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An Analysis of Learning Outcomes

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Students' Reflections in an Online Service-Learning (OS-L) An Analysis of Learning Outcomes

Teresa M. Camarines, Simon Peter T. Balanquit, and Elmgay M. Valeriano

Abstract

Education plays several important roles, one of which is to promote cognitive development that enriches the social aspects of learners. Service-learning as a pedagogy is reported to develop students' personal aspects and social engagement. As a teaching tool, students can reflect and better understand their experiences by writing reflections in concluded service-learning activities. However, the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic posed a challenge in accomplishing course deliverables that required educators to redesign learning delivery and how service-learning pedagogy can be facilitated virtually. Following Kolb's experiential learning theory, the researchers utilized the rubric that assesses the academic service-learning (AS-L) of gathered reflection papers of Grade 12. This study aims to explore how their online experiences can contribute to a positive learning outcome using the following dimensions: (a) awareness of the purpose of service, (b) critical thinking, (c) application of the AS-L experience to the academic knowledge base and objectives of the course, (d) responsibility to the community, and (e) impact on student's personal life. These were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis with computer-assisted data analysis software MAX Qualitative Data Analysis. Given that service-learning plays a vital role in the academic milieu, the outcomes of this study may be used as a benchmark in the sphere of Philippine education and how it can contribute to enhancing students' reflective process.

Keywords: *online service-learning, reflection, learning outcomes, academics, experiences*

Reflexiones de los estudiantes en un aprendizaje-servicio en línea (ESO) Un análisis sobre los resultados de aprendizaje

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Resumen

La educación cumple varias funciones importantes y una de ellas es promover el desarrollo cognitivo que enriquece aspectos sociales de los estudiantes. El uso de la pedagogía de aprendizaje y servicio desarrolla aspectos personales y el compromiso social de los estudiantes. Al utilizarla como herramienta de enseñanza, los estudiantes pueden escribir reflexiones y así comprender mejor sus experiencias previas de actividades de aprendizaje y servicio. Sin embargo, la pandemia sin precedentes de COVID-19, planteó un desafío para lograr los entregables esperados de los cursos y requirió que los educadores rediseñaran su forma de enseñar virtualmente la pedagogía del aprendizaje y servicio. Los investigadores se basaron en la teoría de aprendizaje experiencial de Kolb y aplicaron la rúbrica (AS-L), que evalúa el aprendizaje y servicio académico de los trabajos de reflexión recopilados del grado doceavo. El objetivo de este estudio es explorar cómo las experiencias en línea de los estudiantes pueden contribuir a un resultado de aprendizaje positivo utilizando las siguientes dimensiones: (a) conciencia del propósito del servicio, (b) pensamiento crítico, (c) aplicación de la experiencia AS-L con la base del conocimiento académico y los objetivos del curso, (d) responsabilidad con la comunidad, y (e) impacto en la vida personal del estudiante. Esto se analizó mediante un análisis temático reflexivo con el software de análisis de datos asistido por computadora MAX Qualitative Data Analysis. Dado que el aprendizaje y servicio juega un papel vital en el entorno académico, los resultados de este estudio pueden usarse como un punto de referencia en el ámbito de la educación filipina y puede contribuir a mejorar el proceso reflexivo de los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: *aprendizaje-servicio en línea, reflexión, resultados de aprendizaje, académicos, experiencias*

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A unique approach to experiential learning is online service-learning (OS-L), which enables students to participate in worthwhile service projects through online platforms. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced many educational institutions to implement remote learning, OS-L has become increasingly popular in recent years. OS-L allows students to participate in significant service projects via online platforms, effectively addressing the challenges posed by social distancing and lockdown measures. This service-learning approach is “an opportunity for students to engage in a transformative civic, educational, and experiential journey” (Billig et al., 2020, p. 19).

OS-L can be as effective as traditional service-learning in accomplishing learning outcomes and providing students with opportunities to develop cross-cultural understanding and digital literacy skills (Billig et al., 2020; Chang & Kang, 2017;). In addition, it was emphasized that OS-L has the potential to increase public participation because it allows students to engage with real-world issues and develop community-applicable skills.

However, OS-L poses unique challenges and opportunities that have not been exhaustively investigated. For instance, the online nature of OS-L can hinder the formation of relationships and trust among participants (Borup et al., 2012). Moreover, the absence of face-to-face interaction makes it challenging for students to develop a sense of community and social presence (Borup et al., 2012). Nevertheless, with a well-designed program, alternative methods can ensure fruitful outcomes. According to Cordero et al. (2022), effective partnerships necessitate collaborative efforts from all stakeholders involved—the institution, faculty, community, and students—all of whom play integral roles in SL's successful implementation and outcomes.

Service-Learning Pedagogy

Service-learning is an educational approach that incorporates academic instruction with community service (Eyler & Giles, 1999). It allows the students to apply what they have learned in the classroom to real-world circumstances while addressing social and community issues. Several studies have established that service-learning enhances student learning outcomes. For instance, Billig and Furco (2002) found that service-learning programs boost students' overall academic performance. In a separate study, Hill and Mannion (2017) investigated the impact of service-learning on the learning outcomes of psychology students. They discovered that students who participated in service-learning had substantially higher final exam scores and reported a greater comprehension of course material than those who did not. These findings suggest that by bridging academic knowledge with practical experience, service-learning can reinforce students' understanding through experiential application with the community (Kolb, 1984; Mayer, 2003; Mpofo, 2004; Raman & Pashupati, 2002).

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, OS-L has become a significant trend in various academic institutions. Numerous research studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of OS-L and its implications for student learning outcomes. Brescia and Miller (2020) noted that virtual service-learning promotes community development, resilience, and civic responsibility. Compared with traditional methods, Dabrowski (2020) found that virtual service-learning is highly effective in enhancing learners' involvement and understanding. Although OS-L brings positive results, some studies cited its drawbacks and disadvantages. Hence, Jayatilaka and Pinto-Zipp (2021) highlighted the relevance of students' reflection papers to identify the program's efficacy validly.

Student's Reflection

Hulton et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of reflection as a key element of service-learning. This aligns with Eyler's (2002) assertion that the hyphen between the words "service" and "learning" is a manifestation of the continuous reflective process involved throughout the program's implementation. Furthermore, using reflection papers as an assessment can encourage students to ponder their experiences and evaluate their progress toward attaining the intended learning outcomes (Andrus, 2023; Bond, 2007). Additionally, studies indicate that reflection papers evaluate student performance in various academic settings (Dahlgren, 2020; Philip, 2006; Veine et al., 2019). When students reflect on their service-learning experiences, they can articulate how those experiences have affected their schema and personal development—leading to the progression of their metacognitive skills (Eyler & Giles, 1999). For instance, students can develop a deeper understanding of their learning processes and how their experiences have influenced their knowledge, skills, and attitudes through sustained reflections (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Deans and Wiley (2016) further asserted that interconnecting reflection and service-learning can foster students' self-awareness and self-regulation.

Reflectiveness, critical thinking, resilience, reasoning, problem-solving, and intercultural awareness, are recognized as one of the most essential skills needed in the current generation (Kittelman et al., 2023). Specifically, Kittelman et al. (2013) argued that "reflection skills are becoming more and more important, as they can be a basis or 'enabler' for the development of other skills" (p. 230). A study demonstrating the impact of reflection on learning reveals its multifaceted benefits, such as enhancing learners' depth of knowledge, giving room for areas for improvement, personalizing and contextualizing knowledge, offering comparative references, aiding in understanding structural relationships within knowledge, and fostering social connections (Chand & Deshmukh, 2019).

Nevertheless, the onset of COVID-19 created immense challenges and disruption to the education sector (Salehi et al., 2023) that forced many universities to shift their classes online (Dang & Zhang, 2022). Educational institutions also opted to conduct online activities such as reflective writing to sustain the academic continuum. Hence, this study offers foundational concepts for crafting reflective activities to foster student learning within an online educational setting amidst the challenges encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic (Yulhendri et al., 2023). In a study by Stirling and Kerr (2013), students who wrote reflection papers about their service-learning experiences reported a better knowledge of the course, improved their critical thinking skills, and developed more empathy for those they helped. Similarly, Fuertes-Camacho et al. (2021) and Mabry and Sutliff (2016) found that students who engaged in reflection through writing as part of their service-learning involvement reported a deeper comprehension of social issues and a stronger sense of personal and social duty. These studies further align with Salim et al. (2021), who claimed that "students appreciate the use of reflective writing methods in their final assignments in pandemic situations." These findings imply that despite the disadvantages of online settings (Findyartini et al., 2020), students experience enhanced learning depth and confidence in formulating writing ideas through reflective writing.

In general, composing reflection papers allows students to make connections between their experiences and the concepts they have learned in class. In this manner, teachers can assess the impact of the service-learning experience on their lives and the learning outcomes that are being attained in the process. The efficacy of service-learning programs can also be gleaned from students' reflections. By synthesizing and analyzing their experiences, students can better understand the course material and the social issues their service addresses. The online reflections of the students are essential in service-learning because they promote critical analysis, heighten self-awareness, and lead students to make meaningful connections as they respond to the community's needs. The critical thinking skills they developed throughout this assessment led them to foster a sense of civic responsibility toward social change as students continuously broadened their knowledge and critically explored authentic situations.

Methodology

Setting

This study is a research review in nature and was conducted in one of the leading private universities in Manila, Philippines. The university continues “to be inspired by the charism of its founder and aspires to be a leading learner-centered research university, where it commits itself to bridging faith and scholarship in the service of society, especially the poor.” The founder envisioned the teachers to “teach minds, touch hearts, and transform lives” (De La Salle University, 2013). The SHS Division on this Campus serves 11th and 12th grades with the following tracks: academic tracks/strands include STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), ABM (Accountancy, Business, and Management), HUMSS (Humanities and Social Sciences), ADT (Arts and Design Track), and SPT (Sports Track).

The population of this study covers four sections with a total of 141 Grade 12 students (one section from ABM strand: 31 students, three sections from HUMSS strand: 110 students), which one of the researchers handled from the recently concluded Christian Living 6 course during the third term of the academic year 2021–2022.

Data Gathering Procedure

A Parental and Informed Consent (PIC) was distributed to the parents and students online specifying that their children are conducting an E-Service-Learning via Zoom as a performance task required for the subject, *Christian Living 6: How Can I Grow in my Service to the World?* The PIC, however, did not specify that their Service-Learning Reflection Paper (SLRP) as pre-existing data will be collected for study purposes. Thus, additional informed consent, outlining the present study’s rationale, was also sent to the same population to seek consent to utilize SLRP.

From the informed consent forms sent to the target population, only 14 students replied—considering this now as the study sample. For qualitative research, the sample sizes are not justified (Marshall et al., 2015). It is smaller than that in quantitative research methods. It is concerned with the “in-depth understanding of a phenomenon or is focused on *meaning* (and *heterogeneities in meaning*)—which are often centered on the *how* and *why* of a particular issue, process, situation, subculture, scene or set of social interactions” (Dworkin, 2012, p. 1). Additionally, there are “no well-established published guidelines to allow formal estimation of sample size a priori for qualitative research” (Doll, n.d.).

Data included students’ final reflection papers. According to Suskie (2009), reflection promotes deep, lasting learning and can also be employed to evaluate whether an intended program or course helped students learn. In this study, the researchers used the suggested rubric about academic service-learning reflection papers (Brenton, n.d.) provided by the social development arm of [the university—redacted for review]. As mentioned earlier, the tool was utilized to assess students’ reflection output using a 4-point scale: *novice*, *apprentice*, *proficient*, and *distinguished*. Five (5) dimensions of quality or criteria include the following: (1) *awareness of the purpose of service*, (2) *critical thinking*, (3) *applying the SL experience to the academic knowledge base and objectives of the course*, (4) *responsibility to the community*, and (5) *impact on student’s life*. The Center for Social Concern and Action (COSCA) (n.d.) also formulated questions about each dimension of quality or criteria that promotes “the Lasallian Social Development (LSD) principles and social formation values of the Lasallian Guiding Principles” to facilitate student’s learning and experiences better.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the researcher followed the six-phase analytical process of reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) of Braun and Clarke (2006) with the aid of MAXQDA. RTA is “an easily accessible and theoretically flexible interpretative approach to qualitative data analysis that facilitates the identification and analysis of patterns or themes in a given data set.” Overall, RTA aims to find underlying meaning and patterns in data and provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research question.

Phase One: Familiarization with the Data

The researchers acquainted themselves with the data set by thoroughly examining and repeatedly reading the 14 reflections provided by the respondents. Through the initial reading, the researchers conducted preliminary observations and gained valuable insights into the correlation and integration of each item within the comprehensive data set. According to Braun and Clark (2006, p. 60), this stage is crucial because it is at this point that researchers begin “read[ing] our data as data,” which entails going beyond “the surface meaning of the words on the page.” Afterward, the researchers clustered each respondent’s answer per dimension, grouped them, and saved them as one file. The five documents developed are as follows: (1) *awareness of the purpose of service*, (2) *critical thinking*, (3) *applying the AS-L experience to the academic knowledge base and objectives of the course*, (4) *responsibility to the community*, and (5) *impact on student’s personal life*.

Phase Two: Generating Initial Codes

After familiarizing themselves with the data set, the researchers started encoding each document into the MAXQDA software, followed by qualitative coding. Codes are essential building components of what will eventually become themes. The coding process is undertaken to produce brief, shorthand descriptive, or interpretive labels for information relevant to the research question(s) (Bryne, 2022). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), codes are “the building blocks of analysis” (p. 61) and help researchers make sense of their data in light of the tentative research questions. The researchers selected and assigned codes by highlighting the relevant sections of the text. These highlighted segments were further analyzed to identify the connections, patterns, and relationships leading to the formulation of potential themes.

Phase Three: Generating Themes

In this phase, the process shifted from developing codes to formulating the themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) described themes as “patterned responses or meanings within the data set” that somehow relate to the research questions (p. 82). The researchers analyzed and discovered patterns through visualization techniques. Through the word trend feature of the MAXQDA software, the researchers evaluated the most frequent words that occur in the data set. These allowed the researchers to see relationships between codes and to develop themes. An initial candidate theme shows that in the first dimension of *awareness of the purpose of service*, words such as “work,” “partner,” “service-learning,” “help,” and “project” are the most recurring words in the data set. This visualization served as the researchers’ baseline in developing emerging themes.

Phase Four: Reviewing Potential Themes

This phase involves reviewing the potential themes created in the previous phase by cross-referencing the documents and coded segments. The researchers examined different codes closely related to each other and recognized potential themes based on the frequency and similarity of codes. Following the analysis, the researchers grouped the coded segments based on their thematic alignment.

Phase Five: Defining and Naming Themes

At this stage, the researchers examined the thematic framework thoroughly. They employed the Questions, Themes, and Theories (QTT) in each dimension to identify overarching themes; the list of themes that emerged per dimension is enumerated in Table 1.

Table 1.*Emerging Themes*

Dimensions				
Awareness of the Purpose of Service	Critical Thinking	Applying the AS-L Experience to the Academic Knowledge Base and Objectives of the Course	Responsibility to the Community	Impact on Students' Personal Life
Assisting the partner community Career path decision-making Self-awareness Contribution to the society	Significance of communication Understanding social context Significance of teamwork Having a vision Fulfillment in working for others Openness to new opportunities	Integration of the Lasallian Reflection Framework (LRF) and the service-learning service to people Being a humane person Purpose in life Work	Market the business/partner community Advocate positive change Assist the community with documentation Help the community formulate sustainable projects	Gratefulness Self-awareness Leadership Service Faith in God Personal development Teamwork

Phase Six: Producing the Report

This last phase is the completion and final inspection of the report (Bryne, 2022).

Results and Findings

When asked to determine the purpose of service-learning, the themes of *self-awareness*, *assistance to the partner community*, *career decision-making*, and *contribution to society* surfaced in the respondents' answers. The most common theme in the responses is "helping the partner community," which occurred 17 times. This is followed by their understanding of service to "contribute to the society" (7 times), "promoting self-awareness" (4 times), and "making decisions on their career" (3 times).

On the other hand, under the critical thinking dimension, there are three recurring themes in the dataset, namely, *understanding the social context*, *significance of teamwork*, and *fulfillment in working for others*, with each theme appearing four times. The theme follows this *has a vision* and *communication*, and *openness to new opportunities* with a frequency of 3 and 2, respectively.

Regarding applying the AS-L experience to the course's academic knowledge base and objectives, the theme *work* emerged most frequently from the respondent's response (7 times). This is succeeded by *integrating LRF and SL programs* and *services to people* with the occurrence of 3 times each, then *purpose in life* (2 times), and lastly, *being a humane person* and *inclusivity* (one time each).

Concerning the participant's responsibility to the community, the recurring themes from participants' answers include *marketing the business/partner community* with a frequency of 11 and *advocating positive change*, which has a frequency of 9. Finally, *assisting the community in documentation* and *helping the community formulate sustainable projects* appeared twice in the dataset.

Finally, under the dimension of impact on students' personal lives, the theme of *service* appears in the responses most frequently (22 times), followed by *personal development* (10 times) and *faith in God* (4 times). Meanwhile, the themes of *self-awareness*, *leadership*, and *teamwork* appear three times, and *gratefulness* has the lowest frequency, garnering only two occurrences.

Discussion

Awareness of the Purpose of the Service

The themes “assisting the community” and “contributing to society” are crucial to the students’ understanding of the *purpose of service*. It implies that the participants immediately recognize the impact of their work on the community, which, in turn, inspires them to volunteer and strengthen their sense of communal responsibility. This finding aligns with the study conducted by Pong and Leung (2023), which found that the student participants are motivated to continue their volunteer work, since they have become committed to helping people and understanding community issues. Similarly, as noted by Mikhail et al. (2023), service-learning serves as a valuable educational instrument for gaining insight into the significance of social accountability within the community (p. 5) and fostering a profound sense of responsibility (Afzal & Hussain, 2020).

Moreover, the responses revealed a theme on *career decision-making*—showing how service-learning affected their choice of career path. This finding matches the study of Pong and Leung (2023), wherein they discovered that service-learning enabled learners to gain a better perspective of their academic goals and career choices (p. 263). Since service-learning facilitates engagement with various community stakeholders (i.e., schools, extracurricular activities, advocacy groups, artistic institutions, governmental agencies, and various charitable organizations), students are introduced to numerous career paths that enable them to merge their personal values with their professional pursuits (Mitchell & Rost-Banik, 2019). They are motivated to seek a career that is aligned with their passion for creating a positive impact on society. Coulter-Kern et al. (2013) further asserted that students participating in service-learning courses claimed that classes became less academically challenging since they could apply their classroom knowledge in practical situations (p. 307). Through exposure to real-world scenarios, students developed a greater comprehension of the difficulties faced by their partner community.

Another recurring theme is *self-awareness*, which helps students uncover their life’s purpose and refine their abilities. As highlighted by Mitchell and Rost-Banik (2019), service-learning initiatives play a pivotal role in fostering self-awareness among students. This aspect is crucial in guiding students toward career paths that align with their interests and aspirations.

Critical Thinking

The aspect of critical thinking was applied by the respondents in their service-learning engagements as recapitulated in the following key themes: (1) *understanding the social context*, (2) *placing importance on teamwork*, (3) *having a sense of fulfillment in working for others*, (4) *having a vision*, (5) *stressing the significance of communication*, and (6) *being open to new opportunities*. The respondents affirmed the necessity of comprehending the community’s social context when carrying out service-learning initiatives. As reiterated by Brown et al. (2003), knowing the social context is vital for service-learning because it helps students grasp the complex political and economic variables contributing to societal problems. This information can then be used for the service project to assist students in developing practical and long-lasting solutions for the community. In addition, the themes mentioned above underscore the potential of incorporating service-learning programs into academic environments to foster personal and social development by honing students’ empathy and concern for others and encouraging individual and societal accountability.

The students also emphasized the importance of working together and functioning as a team to benefit the community. Teamwork is essential to service-learning because it allows students to collaborate toward common goals while gaining valuable skills that can be applied in school and real-world settings. Regarding fulfillment from working for others, respondents reported delight and satisfaction in serving and assisting others. The students found delight and satisfaction in serving and assisting others while working for someone else. On a similar note, Furco (2002) asserts that service-learning helps cultivate learners’ sense

of social responsibility and provides them with personal gratification, as they witness the beneficial impact of their actions on society.

Furthermore, the respondents stressed the necessity of formulating plans, visions, and goals for service-learning. They emphasized how service-learning has made them receptive to new learning opportunities. As previously described, service-learning combines community service and academic learning that promotes reflective thinking. As students acquire these skills, they develop a moral obligation toward the community by identifying their needs and responding to their concerns (Anorico, 2018).

Applying the AS-L Experience to the Academic Knowledge and Objective of the Course

One of the positive effects of service-learning is the personal development that allows students to apply academic knowledge to real situations, facilitating the acquisition of contextualized learning and reducing the gap between theory and social practice (García-Rico et al., 2021). The service-learning implementation is considered the practice of the theories learned by the students in the CL6 course. This course aims to answer the question, *How Can I Grow in My Service to the World?* (also referred to as *Kapatiranan* Filipino). It also seeks to provide students with the opportunity to grow in their service to others and recognize their worth as disciples of Jesus who are called to love one another and be a witness to the realization of God's Kingdom in this world. The course provides opportunities for students to explore Catholic social teachings revolving around the marginalized and politics. About the subject's objectives, the class implements their service-learning project for a partner community using the third phase of the LRF, *Taya-Kilos*, where one can live out their Lasallian identity as Christian/Spiritual Achievers for God and Country. The LRF is the framework followed in the CL1 to CL6 courses. It is composed of three phases, namely *Masid-Danas* (Conscious Experiencing), *Suri-Nilay* (Critical Reflection), and *Taya-Kilos* (Committed Action).

The six themes that emerged from the respondents' answers ([1] *work*, [2] *integration of the Lasallian Reflection Framework (LRF) and Service-Learning (SL) Program*, [3] *service to people*, [4] *purpose in life*, [5] *being a humane person*, and [6] *inclusivity*) provide valuable insights into the impact of service-learning on their understanding and application of Christian Living topics. Specifically, the theme of *work* was the most frequently mentioned, which demonstrates that students could relate their service-learning experiences to the Christian Living topic related to careers, such as the rights of workers, work as a form of continuing participation in God's creation/plan, facets of work, the importance of working with passion, work as a service to humanity, and work as a reflection of the human person. Therefore, service-learning provides opportunities for learners to explore the different issues and Catholic social teachings around work.

Another prominent result is the integration of the LRF into the service-learning program. The result shows how the respondents used this framework to undertake service-learning. As one of the students mentioned, "[service-learning] allows me to apply what I learn in class because it entitles me to retain how situational observation works on a practical level." This statement suggests the importance of situational observation through conscious experience in fulfilling one's work or project. This is further supported by another answer from one of the respondents, who stated, "[service-learning] teach[es] me more reflective things that I need to keep in mind; it certainly helped with my attitude toward the project." The response implies the need to delve deeper into the process or situation to a level of critical reflection. Reflection can help learners see the interconnections of the knowledge they are learning (Chang, 2019).

For the theme of *service to people*, the respondents highlighted how they integrated their service-learning program experience with their Christian Living topic on serving others—the poor, the minority, and the marginalized. Another topic in Christian Living that the respondents could apply in service-learning is *purpose in life* since they claimed how they discovered their resolve and realized the essence of working with a purpose. The next theme is "*being a humane person*," where the respondents focus on the link between the importance of being kind and humane in service-learning. The respondents also emphasize applying their experience with the service-learning program to inclusivity, gender equality, and women's empowerment. The emerging themes indicate that service-learning can be a valuable strategy for deepening

students' understanding of Christian Living principles, encouraging personal growth, and supporting broader social values.

Responsibility to the Community

García-Rico et al. (2021) stated that collaborative work between students and community partners can alleviate social inequalities and promote mutual learning. This dimension emphasizes how the respondents fulfill their social responsibilities to the community. Four themes have emerged from the responses: *marketing the business or partner community*, *promoting positive change*, *assisting the community with documentation*, and *assisting the community in formulating sustainable projects*.

The first theme, *marketing the business or partner community*, highlights the students' obligation to promote the business of their partner community through social media because of their broad reach. The responses believed that the businesses from the partner communities could reach a large audience and attract potential organizations to collaborate by creating a virtual presence on different social media platforms. By promoting these local businesses, the community members will be given additional opportunities to showcase their skills in agencies and institutions.

As evident in the second theme, *advocating positive change*, the respondents desire to empower the elderly and youth and promote advocacies related to sex education, family planning, and literacy. Students also highlighted the importance of people being critical thinkers and supporting marginalized groups like the farming industry and local brands. On the other hand, the subsequent theme (*assists the community in the documentation*) shows the respondents' capacity and responsibility to support the community through ethical and proper documentation, which includes generating documents that will allow them to communicate with local government units (LGUs) and other organizations. Finally, the theme of *helping the community formulate sustainable projects* highlights their responsibility to develop long-lasting projects for the community. This theme supports the central role of the school in ensuring a society's sustainability. Setó-Pamies and Papaoikonomou (2020) also argue that universities can contribute to the progress of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) from several perspectives. These include providing students with the necessary abilities to act toward the achievement of SDGs (teaching function), offering new formulas for the treatment of SDGs (research function), and communicating efficiently with the community to improve the environment (extension and university social responsibility function). The results demonstrate that the respondents know their social responsibility and are willing to contribute to society. Furthermore, the themes reflect the students' willingness to contribute to positive societal change.

Impact on Students' Personal Life

Seven themes emerged from the data: *service*, *gratefulness*, *teamwork*, *self-awareness*, *faith in God*, *leadership*, and *personal development*. The theme *service* indicates how the service-learning program helped the respondents deepen their understanding of the concept and develop the desire to help others. The respondents also expressed their *gratefulness* for the service-learning program and, consequently, for the life they are having now. One respondent affirmed, "This service-learning made me feel more grateful." Regarding *teamwork*, the respondents believe that the service-learning program has improved their ability to collaborate and understand the value of cooperation. The service-learning program also helped the respondents cultivate their *self-awareness* after claiming that the program enabled them to discover more about themselves, particularly their passion and identity. The theme, *faith in God*, demonstrates how the service-learning program assisted the respondents in deepening their faith and recognizing God in their lives. The theme of *leadership*, meanwhile, reflects how the activity aided them in honing their leadership skills. Finally, the service-learning program contributed to the respondents' *personal development* in values, skills, work ethic, openness to learning, solidarity, compassion, teamwork, empathy, and the three core values of De La Salle University—faith, service, and communion. In general, the results infer that the service-learning program has effectively assisted the respondents in developing a wide range of skills, values, and qualities. The program has helped the respondents become well-rounded people prepared to

effectively contribute to their communities and beyond by encouraging social responsibility, personal growth, and spiritual development.

Conclusion

Service-learning allows students to apply classroom information to real-world settings by giving them avenues to solve social and community challenges (Eyler & Giles, 1999). This paper examines the reflection outputs of Grade 12 students following a rubric developed by Brenton (n.d.) and was analyzed using the RTA of Braun and Clarke (2006) with computer-assisted data analysis software, MAXQDA.

This study highlighted the positive impact of service-learning as a pedagogy in achieving students' learning outcomes and personal and social development. It has been determined that integrating LRF with service-learning is an effective strategy for fostering students' critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and spiritual growth. By participating in service-learning activities, students can develop stronger self-awareness, personal identity, and leadership and teamwork skills that will benefit them in future endeavors. In addition, service-learning can enhance students' understanding of the significance of service to others, faith in God, and communion in mission, which are the university's core values. The positive effects of service-learning on students' lives demonstrate the significance of incorporating this pedagogy into the curriculum and its potential to urge students to be agents of social transformation and contribute to developing a more compassionate and just society.

To have a comprehensive understanding of the efficacy of service-learning, it is suggested to conduct additional studies on the following: (1) identify the domains that have an enduring impact on students' lives, career decisions, and involvement in the community; (2) determine the service-learning integration of a certain academic strand into their curriculum and their contribution on learning and skill enhancement; (3) investigate the efficacy of capacity building or training programs for educators or service-learning implementers; and (4) examine the efficacy of diverse service-learning models for distinct student groups and situations, as well as their influence on students' readiness for certain academic fields and future professional paths. Although there is a lack of literature in the Philippine context that studies reflection as an assessment, the present study argues the need for further exploration of how reflection can help address the diverse needs of the students and partner community in an online setting. A different reflection assessment tool is also recommended to identify if transformative learning transpired among the students and the partner community. As "service combined with learning adds value to each and transforms both" (Honnet & Poulsen, 1989, p. 1), this study affirms that online service-learning resulted in positive learning outcomes.

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