

A Pilot Study of Cultural-Based Service-Learning: What Did Undergraduate Students Learn from Elementary School Teachers in an Urban Public School District?

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ABSTRACT

This article describes what undergraduate students learned from school teachers involved in a cultural-based service-learning program. Forty-four undergraduate students enrolled in an educational psychology course at a private, metropolitan University were paired with 30 teachers and provided tutoring and mentoring activities to the children in their classrooms over the course of the semester at the West or East School located in Chester, Pennsylvania. The results from a preliminary survey indicate that undergraduate students increase their civic action attitudes, problem-solving skills, multigroup and ethnic identity, community self-efficacy, and academic and community engagement from the beginning to the end of the term. Undergraduate students acquired confidence in their communication, analytical, and problem-solving skills. Undergraduate students also developed their ethnic identity and made connections to the academic community and beyond to the broader University community. The results further indicate that the service context influences students' critical thinking and social responsibility. Undergraduate students assigned to the West School had higher post service ratings of their application skills and community responsibility compared to those assigned to the East School. Teachers' reports confirm that undergraduate students demonstrate cultural competence and community engagement in their service activities at both the West and East School.

Keywords: Culture Base, Service Learning, Elementary School, Urban

Introduction

Multicultural education and service-learning are often viewed as separate pedagogical approaches (O'Grady, 2000). However, the few studies (i.e., 17 studies) that have been conducted on service-learning as a dimension of multicultural education suggest the combination of these two discourses contributes to improvements in student learning (Boyle-Baise, 2002). Cultural-based service-learning (CBSL) (also known as multicultural or diversity service learning) is an innovative pedagogical approach that intentionally integrates multicultural (i.e., race- or diversity- related) content with service experiences (Boyle-Baise, 2002; Waldstein & Reiher, 2001). The purpose of this paper

is to add to the service-learning literature by analyzing a pretest and posttest survey of undergraduate students and a posttest interview of elementary public school teachers in a CBSL program.

Review of Related Literature

Investigations on academic-based service-learning (ABSL) have noted both improvements and reductions in students' diversity attitudes that result from their service experiences with recipients who differ from them in race and class at placement sites located in culturally-diverse communities (Brody & Wright, 2004; Rockquemore & Shaffer, 2000). ABSL is teaching method that connects academic learning with community service by

providing students with opportunities to learn about social disparities associated with diverse communities (Boyle-Baise, 2005; Eyer & Giles, 1999). Failure to find service-learning effects on students' diversity attitudes reflects an ABSL program limitation (Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Illustre, 2002). ABSL courses do not sufficiently encourage students to think about how race and class influence their interactions with service recipients; therefore, service experiences reinforce the "power dynamic" between White students and service recipients (Moely et al., 2002, p. 24). CBSL not only encourages students to reflect on their dispositions about their relationships with diverse racial and ethnic service recipients, but it also requires them to critically think about power, privilege, and oppression.

Cultural-based service learning may be a culturally responsive teaching method, but only when placements promote tolerance rather than reinforce stereotypes (Boyle-Baise, 2002a; O'Grady, 2000; Root, Callahan, & Sepanski, 2001). Baldwin, Buchanan, and Rudisill (2007) interviewed 41 preservice teachers and found that some of them changed their preconceived notions while others maintained their negative assumptions about the children they tutored. Hess, Lanig, and Vaughan (2007) propose that service-learning is a "deficit model" where students view themselves as the advantaged providing a service for the disadvantaged, thus further reinforcing students' stereotypes (pg. 32). Examples of such programs include tutoring children from an inner-city school or mentoring at-risk youth at a community program. Dunlap, Scoggin, Green, and Davi (2007) suggest students' contact with community

recipients that does not contradict their cognitive biases will lead to reinforcing stereotypical attitudes and beliefs.

In contrast, Brody and Wright (2004) suggest that service learning provides students with an opportunity to develop relationships with community members and that these interactions foster their diversity attitudes. Erikson and O'Connor (cited in O'Grady, 2000) suggest that tutoring as a service activity allows students and recipients to work together toward a common goal (i.e. better grades). Students forge relationships with recipients and acquire personal evidence that contradicts their stereotypes.

Few studies have assessed community recipients' perspectives of CBSL. In fact, most research in this area is about community recipients' views of ABSL rather than CBSL. For instance, Vernon and Ward (1999) surveyed 65 directors of community service agencies, and found that 82% of respondents were generally satisfied with the students' work. Ferrari and Worrall (2000) similarly detected that community-based organization supervisors unanimously rated students as helpful and evaluated their work skills favorably. Miron and Moely (2006) interviewed 40 site coordinators and identified that coordinators who had an active role in planning and implementing the service program and those who developed positive relationships with students positively appraise the university-community partnership. The scope of the data derived from community recipients illuminates the value of ABSL in the community context. The next step in this area of research is to detect if community recipients appraise CBSL the way they do ABSL. This type of assessment would

expand the research on community recipients' perspectives of service learning. The goal of this study is to add to this area of research by evaluating a CBSL program for undergraduate students and schoolteachers.

Research Questions

1. Do cultural-based service-learners improve their civic attitudes (i.e., civic action, problem solving, leadership, social justice, diversity, and political awareness), multicultural skills (i.e., ethnic identity development, colorblind attitudes, community self-efficacy), and community engagement (i.e., community, academic, and interpersonal) from the beginning to the end of the course?

2. Do placement sites influence students' sociocultural awareness and community perceptions? That is, are there differences in sociocultural awareness and community contributions between cultural-based service-learners assigned to tutoring and mentoring roles at different placements?

3. What are teachers' views about multicultural education and cultural-based service-learners?

Definitions

1. Community recipients (also known as service recipients) refer to schoolteachers.

2. The West School refers to a PK-5 elementary school (i.e., pre-kindergarten through 5th grade) that serves 714 students.

3. The East School refers to a KG-8 (i.e., kindergarten through 8th grade) that serves 342 students.

Method

Research Participants

Undergraduate students enrolled in a two-hundred level educational

psychology course at a private teaching university in a northern metropolitan area completed a preliminary survey about their CBSL course. Data was gathered from 44 students at the beginning and at the end of the semester during the 2006-2007 academic year, so that retention from pre-to post-test was 100%. Most students identified themselves as White (84%) and female (80%). Of these students, 52% were freshmen and 42% were sophomores majoring in either education (81%) or psychology (37%). Students worked as either tutors (62%) or mentors (38%) for one-hour per week during a 15-week semester at either the West or East School.

The West School is similar to the East School in student demographics. The majority of children are African-American (80%), Latino (18%), and White (2%) from either lower-income or impoverished neighborhoods (US Census Data, 2000). The West and East Schools are located in a public school district that routinely ranks last on statewide academic performance indicators (Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), 2007). Standardized test scores from 2007 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) reveal that in the third grade less than 40% of students score at a proficient scale in mathematics and only 46% are proficient in reading (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2007).

School Teachers from the West and East School were interviewed about their views of multicultural education and cultural-based service-learners. Eleven open-ended questions were used to assess teachers' views, including: 1. To what extent do you feel your students were sensitive to the needs and problems facing this particular community; 2. To what extent did your students enjoy and value working with people of a different race, social class, or culture; 3. To what extent

do you feel that your students need improvement to work with people of a different race, social class, and culture; 4. What type of diversity is there within your classroom; 5. How do you deal with diversity as a teacher; 6. What multicultural techniques do you use in your classroom; 7. What has prepared you to deal with diversity; 8. How do you work with students and families from different backgrounds; 9. How has having diverse students in your classroom affected your teaching; 10. How do you celebrate or recognize diversity in your classroom; and 11. Do you think incorporating multicultural education into the curriculum has educational value for you and your students?

Data was gathered on 22 out of the 30 teachers who were eligible to participate in the interview, so the teacher response rate was 73%. Most teachers identified themselves as either White (54%) or Black (45%) and female (86%). Thirty-two percent of them reported that they had taught at another school in the district prior to their current place of employment. Teachers' average length of teaching in the district was 17 years and their average length of teaching in their current position was 11 years.

Instruments

Demographic Questionnaire, developed by the researchers, was used to gather information on gender, race, age, GPA, area of study, year in school and volunteer experience.

Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ), developed by Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, and McFarland (2002), assessed civic attitudes and skills associated with student personal and interpersonal development. The CASQ, an 84-item self-report questionnaire, yields scores on seven scales: 1. Civic Action

(respondents evaluate their intentions to become involved in the future in some community service); 2. Interpersonal and Problem-Solving Skills (respondents evaluate their ability to listen, work cooperatively, communicate, make friends, take the role of the other, think logically and analytically, and solve problems); 3. Political awareness (respondents evaluate their awareness of local and national events and political issues); 4. Leadership skills (respondents evaluate their ability to lead and effectiveness as a leader); 5. Social Justice Attitudes (respondents rate their agreement with items expressing attitudes concerning the causes of poverty and misfortune and how social problems can be solved); 6. Diversity Attitudes (respondents describe their attitudes toward diversity and their interest in relating to culturally different people); and 7. Contribution to the Community (respondents evaluate their service-learning experiences and activities at the end of the semester). Internal consistencies for each scale ranged from .69 to .88, and test-retest reliabilities for each scale ranged from .56 to .81.

Color-Blind Racial Attitude Scale (CoBRAS), developed by Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Browne (2000), assessed contemporary racial attitudes. The CoBRAS, a 20-item self-report measure, yield scores on three scales: 1. Unawareness of racial privilege (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of White racial privilege); 2. Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues (respondents evaluate their lack of awareness of blatant racial issues associated with social policies, affirmative action, and discrimination against White people); and 3. Unawareness of Blatant Racial Issues (respondents evaluate their awareness of racial issues such as isolated

situations and racial problems in the United States). Item scores are added together to produce three subscale scores. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .86 to .88.

The *Community Service Self-Efficacy Scale (CSSES)*, developed by Reeb, Katsuyama, Sammon, and Yoder (1998 as cited in Bringle, Phillips, & Hudson, 2004), measures students' confidence in making a clinically significant contribution to the community through service. Ten items were added together to produce a full-scale score. Test-retest reliability for this scale is modest ($r = .62$).

The *Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)*, developed by Phinney (1992), measures three aspects of students' ethnic identity: 1. Ethnic identity achievement based on exploration and commitment; 2. Sense of belonging to and attitudes toward, one's ethnic group; and 3. Sense of commitment and belonging to one's multi-ethnic group. Mean scores were calculated to produce a full-scale score and two subscale scores. Reliability for this scale is strong ($r = .80$).

Sociocultural Awareness Items, developed by Marchel (2003), measures students' views about culturally diverse individuals, awareness of social issues in the community, and sense of community responsibilities. Each of the four items is analyzed separately on a four-point likert scale. Inter-item correlations ranged from .50 to .72, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient is .84. *Three Aspects of Engagement*, developed by Gallini and Moely (2003), assessed students' views of how their courses have influenced their engagement with other university students, the community, and academic material. This 27-item self-report questionnaire yields scores on three

scales: 1. Community engagement (respondents evaluate the extent to which their attitudes changed because of course participation, working with people of different backgrounds, and feeling connected to the community); 2. Academic engagement (respondents describe their satisfaction with the academic course and university, and their connectedness to their studies and field of interest); and 3. Interpersonal engagement (respondents evaluate the course's influence on their ability to work with others effectively, communicate with other students, and make friends). Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each scale ranged from .85 to .98.

Design

An explanatory mixed methods design was used to collect data on undergraduate students and schoolteachers who participated in a CBSL program. An explanatory mixed methods design refers to a two-phase model in which quantitative data is collected and then qualitative data is gathered (Creswell, 2005). The quantitative data are merged with the qualitative data and qualitative data are used to refine, explain, and extend the quantitative results.

Procedures

The CBSL program required undergraduate students enrolled in an educational psychology course to work with schoolteachers at one of two elementary public schools over the course of the semester. The educational psychology course is a three-credit, two-hundred level undergraduate course intended to prepare students to work with children at a public school. This course is a prerequisite for upper-level education courses and requires a field placement (i.e., service learning) to meet the National Council Accreditation for Teacher Education and the Pennsylvania

Department of Education standards. In-class time (50 minutes, 3 times per week, 15 weeks) began with a lecture on service learning. The next two classes consisted of a two-hour orientation on mentoring and tutoring by guest speakers representing one of two public schools. Students assisted the teacher with whom they were paired and provided 15-hours of tutoring and mentoring activities to fulfill the service requirement. The rest of the course was devoted to lecture, activities and discussion. Undergraduate students were required to complete three examinations, a cultural competence paper, and a journal assignment about their service experiences. The cultural competence assignment required students to watch a diversity film (i.e., *Stand & Deliver*, *Dangerous Minds*, *the Ron Clark Story*, *to Sir with Love*, *Lean on Me* *the Principal*). Diversity-focused films foster students understanding of different cultures by allowing them to vicariously experience racial, economic, and educational issues within these cultures (Pinterits & Atkinson cited in Gladding, 2000). Students were also required to compare and contrast the movie to their service-learning experiences, apply developmental, racial/ethnic-identity, and risk and resilience theories to describe and explain the main character in the movie, and summarize the value of this assignment in terms of learning about diversity, prejudice reduction techniques, and multicultural education. The course ended with a reflection ceremony at each school in which teachers and students discussed what they learned from participating in the CBSL program.

Limitations

We acknowledge the difficulty of generalizing results beyond our sample of undergraduate students and schoolteachers.

The Widener student population is demographically homogenous. Most participants were White and female, came from middle-class backgrounds, and were the first-generation to attend a four-year college. In addition, participants worked in public schools and community organizations in an urban area where the majority of children were African-American and came from lower-income backgrounds. The various developmental levels of recipients and the educational disparities associated with the public school system makes this unique service experience unlikely to be replicated elsewhere. Moreover, history effects are associated with service activities at the West School. The location of the West School allowed participants to witness educational and social disparities at the High School (i.e., student protest), which may have enhanced their critical thinking and civic responsibility. These events would probably not be observed by other participants at this or another school at a subsequent time. Further, the use of multiple surveys does not prevent participant bias in written materials. There is the potential for testing effects and self-report biases to be associated with participant surveys, as well as there is the likelihood of social desirability effects to be associated with teacher reports. Finally, the lack of randomization methods precludes us from inferring causality between the course content and the service context on participants' critical thinking and civic engagement skills.

Data Collection

All of the respondents completed an informed consent form and a survey measuring personal and interpersonal development, multicultural skills, and community engagement. Undergraduate students completed the survey, placed it

in a coded, confidential envelope and gave it directly to the researcher. Surveys took about 45 minutes to complete. Undergraduate students were required to complete the survey again post service (i.e., after completing 15 hours of service). In addition, a research assistant conducted an interview with each teacher at the placement site at the end of the term. Teachers completed an informed consent form and answered open-ended questions that inquired about their views on service-learning and multicultural education. Interviews took about 30 minutes to complete.

Data Analysis

A paired t-test was conducted to measure differences in interpersonal and personal development (i.e., civic

action, problem solving, leadership, social justice, diversity, and political awareness), multicultural skills (i.e., ethnic identity development, colorblind attitudes, community self-efficacy), and community engagement (i.e., community, academic, and interpersonal) for cultural-based service-learners from the beginning to the end of the course. As indicated in Table 1, cultural-based service-learners increased their civic action attitudes, problem-solving skills, community self-efficacy, multigroup and ethnic identity, and academic and community engagement by the course end. Cultural-based service-learners also decreased their racial privilege awareness and diversity attitudes over the semester.

Table 1. Pre- and Posttest Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Personal and Interpersonal Development Outcomes for Cultural-Based Service-Learners

Measure	Time Points		M	SD	df	t
	Pretest	Posttest				
CASQ						
Civic Action	30.68	4.68	32.14	4.78	35	-2.85**
Problem-Solving	41.05	3.71	42.47	3.62	34	-2.97**
Political Awareness	16.16	4.27	17.47	4.05	34	-1.34
Leadership	13.05	1.74	13.17	2.59	35	-.34
Social Justice	25.89	2.60	26.34	2.93	29	-.73
Diversity	17.05	1.67	16.20	1.87	35	2.13*
MEIM						
Ethnic Identity						
Exploration	15.29	4.20	16.51	3.79	37	-2.21*
Commitment	28.48	4.87	27.80	4.67	35	1.00
Multigroup	39.72	7.27	44.22	7.50	35	-4.63***
Community						
Self-Efficacy	40.17	5.89	41.51	6.16	35	-2.05*
CoBRAS						
Racial Privilege	22.33	4.92	24.19	3.83	36	-2.24*
Institutional Discrimination	23.73	4.30	23.70	3.71	30	.03
Blatant Racial Issues	20.47	3.40	20.61	1.74	36	-.23
Engagement						
Community	40.20	6.21	42.28	5.93	35	-2.14*

Academic	40.14	6.68	43.91	6.90	35	-3.53***
Interpersonal	25.22	3.77	26.37	3.29	35	-1.81

Note. ¹Differential change by cultural-based service-learners, reflected at ***p<.000, **<.01, *p<.05. ²CASQ rating scales 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Higher posttest scores indicate an increase in civic attitudes and skills. MEIM rating scales: 1= strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Higher posttest scores indicate greater ethnic identity achievement and sense of belonging to one’s ethnic group. Community Self-Efficacy rating scales: 1= strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Higher posttest score indicate greater confidence to work effectively in the community. CoBRAS rating scales: 1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree). Lower posttest scores indicate an increase in awareness of racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues. Engagement rating scales: 1 = strongly disagree; 5 strongly agree. Higher posttest scores indicate increases in community, academic and interpersonal engagement. ³Students made increases in their interests for participation in community service, communication, logical, and analytical skills, sense of belonging and connectedness towards one's ethnic and multi-ethnic group, confidence in their ability to work in the community, and connectedness to the academic and broader community post service. Students made increases in their unawareness of racial privilege (i.e., awareness of privilege decreased) and decreases in their interest in working with diverse individuals over time

A 2 (Service Activity) X 2 (Placement Site) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to examine differences in sociocultural awareness and community contribution scores between cultural-based service-learners assigned to mentoring and tutoring activities at the West and the East School.

As indicated in Table 2, there were significant main effects for between cultural-based service-learners assigned to the West and the East School. Cultural-based service-learners assigned to the West School had higher ratings of application skills and community responsibility compared to those assigned to the East School.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and Main Effects of Placement Sites on Sociocultural Awareness and Community Contribution Scores

Variable	Public Elementary Schools				ANOVA F (1, 32)
	West		East		
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	
Sociocultural Awareness					
1. This course caused me to question my own views about people that are different from myself.	4.38	.51	3.67	.70	4.53
2. This class had helped me to become more aware of the social issues that existed in the community.	4.50	.53	3.89	.60	3.66
3. The service-learning activities made this course more applicable to “real world” issues.	4.75	.46	3.89	.60	10.48**
4. As a result of this course, I feel a sense of responsibility toward the community.	4.50	.75	3.11	.60	21.27***
Community Contribution					
1. In my service-learning, I was appreciated when I did a good job.	4.31	.79	3.81	1.16	1.82
2. I feel that I made a real contribution					

through my service learning activity.	4.25	.90	4.00	.89	.70
3. In service-learning, I was free to develop and use my ideas.	3.56	1.41	3.75	1.06	.06
4. I often discussed my service experience with one or more faculty members.	3.37	1.36	3.31	1.01	.08
5. I often discussed my service experience with the service-learning staff.	3.25	1.43	3.37	1.02	.00
6. I often discussed my service experience with other students.	4.00	.89	4.31	.60	1.35
7. My service learning experience challenged my previous opinions.	3.94	.92	3.88	1.08	.16
8. I applied things that I learned in my course to my service learning activities.	4.37	.71	3.81	.91	4.94*
9. I applied things that I learned in the service activity to my college course.	4.44	.62	3.87	.80	8.13**
10. This service learning experience was an integral part of my college course, not just an "extra" activity.	4.69	.47	3.62	1.25	10.21**

Note. ¹Differential change between cultural-based service-learners assigned to West and East public schools at *** $p < .000$, ** $< .01$, * $p < .05$. ²Sociocultural awareness: 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Higher posttest scores indicate greater understanding of course content and service context and sense of community responsibility. Community Contribution rating scales: 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree. Higher posttest scores indicate a greater impact from service activities on student learning. ³Students assigned to the West school had greater post service ratings of the application of the course content and service content and sense of community responsibility compared to students assigned the East school.

A content analysis was conducted on 22 teacher interviews to describe their views of multicultural education and cultural-based service-learners. Each teacher's response underwent an item-level analysis that resulted in nine broad

categories and two major themes as shown in Table 3. Two major themes that emerged from the data describe teachers' favorable views about multicultural education and the CBSL program.

Table 3. Teachers' Views of Multicultural Education and Cultural-Based Service-Learners

<u>Major Themes</u>	<u>Categories</u>	<u>Subcategories</u>	<u>%</u>
Multicultural Education	Culturally-responsive teaching methods	Does not use prejudice reduction techniques	68
		Use prejudice reduction techniques	32
		Incorporate and recognize Holidays and Black History Month in the classroom	32
	Diversity teaching philosophy	Incorporate diversity speakers, books, and activities in the classroom	32
		Treat all students the same	65
		Treat students differently by being more sensitive to ethnic and linguistic differences	35
Diversity in the	Resistant to acknowledge ethnic and linguistic differences	28	

	classroom	Acknowledge ethnic and linguistic differences	72
	Dealing with diversity in the classroom	Does not address diversity in the classroom	68
		Address diversity in the classroom	32
	Multicultural education training	Formal education or training in multicultural education	33
		Lack of formal education or training in multicultural education	67
		Life experiences as form of multicultural education	67
CBSL	Multicultural Education	Belief that multicultural education should be incorporated into the curriculum	77
	Students assisted the children and teachers in the classroom	Students helped the teachers by providing individual attention to the students, allowing them to use cooperative learning methods, and assisting with the overcrowded classrooms	84
		Students did not help the teachers in providing individual attention to the students and allowing them to use cooperative learning methods	16
	Students were sensitive to the cultural and developmental needs of the children	Students were aware and sensitive to the children's cultural and developmental characteristics	98
		Students appeared to be in a cultural-shock and lacked the skills to deal with the children's cultural and developmental characteristics	2
	Teachers' satisfaction with the service-learning program	Teachers did not feel that any changes were necessary to improve the service-learning program	84
		Teachers felt that the service-learning program should be improved	16
	Program improvement areas	One student over the year instead of the semester	13
		Students should come more often - more than one or two hours per week	13
		Students need to be more prepared to deal with diversity in the schools	2

¹Two major themes emerged from the teacher interviews: (1). Multicultural Education which refers to multicultural issues that may arise in the classroom and teaching strategies that foster cultural competence, (2). CBSL refers to teachers' views of the students and the program. ²Nine subcategories emerged: (1). Culturally-responsive teaching methods refers to teaching methods that foster cultural competence, (2). Diversity teaching philosophy refers to teacher's philosophy for addressing diversity in the classroom, (3). Diversity in the classroom refers to the area in which teachers address diversity in the classroom, (4). Diversity in the classroom refers to if the teacher addresses diversity in the classroom, (5). Multicultural education refers to teacher beliefs about incorporating multicultural education in the curriculum, (6). Student assistance refers to the way in which cultural-based service-learners worked with them in the classroom, (7). Student sensitivity refers to the way in which cultural-based service-learners did or did not demonstrate cultural competence, (8). Teacher satisfaction refers to if they were or were not satisfied with the program, and (9). Program improvement refers to teachers' views about ways to improve the CBSL program.

Results

The first objective of this study was to measure differences in undergraduate students' interpersonal and personal development, multicultural skills, and

community engagement from the beginning to the end of the course. Cultural-based service-learners had higher ratings of civic action attitudes, problem-solving skills, community self-efficacy, multigroup ethnic

identity and ethnic identity exploration, and academic and community engagement, as well as they had lower ratings of racial privilege awareness and diversity attitudes by the end of the term. These findings are consistent with previous research of Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, and Ilustre, 2002, who found that service-learners decrease their diversity attitudes and increase their interpersonal skills and community responsibility over time. The service context provided cultural-based service-learners an opportunity to work in public school where Students of Color were in the majority and to observe the limited resources provided by district (i.e., outdated computers). Cultural-based service-learners may have attributed educational inequities to economic disparities instead of racial privilege. The combination of the service context and the course content also may have contributed to the development of student attitudes and skills. Cultural-based service-learners' racial privilege awareness and diverse attitudes decreased, but their problem solving, competence, and community engagement skills increased over the semester. Taken together, student attitude- and skill-formation are complex processes; however, CBSL has the potential to serve as an effective pedagogy to promote attitude-change and skill-development.

A second objective of this study was to measure differences in sociocultural awareness and community contribution between CBSL mentors and tutors assigned to the West and the East School. Congruent with previous studies (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Gallini & Moely, 2003), cultural-based service-learners assigned to the West School had higher ratings of application skills and community responsibility compared to those assigned to the East School. Cultural-based service-learners assigned to the West School reported that service activities made the course more applicable to real world issues,

as well as they felt service was an integral part of the course and not just an extra activity than those assigned to the East School. Cultural-based service-learners assigned to the West School worked in a large public school located next to the High School in the middle of town. Cultural-based service-learners assigned to the West School may have observed a student protest (students picketed the high school because of the inadequate number of desks and textbooks made available to them in their classrooms), an ongoing legal investigation of the former principal (false allegations were made about the principal), and other situations that involved the police at the High School. The location of the West School provided cultural-based service-learners with knowledge about the complex social structures involved in urban education. Moreover, it is plausible that cultural-based service-learners assigned to the West School had more autonomy, guidance, and support in their tutoring and mentoring service activities. Placements that provide more guidance and support enhance students' critical thinking and civic engagement skills (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Cultural-based service-learners not only acquired critical thinking and civic engagement skills, but they also developed a deeper understanding of the problems facing this school and community (Umbach & Kuh, 2006).

A third objective was to explore teachers' views of multicultural education and cultural-based service-learners. Most teachers believed that multicultural education should be incorporated into the curriculum, but over half of them did not use prejudice reduction techniques or other culturally responsive methods. In fact, more than half of the students did not observe multicultural practices in the classroom. Further, slightly more than half of the teachers adopted a colorblind attitude in that

they treat all students the same regardless of their ethnic or linguistic backgrounds. The prevalence of their colorblind attitudes may be attributed to the fact that the majority of them were seasoned teachers and few of them were formally trained in multicultural education, consistent with previous research that found most teachers adopt colorblind attitudes rooted in norms of American public schools (Schofield, 1986).

Teachers had a positive view of cultural-based service-learners and the CBSL program. Almost all of them felt that cultural-based service-learners helped them in the classroom by providing individual attention to the children. Most teachers also felt cultural-based service-learners were sensitive to the cultural and developmental needs of the children. Few teachers made comments regarding student or program improvement; however, they did request that the same student assist them throughout the year instead of one semester. Overall, the cultural-based service-learners benefited both teachers and children by providing support in overcrowded classrooms, and these benefits to the community were not only encouraging but also vital to the university, whose mission is predicated on service learning and citizenship.

A final objective was to detect what the undergraduate students and schoolteachers learned about CBSL by comparing teachers' reports with cultural-based service-learners' surveys. Similarities between the qualitative and quantitative findings were observed in cultural-based service-learners' personal and interpersonal development, multicultural competence, and community engagement. For instance, cultural-based service-learners developed their multigroup and ethnic identity, improved their competence to work with culturally diverse children, and formed a connection to the

community by the course end. Teachers' reports further confirm that students utilize multicultural skills despite the lack of observed teaching models at the placement sites. This consistency of data between teacher reports and student surveys suggest that cultural-based service-learners acquire knowledge of culturally responsive practices from participation in the CBSL program.

Conclusion

Institutions of higher education are bestowed the challenge of finding ways to teach students to become responsible citizens. Preparing students to become responsible citizens requires them to understand the complexities connected to social institutions in society. Educators often grapple with how to teach students about diversity or difference, privilege, and power (Conley & Hamlin, 2009). As a result, educators seek to find and use transformative methods that inspire students beyond the classroom. Cultural-based service learning is an innovative pedagogy that may hold promise for teaching students about multicultural and social justice education, as well as fostering their academic and community engagement.

Recommendations

Certainly more work is needed to examine whether this kind of pedagogy is effective when assessed with randomization methods and implemented in large, diverse educational institutions. Additional work is needed to determine if there are differences in student development, multicultural skills, and community engagement outcomes between students in a CBSL course randomized to service activities and placements from large public institutions. Future research in this area may assist educators in understanding the complexities of student learning and development, as well

as preparing undergraduates to be culturally competent critical thinkers.

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