



IJRSLCE

International Journal
of Research on
Service-Learning &
Community Engagement

Volume 11 | Issue 1

Article 10

“Poner en práctica” (Put into Practice)

Impacts of Service-Learning for University Students in the Dominican Republic (Los impactos del aprendizaje de servicio para estudiantes universitarios en la República Dominicana)

Megan Jeanette Myers
Iowa State University

Recommended Citation

Myers, M. J. (2023). “Poner en práctica” (put into practice): Impacts of service-learning for university students in the Dominican Republic (Los impactos del aprendizaje de servicio para estudiantes universitarios en la República Dominicana). *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement*, 11(1). Article 10.
<https://doi.org/10.37333/001c.91727>

Poner en práctica (Put into Practice)

Impacts of Service-Learning for University Students in the Dominican Republic

Megan Jeanette Myers

Abstract

This mixed-methods research charts the student impact, with special attention to the effects on civic attitudes and skills, of a service-learning (SL) project implemented as part of a noncredit-bearing course at a private university in the Dominican Republic. The context of the study is situated within an understanding of SL in Latin America and the Caribbean, and it serves to offer a counterpoint to studies that center on International Service Learning or Global Service Learning in the Dominican Republic given that these approaches traditionally focus on U.S.-based college students engaged in SL abroad. The main goal of the study is to evaluate changes in the civic attitudes and skills of the university students as well as to gain a better understanding of the impact of SL coursework for Dominican students engaged in a local SL project. The quantitative portion of the study included a pre- and postcourse survey (a Spanish translation of the Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire). The qualitative element consisted of semistructured interviews with individual students.

Keywords: *service-learning (SL), civic attitudes, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), International Service Learning (ISL), social responsibility*

Poner en práctica

Los impactos del aprendizaje de servicio para estudiantes universitarios en la República Dominicana

Megan Jeanette Myers

Resumen

Esta investigación de métodos mixtos percibe el impacto estudiantil, concentrado en los efectos que tiene este impacto en las actitudes cívicas y las habilidades, de un proyecto de aprendizaje de servicio (ApS) implementado como parte de un curso en una universidad privada en la República Dominicana. El contexto del estudio se relaciona con un entendimiento del ApS en América Latina y el Caribe y sirve como contrapunto a otros estudios centrados en el ApS internacional o global en la República Dominicana ya que muchas de estas aproximaciones se enfocan en estudiantes universitarios estadounidenses involucrados en el ApS en el exterior. La meta principal del estudio es evaluar los cambios en las actitudes cívicas y las habilidades de los estudiantes universitarios y también llegar a un mejor entendimiento del impacto de los cursos de ApS para estudiantes dominicanos quienes participan en un proyecto local de ApS. La porción cuantitativa del estudio incluyó una encuesta antes y después del curso (una traducción al español de la encuesta “Actitudes cívicas y habilidades” o “CASQ”). El elemento cualitativo consistió en entrevistas semi-estructuradas con estudiantes individuales.

Palabras claves: *el aprendizaje-servicio, las actitudes cívicas, América Latina y el Caribe, el aprendizaje-servicio internacional, la responsabilidad social*

Editors' Note: Translation provided by the author

The main goal of this mixed-methods study is to understand the effects of a service-learning (SL) course on the civic attitudes and skills of university students at a private institution in the Dominican Republic. Much of the published research on SL, International Service Learning (ISL), or Global Service Learning (GSL) in the Caribbean focuses on U.S.-based universities engaged in service programs or community engagement (CE) coursework that falls within a broader framework of study abroad. This article instead focuses on SL in the Latin American and, more specifically, Caribbean context. This is different from ISL and GSL research because it centers on local, Dominican university students engaging in community-based projects as part of their academic coursework. The research engages with previous studies on the perceived impacts from SL participation and the possible changes in the civic attitudes and skills of students following engagement with an SL project. It assesses the potential impact of SL for students at a private Dominican university who participated in an SL project with a local community partner.

While this study focuses on the impacts of SL coursework for university students, a careful recognition of others impacted by the project at large is important given that SL inherently involves multiple parties. This research measures the impact of the SL experience for students, but the range of those possibly impacted by the project expands beyond the university students (“the servers”) and can include

the volunteers or the servers; the organizations that run or work with the programs; the service users or beneficiaries (who are categorized most commonly as either children, youth, adults, seniors, or people who are economically and socially disadvantaged); and the wider communities in which the service takes place. (Davis Smith & Ellis Paine, 2007, p. 226)

Recognizing the wide impact of SL signals the need for further research in the Latin American or Caribbean context that considers all or more of these impacted counterparts. Within the specific context of the Dominican Republic, the K–12 sector boasts an emphasis on civic engagement that dates back to the late 1980s, but support for high-impact pedagogies such as SL is lacking at the level of both private and public colleges and universities (Tapia, 2007). Research signaling the effects of SL coursework for students in higher education is an important motivator to increase the support and implementation of community-based projects clearly linked to academic content in the Dominican Republic.

To assess the impacts of SL on students in a noncredit-bearing course at a private university in the Dominican Republic, the following two research questions guide the present study. **R1:** What is the impact of an SL project in a literature course in the Dominican Republic as reflected in students’ civic attitudes and skills? **R2:** How do SL practices in the classroom help university students studying education connect to course content and build high-impact practices into their own teaching methodologies in the future?

Literature Review

SL and CE scholars routinely trace the roots of the field back to American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey (1938, 1944) and his development in the early 20th century of participatory and democratic education. Viewed by many as the founding father of SL, Dewey argued that learning that takes place in an academic setting should be relevant to students’ lives. Dewey’s view of education contributed greatly to the growing field of SL. Another key intellectual who serves as a precursor to SL is Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire. Freire’s conceptualization of critical pedagogy (1970) encouraged students to be aware of and critically challenge society’s status quo.

This research builds on a broad definition of SL encompassing an educational approach that combines both learning and service in the community. SL projects are mutually beneficial and are consciously designed to benefit both those who perform the service and those who receive it. As a methodology, SL offers both a high level of service to the community and a high level of integration of the CE element(s) within a formal academic context. When considering SL as part of university coursework, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), the differentiation of this pedagogical approach from

volunteerism or community service is key. In SL, the classroom tasks and learning objectives are clearly aligned with community-driven service projects; service and learning serve as dual primary goals.

The definitions of SL most reproduced in academic writing are in large part reflective of the field as it emerged in the United States in the 1980s and 1990s. Compared to U.S.-based definitions of SL, the understanding of SL in the Latin American context is more variable and constitutes a “complex expression” (Tapia, 2007, p. 134). Tapia (2010) importantly distinguishes between the different terms used in Latin America to refer to what U.S. institutions understand as SL while also confirming that more recently Ibero-America has started to craft its own pedagogical movement as related to SL. Two of the more commonly used terms to refer to SL in Latin America are *trabajo comunal universitario* (communal university work) and *prácticas solidarias* (solidarity practices; Tapia, 2007).

In the U.S.-based university setting, SL coursework, both domestic and international, is well established and has found ample representation in peer-reviewed journals. An issue of the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* focuses on GSL, and the *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement* employs a global focus. At the same time, given the adolescent phase of the field in the region (especially within the context of higher education), there is not much SL research focused on LAC. There is even less research that evaluates the impact of SL for students (Díaz et al., 2017; Méndez, 2021). Journals such as *Revista Iberoamericana de Aprendizaje-Servicio* (RIDAS, Ibero-American Journal of Service Learning), founded in 2015, offer increased engagement with Spanish-speaking countries and SL and community-based learning research. La Red Iberoamericana de Aprendizaje-Servicio (Ibero-American Service-Learning Network)¹—led in tandem by CLAYSS (Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario, Latin American Center for Service-Learning, Argentina) and the NYLC (National Youth Leadership Council, USA)—has furthered scholarship on SL in LAC. The network has supported and contributed to publications such as the *Jornada de investigadores sobre aprendizaje-servicio* and a special issue of *Tzhoecon* in 2010 dedicated to SL.

Despite the gap in existing research regarding SL in LAC, there are helpful theoretical frameworks that explore SL in international spaces. Bawa and Munck (2012), for example, stress the essential role of SL and CE within the globalization agenda of today’s socially minded higher education institutions. Moreover, the authors note that CE as a field is inherently internationalized, and research on SL and CE cannot disregard the fact that CE is connected to the challenges and benefits of globalization and the interconnectedness of culture, society, economy, and politics. A guiding principle for Bawa and Munck (2012) is that future research must resist normalizing or privileging one (national) model of CE or SL over another. Their proposal of a “view from the South” as opposed to the North—emphasizing and clearly engaging with interdisciplinary understandings of the Global South—relates directly to the present research focused on SL in the Dominican Republic. The present study supports and furthers the claim that “whether it be the US ‘service’ model or some other one, we need to accept that ‘one size fits all’ is not a viable philosophy for CE” (Bawa & Munck, 2012, p. xvii).

Earlier studies from those outside of the SL and CE fields—but clearly connected to them—remind researchers that community activism and civic engagement are built from the bottom up. The center of knowledge is not the university or the students, but instead the communities themselves (Appadurai, 1996). Higher education, often driven by a shifting mission and interest in high-impact practices like SL and CE, can serve as a motor for community activism and social transformation in global communities (Gourley, 2012; Schuetze, 2012; Vortuba, 2005). Theoretical frameworks that posit non-U.S. or non-European models of SL and CE help contextualize and interpret the effects of SL for students in the Dominican Republic, as well as for other LAC countries that do not routinely appear in SL-focused research. Further, it is important to conceptualize SL and CE as international practices that take different forms in different national or regional contexts. This definition makes a distinction between research on ISL or GSL and research on SL in international spaces. Further, it emphasizes the importance of understanding how students respond to SL in coursework on an international scale.

¹ The organization’s webpage is <https://www.clayss.org/redes/red-iberoamericana-aprendizaje-servicio/>.

In the Dominican Republic, the push from the Ministry of Education toward civic engagement has a strong tradition in the K–12 sector (Tapia, 2007). The last two decades have shown considerable growth in the field of SL in the Dominican context, particularly within private universities; Iberoamericana University in Santo Domingo is home to an SL program, bolstered by a community service office (“Aprendizaje-Servicio,” 2017). However, such programming in the country often mirrors volunteerism and lacks clear links to academic content and learning objectives. Interviews with educational officers in the Dominican Republic frame the state mandatory requirement of 60 hours of service in high school, established in 1988, as a bureaucratic procedure and point to notable discrepancies in the quality of the service projects (Tapia, 2007). Since the early 2000s, promotion of SL projects, as opposed to required community service, by the Dominican Republic’s secretary of education marks a shift in SL in the country. Collaborations with NGOs and international agencies such as Sirve Quisqueya have bolstered this transition. The SL model, however, is not widespread at the university level, and on a national scale, there is no clear acceptance or recognition of either the approach or the related terminology (Tapia, 2007). The context of SL in the Dominican Republic is in many ways representative of the field in LAC at large in that the gains in momentum regarding a more widespread use or recognition of SL, especially at the university level, are just beginning to take root (McBride et al., 2008, 2011; Tapia, 2007, 2010). As Tapia confirms, “Since the start of the twentieth century a pedagogical movement has started to form that is still in the development phase” (2010, p. 30, translation my own). McBride et al. (2011) also point to the growth of civic service programs in LAC but note that when compared to youth service worldwide, “youth service in LAC is in its adolescence” (p. 38).

The present study considers the impact of SL coursework for students at a private university in the Dominican Republic. This clarification is important because, as noted, there has been more growth in SL in the country within private universities when compared with public universities (“Aprendizaje-Servicio,” 2017). Historically, higher education in the Dominican Republic began with the first university in the Americas, the public Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo (Autonomous University of Santo Domingo), established in 1538. It was not until the 20th century, in 1962, when the country opened its first private institution, Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM). In 2018, the Dominican Republic counted 45 higher education institutions, including one community college and one technical college (*¿Quiénes somos?*, n.d.). The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology governs the quality of higher education in the country, but each individual institution handles its own vision or mission statement and establishes its overall educational and philosophical values (*¿Quiénes somos?*, n.d.). To this end, private institutions have trended toward more engaged, civic missions. PUCMM, for example, hosts a page about “Actividades de extensión” (Extension Activities) on its webpage and self-describes as an institution dedicated to the community, the development of community programming, and service to the community (*Reseña histórica*, n.d.).

In addition to understanding SL within the LAC context and within a Dominican-specific context, understanding specific fields within SL research is also important. In research related to SL, terminology is key. In particular, it is vital to distinguish between ISL and GSL and the study of SL in an international context. Scholars distinguish GSL from domestic SL given the focus on global contexts and the importance of reciprocal relationships between university and community (Hartman & Kiely, 2014; Kiely, 2004).² Similarly, ISL aims to facilitate student growth in the areas of cross-cultural learning and civic engagement and, broadly speaking, can encompass any “structured” academic experience in another country (Bringle & Hatcher, 2010; Niehaus & Crain, 2013).

Both ISL and GSL primarily denote a U.S.-based university context, given that these fields of study concern SL in U.S. institutions that take place in an international, non-U.S. context. Although ISL can signal a combination between academic instruction and community-based service in an international context (Crabtree, 2008), the field principally concerns universities and colleges engaging in SL “abroad,” offering an internationalized experience for U.S.-based students. The situating of ISL and GSL in a U.S.

² There is a special issue on GSL in the Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning (Fall 2014). See further work and research on GSL at globalsl.org.

context is essential to understanding that SL research in LAC, for example, is not an example of ISL or GSL but instead adds to the understanding of SL on an international level.

This study explores the outcomes of SL for university students in the Dominican Republic. In the U.S. context—and in the fields of ISL and GSL—there are ample studies focused on the positive impacts of SL for university students (Ehrlich, 2000; Kiely, 2004; Tonkin, 2004), but there is much less from LAC. Although there is room for growth in this area, recent studies in the LAC context focused on the impact of SL on students point to various competencies gained and a positive effect on civic attitudes and skills (Bringle & Hatcher, 2010; Crabtree, 2008; Díaz et al., 2019; Furco, 2005; Tapia, 2010). Nevertheless, it is still helpful to utilize the ISL and GSL research as a backdrop for the studies related to the positive impacts of SL in LAC. A recurring student outcome highlighted in the extant ISL and GSL research, for example, is that service in the community can lead to social responsibility and a new understanding of citizenry (Boyer & Hechinger, 1981; Crabtree, 2008; Kraft & Dwyer, 2000). It is important to differentiate between the outcomes of SL for U.S.-based university students working with international host communities and the outcomes for university students in their own non-U.S. local communities.

The mention in this literature review of ISL and GSL research is also helpful when considering some of the possible negative consequences of the at-times complex dynamics of cross-cultural SL projects. In such projects, there are cross-cultural misunderstandings and negotiations that students, practitioners, and community partners must work through and address. Previous studies have framed SL “abroad” as tourism (Prins & Webster, 2010; Salazar, 2004), and others have pointed to the potentially problematic power balance between students and the international host communities with which they engage (Camacho, 2004; Cermak et al., 2011; Crabtree, 2007). Crabtree (2013) identifies numerous consequential contextual variables in this cross-cultural SL context:

Distal and proximal contextual variables affect international service-learning projects in massive and unseen ways. These variables include the socioeconomic and cultural environment of the host country, national and local policies, historical sociopolitical relations between the home and host countries, participants’ prior experiences with collaboration and cross-cultural contact and more. (p. 53)

Many of these contextual variables are naturally avoided or sidestepped when the cross-cultural context is removed and the partnership dynamics between institution and community partner are local.

Methodology

Twenty-nine students participated in a noncredit-bearing literature course at a private institution in the Dominican Republic. The noncredit-bearing course model is common in LAC and most often referred to in academic circles as *diplomado*. Diplomados are certification courses that follow an academic syllabus with set course objectives as well as solidified course hours and a maximum enrollment number, but they allow for some flexibility in terms of content. In this way, diplomados can offer ideal opportunities for SL and other forms of high-impact learning practices. The design of the course consisted of a primary focus on literary analysis and a secondary focus on both SL and active learning as teaching methodologies—both of which were modeled in the course itself. The enrolled students, all students in the education program, had diverse experiences with these pedagogical approaches prior to the course.

Of the students enrolled in the certification course in the Dominican Republic, 26 identified as female and three as male. This gender breakdown reflects the demographics of teachers in the country today; the Ministry of Education reports that in 2020, 76.67% of teachers in the Dominican Republic identified as female (*Situación del personal*, n.d.). A majority of the students were already employed as teachers (in the K–12 sector) at the time of the survey. The survey did not ask about the specific employment details of each student; however, discussions in the classroom revealed that the students taught a diverse range of grade levels and subjects. The course was offered at nighttime and after working or typical school hours, thus allowing for students to work and enroll concurrently in the course.

It is important to note upfront that this research classifies as a sample study, given that the 29 enrolled students who completed the survey represent only a subset of the overall university population. The results from the quantitative measures discussed in the following paragraphs may not be representative of Dominican student demographics on a broad scale. A potential invariance reflects the reality that the students were all enrolled at a private institution in one of its five satellite campuses. The institution's main campus is located in the Dominican Republic's second-largest city, Santiago de los Caballeros. Further, these students classify as self-selecting as they elected to enroll in the diplomado or certification course, a noncredit-bearing academic offering.

Although many of the students were aware of the term *aprendizaje servicio (ApS)* or other interchangeable terms that are synonymous with SL, none of the students had previously engaged in an SL project as part of an academic course at the university level. The course addressed SL both as a pedagogical methodology in which students learned about the educational approach, its history, and its growth in LAC, and as an integral part of the course content in which students actively participated in an SL project. The class discussions surrounding SL methods and terminologies aimed to help the students to envision implementing SL in their own classrooms in the future.

The SL project that composed an important element of the literature course consisted of the students facilitating half-day *talleres literarios* or literary workshops at a local educational nonprofit. The workshops took place on a weekend. Students 15–18 years of age previously involved in programming at the respective nonprofit were invited to attend. The workshop facilitated by the university students was the first of its kind offered at the collaborating nonprofit.

Students, working in teams of four to six, designed and led interactive sessions focused on different elements of literature and literature analysis. The five student groups each focused on unique themes or aspects, including a general introduction to literature and the different types of literature to an introduction to literary analysis. Two groups led readings and group analyses of short stories. All the groups were encouraged to plan their sessions using active learning strategies to engage students in the learning process and to show students that learning about and reading literature can be captivating and immersive.

Prior to planning the sessions, students learned about the nonprofit and the programming it offered to community members. The class brainstormed together the ways by which the workshop could fill existing gaps in programming and respond to programming needs or gaps of the nonprofit. They elected to target working with groups of recent high school graduates who had less programming offered to them within the structure of the nonprofit and who, likely, had little exposure to literary analysis and active learning strategies in high school.

The data for this mixed-methods study were collected from a pre- and postclass survey and a semistructured interview. The survey instrument was a Spanish translation of the Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ). Moely et al. (2002) developed the CASQ with the aim to measure students' attitudes, skills, and behavioral intentions potentially affected by SL participation. Originally an 84-item questionnaire to measure skills related to civic endeavors, values related to civic engagement, and the propensity to become involved in community issues, analyses of the groupings and SL-related factors led to a final version with just 45 items "on which students self-evaluate their skills and personal attitudes regarding civic and social issues" (Moely et al., 2002, p. 17). Given the survey's original design in English, the present study utilized a version of the CASQ translated into Spanish (Díaz et al., 2019). This translated version of the survey underwent a factor analysis and used the same six factors and 45 items as the original. The six factors include civic action, interpersonal and problem-solving skills, political awareness, leadership skills, social justice attitudes, and diversity attitudes.

In addition to the CASQ survey, which all 29 enrolled students who signed the informed consent form voluntarily completed, five semistructured individual interviews were conducted at the end of the term. Students volunteered to be interviewed at the end of the course; due to COVID-19 restrictions, the interviews were virtual. Five of the 29 enrolled students (i.e., 17% of the enrolled students) volunteered to be interviewed, and all of the interviewed students actively participated in the SL project. A

mixed-methods approach allowed for further conversation and commentary surrounding the state of SL in the Dominican Republic and the benefits and impacts of the SL experience.

The combined qualitative and quantitative elements of this study reflect an effort to understand the full range of the impact of SL coursework for students. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods in a study related to SL can improve the study in terms of rigor, depth, and breadth (Davis Smith & Ellis Paine, 2007; Dingle, 2001). Pertinent to the success of the course’s learning objectives and the present research study was the clear definition of SL for the students (as opposed to simply using SL as a pedagogical methodology in the classroom). This transparent approach reflects the reality that any impact assessment related to civic service or SL should take into account the different definitions and terminologies that are used (Davis Smith & Ellis Paine, 2007). While the course’s main learning objective centered on literature and literary analysis, other objectives included introducing the concept of SL as well as discussing the context and the background of SL in LAC. Further, students engaged in interactive discussions surrounding their experiences with SL. These conversations included students sharing about previous SL or volunteer experiences in K–12 as well as various opportunities for individual and group reflection throughout the course as related to the talleres literarios. As Eyler et al. (1996) confirmed when delineating the 4 C’s of reflection, “reflection is the glue that holds service and learning together to provide optimal educative experiences.”

In addition to the study limitations previously discussed, including the size of the study, the self-selecting enrollment of the students in the course, and the related potential invariance of the quantitative survey results, the study also did not have a control group. Given the parameters of the study and the fact that the same course—without the SL element—could not be concurrently offered, the present research classifies as a single-group study. Despite the lack of a concurrent comparison group, the results compare the pre- and posttests of the enrolled students and point to the need for more in-depth future research on SL in the Dominican Republic.

Finally, while the CASQ survey was anonymous and in no way linked to a student’s performance or final grade in the course, the positionality of the researcher as the sole instructor of the course should be noted. More specifically, while conducting this research, I was connected to the institution in the Dominican Republic as a visiting faculty member and Fulbright Fellow. Fulbright teaching and research scholars partner with a non-U.S. institution to contribute to the academic goals of the respective institution and to collaborate with international colleagues. In my role as a visiting instructor and the sole instructor of record—and also to adhere to IRB recommended protocols—the research study was separated from the course and from student evaluation. Students completed the CASQ pre- and postcourse surveys outside of the class and signed a release form indicating they understood that they participated willingly in the study and that their participation would not positively or negatively affect their grades in the course.

Results

Quantitative Results

An analysis of the CASQ ratings from the pretest and the posttest primarily answers the first research question (R1) related to the impact of the SL project as reflected in students’ civic attitudes and skills. The two data sets from the pre- and posttest were analyzed using paired sample *t*-tests to compare the skills and attitudes of the students at the beginning of the course with the same measured skills and attitudes at the end of the course.

As shown in Table 1, there was a statistically significant increase in two of the six CASQ factors: interpersonal and problem-solving skills ($t = -2.97$, $df = 11$, $p = .0006$) and political awareness ($t = -2.62$, $df = 5$, $p = .024$). The other four factors—civic action ($t = .34$, $df = 7$, $p = .37$), leadership skills ($t = -.397$, $df = 4$, $p = .356$), social justice ($t = -.074$, $df = 7$, $p = .471$), and diversity ($t = -.031$, $df = 5$, $p = .488$)—showed no statistically significant change from the pretest to the posttest. Changes were interpreted as statistically significant when $p < .05$.

Table 1.

Means and Standard Deviations of Pre- and Posttest CASQ Scores (Average Scores of the Questions for Each of the Six Factors).

Scale	Pretest		Posttest	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Civic Action	4.52	.57	4.50	.61
Interpersonal and Problem-Solving Skills	4.44	.67	4.61	.55
Political Awareness	3.98	.85	4.13	.75
Leadership Skills	3.57	1.00	3.65	.95
Social Justice Attitudes	3.33	1.07	3.33	1.33
Diversity Attitudes	3.06	.98	3.10	1.15

Qualitative Results

Moely et al. (2002) describe the interpersonal and problem-solving CASQ factor as related to survey participants' ability to "listen, work cooperatively, communicate, make friends, take the role of the other, think logically and analytically, and solve problems" (p. 18). In the interviews, the students emphasized how the SL project positively impacted communication dynamics between their classmates. One student discussed how the positive relationship with their classmates that was a result of SL coursework contributed to a shared connection to the course material:

Me ayudó bastante tener esa conexión con mis compañeros porque a través de esto, al construir conexiones positivas con ellos, conectamos mucho las experiencias que tenemos en la materia.³ (It really helped me to have this connection with my classmates because through this connection, I created positive bonds with them, and we were able to share our connections to the material.)

Another student similarly expressed how the experiences outside of the classroom, as related to the SL project, connected her to her fellow classmates. This student noted that the SL coursework helped her to

conectar con mis compañeros porque al servir a la comunidad de una forma activa me permite conectar o estar en contacto con las necesidades de los demás (connect to my classmates because through serving the community in an active way, I was able to connect or be in contact with the needs of others).

Through these positive classmate dynamics, students recognized the importance of listening to others and understanding their perspectives. One student referenced working in groups as part of the SL project and confirmed that through such group work,

uno se da cuenta que en los grupos verdaderamente te escuchan y buscan tu opinión. Están atentos a las palabras a lo que tú dices, a tus comentarios (one realizes that in groups, classmates really listen to you and look to you for your opinion. They are attuned to your words and what you say, to your comments).

³ In an effort to maintain the international and bilingual scope of this research and produce quotes in the original language (Spanish), I provide both the original and the translated quotations from the interviews. Translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

Although there is a separate CASQ factor related to leadership skills, three of the five students interviewed explicitly connected interpersonal skills to leadership skills. Thus, even though the CASQ ratings did not indicate a statistically significant change in attitudes related to leadership skills, this was a common theme in the interviews, and it is worthwhile to recognize other salient themes that indicate skills gained from the SL course. One student connected numerous skills gained through SL participation and emphasized the importance of collaboration:

Desarrollamos muchas habilidades: el pensamiento crítico, el liderazgo, la toma de decisiones, y también de colaboración porque todos colaboramos. Es decir que esta clase del proyecto ApS me ayudó bastante. (We developed many skills—critical thinking, leadership, decision making, and collaboration—because we all worked together. Or rather, this SL course really helped me.)

Another student, quoted previously sharing about the importance of others listening to you and valuing your opinion, clarified that it was through this environment of mutual respect and camaraderie that “uno se va dando cuenta que en realidad uno tiene esta fortaleza para ejercer un liderazgo” (you realize that in reality you have this strength to be a leader). Yet another student commented that they understood their role as a leader as their ability to direct groups and work well in groups. “Puedo ser líder porque [esta experiencia] me permite dirigir grupos y orientarles y capacitarles en distintas áreas” (I can be a leader because [this experience] allows me to direct groups and orient and prepare them in certain areas). This same student continued by sharing that this skill of working well in groups and organizing groups “fomenta un don de liderazgo en quien enseña” (creates a gift of leadership in the person who is teaching). The evidence that skills gained from SL participation potentially can impact these students’ future careers as educators position SL as a transformational educational practice.

The interview data also serve to highlight gains in civic skills and attitudes other than interpersonal and problem-solving skills and political awareness. An additional common theme in the student interviews related to how the SL project accentuated the course content. These narrative data respond to the second research question (R2) and provide evidence that through the SL experience and leading a literary workshop with a local nonprofit, the university students were better able to connect with course content. They also shared that they felt poised to incorporate SL into their own teaching methods in the future. One student noted that facilitating the literary workshops helped reinforce what was taught in the classroom: “Los talleres literarios me ayudaron a reforzar los conocimientos que ya tenía, adquirir también nuevos saberes que fueron múltiples.” (The literary workshops helped me reinforce the knowledge that I already had, and to learn multiple new things.) Another student approached SL as a way to “put into practice” the learning objectives:

Una de las partes que más me gustó fue el poder trabajar con los jóvenes desde un punto de vista educativo y también ese aprendizaje de ponerlo en práctica, y como los jóvenes pudieron inmediatamente conectar con este tipo de aprendizaje ... Al igual que también me gustó mucho poder servir, y poder estar a la disposición de mis compañeros y poder aprender haciendo las cosas y brindar un servicio al que me necesite la comunidad. (One of the parts I liked most was the ability to work with youth from an educational point of view and also to put learning into practice, and how these youth immediately connected with this type of learning. ... At the same time I really liked being able to serve and to be at the disposition of my classmates and to be able to learn by doing things and providing a service that the community needed from me.)

The students interviewed went further than just outlining the connections between the SL project and the course content—in this way demonstrating their understanding of the integration of academic goals and service, an essential component of SL—but they also commented specifically on the course content that focused on literary analysis. One student noted that the SL project allowed them to take what they learned inside the classroom to a group that previously knew little to nothing about the topic: “Nosotros llevamos la práctica a unos jóvenes que probablemente no sabían nada de literatura ... pudimos conectar [el curso] con este contenido y lo pudimos observar.” (We brought what we learned to youth who probably didn’t know anything about literature ... we were able to connect the class with the content and we were able to

observe it.) Yet another student shared: “Pusimos en práctica parte de lo que hemos aprendido de la literatura.” (We put into practice part of what we learned about literature.)

Discussion

The primary motivation for this study was to understand changes in the civic attitudes and skills of university students engaged in SL coursework. More succinctly, the R1 sought to determine: What is the impact of an SL project in a university course in the Dominican Republic as reflected in students’ civic attitudes and skills? The R2 delves further into the SL model and reflects on the academic impact SL projects have on the learning objectives of a given course. It asks: How do SL practices in the classroom help university students studying primary and secondary education to connect to course content and build high-impact practices into their own teaching methodologies? Further, an overarching goal of this research was to provide a better understanding of SL in LAC in an effort to offer a counterpoint to studies that center on ISL or GSL in the same regions, often focusing on U.S.-based college students engaged in SL abroad. This study instead involved students at a private university in the Dominican Republic engaging in SL projects with a local Dominican nonprofit.

The quantitative analysis from the CASQ pretest and posttest via the sample *t*-tests revealed a statistically significant increase in two of the six CASQ factors from the beginning of the course to the end of the course. The analysis of the CASQ ratings indicated that there was a statistically significant increase in interpersonal and problem-solving skills and in political awareness. Although the quantitative analysis indicated a statistically significant change in only two of the six CASQ factors, it is important to note that a qualitative analysis of the student interviews suggests that, overall, the students found the SL project worthwhile and impactful. The interviews with students retrospective to the course suggested that the SL participation affected various civic attitudes and skills (in addition to interpersonal and problem-solving skills and political awareness).

The narrative comments from the students in the qualitative analysis from the semistructured interviews with five of the 29 students in the course supported the impact on the skills and attitudes of the students in these two areas. A consistent theme in the narrative interviews reflected on the interpersonal classroom dynamics and the positive connection between classmates that was motivated by group work as part of the SL project. In the interviews, students also commented on their political attitudes retrospective to the SL course. They shared how they understood their communities and were aware of the national politics surrounding education, including how educational policy and decision making in-country affect the encouragement, or lack thereof, of SL programming. Given that the Dominican Republic boasts a state mandatory requirement of 60 hours of service in high school, it is not surprising that students in the university course as part of this study were conscious of the connections between service in the community and education. Still, students shared both in the course and in the interviews that they hoped for the country to engage more seriously with and better support high-impact practices like SL at the university level.

The interview data support student gains in attitudes related to political awareness. Moely et al. (2002) note that this factor concerns an awareness of “local and national current events and political issues” (p. 18). In the case of the students in the SL course, the political awareness detailed in the interviews reflects more clearly what Schamber and Mahoney signal as “a distinctive type of political knowledge created through the community-learning based curriculum,” or rather an awareness that is equivalent to an “insider view” of issues facing the community (2008, p. 86). All five students interviewed discussed the need for the Dominican Republic, on a national level, to prioritize SL and high-impact learning. They spoke with knowledge about the Dominican curriculum pushed at a national level by the Ministry of Education. One student shared:

Desde hace tiempo el currículum de educación dominicano ya había venido implementando esta modalidad, lo que es el aprendizaje servicio donde los jóvenes tienen ese aprendizaje activo y van a las comunidades, investigan el problema, tratan de darle una solución. Y el currículum está basado en los problemas reales en la comunidad donde los mismos jóvenes y estudiantes son

protagonistas de la resolución de estos problemas, de estos conflictos que se presentan. Seguiremos intentando. (For a while, the Dominican education curriculum has been implementing this modality, that is service-learning in which youth have this active learning and go into communities, investigate the problem, and attempt to solve it. And the curriculum is based on real problems in the communities in which the same youth and students are protagonists of the resolutions of these problems, of these conflicts that arise. We will keep trying.)

The students also alluded to the multiple parties that benefit from SL courses. One student commented: “Verdad que sí, los [cursos ApS] aumentan el desarrollo intelectual no solamente de los estudiantes sino también de los docentes.” (It is true, SL courses increase intellectual development not only of students but also of the teachers.) The interviewed students closely echoed one another in their call for the country and the Ministry of Education to expand programming and training for SL initiatives. Three students shared nearly the same sentiment: “Creo que es importante que la República Dominicana tome esta iniciativa de proyecto para ayudarnos a formarnos más” (I think it is important that the Dominican Republic takes this initiative to help us be more prepared); “Es muy importante que todas las universidades de la RD hagan proyectos como este y que tomen en cuenta la ONG o la organización” (it is very important that all the Dominican universities do projects like this one and take into account the nonprofit or the organization); and “Es sumamente importante que las universidades tengan proyectos sociales porque esto les permitiría conectar con el entorno y con las necesidades de estos” (it is extremely important that the universities have social projects because this allows them to connect with their surroundings and with their needs). It is worthwhile to keep in mind, as shared previously, that the Dominican Republic does indeed have a mandatory service requirement for secondary students, but it does not extend to the university level. Given that SL in LAC is still a developing field, it is not surprising that the academic rigor of the SL framework is less or often left undefined.

One interesting finding in terms of the quantitative analysis was that there was not a statistically significant difference in the CASQ scale that assessed civic action. In fact, there was a statistically insignificant decrease in the mean between the pretest and posttest student averages. Given that the semistructured interviews prompted students to discuss the six factors of the CASQ, it is important to note that the student responses confirmed that they viewed themselves as active and engaged members of their community both prior to and after the SL course. Students were committed to serving their communities and engaging with volunteer work at a nearly equal rate both before and after the class which mirrors findings from Díaz et al. (2019) that suggested that most students—also in a Latin American context—were previously familiar with and committed to volunteer work. In the Dominican Republic, this familiarity reflects the mandatory service hours at the high school level. It is plausible that many Dominican university students first develop positive relationships with civic action prior to attending university.

While the political awareness and interpersonal and problem-solving skills factors showed positive impacts in both the quantitative and qualitative analyses, the more open-ended qualitative data from the semistructured interviews allowed for other themes to emerge that denoted additional impacts of SL coursework for the students. One of these recurring themes centered on how the SL project complemented and accentuated the course content. Students reported a clear connection between the course content and the SL project and noted how facilitating a workshop for Dominican high school students through a local nonprofit helped them understand their own approach to literature and literary analysis in the classroom. Previous studies have shown that SL and literary analysis—especially when considering multicultural literature—can complement one another; literature plays an important role in helping to teach students of all levels about difference (Battistoni, 1995; Grobman, 2004).

Two students focused their comments related to course content on the role of literature in the classroom, hinting at why literature and literary analysis pair well with many of the pillars of SL work in the community. These two students echoed one another’s sentiments when they noted:

La enseñanza de la literatura debe ser inclusiva. Usted no puede dejar a nadie fuera sino que la literatura es una oportunidad para todos. Ya a la vez, hay que ser justo y tomar en cuenta la

diversidad. (The teaching of literature should be inclusive. You can't leave anyone out because literature is an opportunity for everyone. At the same time, you should be fair and consider diversity.)

La literatura es tan abarcadora, es tan heterogénea porque que no hay barreras, no hay fronteras ... Es decir, [la literatura] traspasa los límites, traspasa las barreras y la literatura expresa. Podemos aprender que la literatura es la voz de los pueblos ... expresa esas inquietudes, expresa esa voz que quizás no puede ser escuchada. (Literature is so inclusive, it is so heterogenous because there are no barriers, there are no borders. Or rather, [literature] moves beyond limits, moves beyond barriers and literature expresses itself. We can learn that literature is the voice of the community ... it expresses those uncertainties, it expresses that voice that maybe can't be heard.)

Students also spoke about how working with the educational nonprofit allowed them to “poner en práctica”—or “put into practice”—what they were learning in the classroom. They found the experience of teaching literary analysis and reading and analyzing literature with local high school students as rewarding and fun and as an engaging way to reinforce the concepts they had learned earlier in the course. This emphasis on the experiential learning element of SL alludes to SL being commonly discussed in the Spanish-speaking context as learning-by-doing or “aprender haciendo” (Halsted, 1998; Tapia, 2010). The act of “aprender haciendo” posits service as a means to access learning and offers an accessible, familiar framework for an increasingly international understanding of SL.

These various references to SL, utilizing terminology such as “aprender haciendo,” point to the complexities of SL on a global scale. Tapia (2007) alludes to the complex and variable context surrounding SL in LAC, and the various ways students discussed their own experiences as part of this research project confirm these regional or national differences. The findings support the need to conceptualize SL and CE as international practices that can be understood and implemented in different ways, especially in countries like the Dominican Republic where students are exposed to civic engagement as part of their K–12 academic trajectory. As Bawa and Munck (2012) recommend, a one-size-fits-all philosophy cannot be applied to CE and SL models on a global scale. Although the field is inherently internationalized, one national model for CE or SL will likely differ from another, and this uniqueness and diverse set of approaches and experiences highlight the value of research on student responses to SL coursework in countries like the Dominican Republic.

Implications and Recommendations for the Future

This study supports previous findings regarding positive changes in the civic attitudes and skills of university students engaged in SL coursework. This research signals the need for longitudinal studies that consider the potential impacts of SL coursework over an extended period, as opposed to a short-duration SL course. Similar studies on the impact of SL coursework that analyze quantitative and/or qualitative data from multiple courses or offer both an experimental and control group would also be important additions to existing research.

Given this research focuses on the impact of SL coursework for university students, it signals the need for further studies in the LAC context that consider other groups impacted by the SL experience. In particular, it is important to consider both the community and the university perspectives. Further, this work encourages future research focused on SL in LAC in which local students engage in SL coursework in their own communities, as opposed to studies categorized more appropriately as ISL or GSL in which the university students engaged in SL projects are performing the work or service in an international context.

Understanding the profile of the participants involved in a given study can lead to further findings and discussions. In the case of the present research, the students enrolled in the course are classified as pre-service teachers. Given the capacity these students have to implement SL projects in their own classrooms in the future, the potential impact of SL coursework is multifold. Beyond studying the

potential impact of SL for students in terms of changes to their civic attitudes and skills, also studying the potential impact in the future classrooms of the preservice teachers could lead to important findings. This study builds on the previous findings of Cerna and Taramona (2006) who found a positive impact of SL coursework for education students in a large-scale study in Peru focused on developing leadership traits.

Conclusion

Regardless of the limitations of the present study and suggestions for future studies, this mixed-methods research indicates that SL coursework has a positive impact for university students in the Dominican Republic. This sample study, with a manageable data set and limited by the time constraints of a university semester, offers a starting point to encourage future research on SL in the Dominican national context.

The results confirm that more higher education institutions in the Dominican Republic—and LAC at large—should consider implementing SL coursework. Results from the quantitative data show that SL models can increase political awareness and interpersonal and problem-solving skills, and the qualitative data signal a positive experience with SL coursework, especially as related to better connections with classmates and to the course content.

References

- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions in globalization*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Aprendizaje-servicio: un desafío para la educación. (2017). *Listín Diario*.
<https://listindiario.com/la-vida/2017/03/14/457671/print>
- Battistoni, R. (1995). Service learning, diversity, and the liberal arts curriculum. *Liberal Education*, 81(1), 30–35. <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/slceslgen/8>
- Bawa, A. C., & Munck, R. (2012). Foreword: Globalizing civic engagement. In L. McIlrath, A. Lyons, & R. Munck (Eds.), *Higher education and civic engagement: Comparative perspectives* (pp. xi–xix). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Boyer, E. L., & Hechinger, F. M. (1981). *Higher learning in the nation's service*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher, J. A. (2010). International service learning. In R. G. Bringle, J. A. Hatcher, & S. J. Jones (Eds.), *International service learning: Conceptual frameworks and research* (pp. 3–28). Stylus.
- Camacho, M. (2004). Power and privilege: Community service learning in Tijuana. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 10(3), 31–42. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3239521.0010.303>
- Cermak, J., Christiansen, J. A., Finnegan, A., Gleeson, A., & White, S. (2011). Displacing activist? The impact of international service trips on understandings of social change. *Education, Citizenship and Social Change*, 6(5), 5–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1746197910397915>
- Cerna, L. P., & Taramona, L. A. (2006). Impacto del programa de aprendizaje-servicio “universitarios en acción” en la formación de liderazgo en los estudiantes de la carrera profesional de educación de la Universidad Nacional “Santiago Antúnez de Mayolo.” *Jornada de Investigadores sobre Aprendizaje-Servicio*, 11, 99–103.
https://www.clayss.org.ar/06_investigacion/jornadas/Libro_II-Jornada-Investigadores-Aprendizaje-Servicio/CIII-05_Cerna-Taramona.pdf

- Crabtree, R. (2007). Asking hard questions about the impact of international service learning. *Conversations: On Jesuit Higher Education*, 31, 39–42. <https://epublications.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1233&context=conversations>
- Crabtree, R. (2008). Theoretical Foundations for international service learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 15(1), 18–36. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ831380>
- Crabtree, R. (2013). The intended and unintended consequences of international service-learning. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 17(2), 43–65.
- Davis Smith, J., & Ellis Paine, A. (2007). Civic service across nations and cultures: The range of effects and ways to study them. In A. Moore McBride & M. Sherraden (Eds.), *Civic service worldwide: Impacts and inquiry* (pp. 223–237). Routledge.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. Collier Books.
- Dewey, J. (1944). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. Free Press.
- Díaz, K., Cárdenas, N., & Garlock, L. (2017). Impact of mandatory service-learning course on civic attitudes and skills: Case study in Ecuador. *International Journal of Educational Excellence*, 3(1), 14–38. <https://doi.org/10.18562/IJEE.021>
- Díaz, K., Ramia, N., Bramwell, D., & Costales, F. (2019). Civic attitudes and skills development through service-learning in Ecuador. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 23(3), 124–144. <https://openjournals.libs.uga.edu/jheoe/article/view/1524>
- Dingle, A. (Ed.). (2001). *Measuring volunteering: A practical toolkit*. Independent Sector and United Nations Volunteers.
- Ehrlich, T. (2000). *Civic responsibility and higher education*. Oryx.
- Eyler, J., Giles, D., & Schmiede, A. (1996). *A practitioner's guide to reflection*. Vanderbilt University Press.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Herder & Herder.
- Furco, A. (2005). *Impacto de los proyectos de aprendizaje servicio*. *Actas del Seminario Internacional Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario*. CLAYSS.
- Gourley, B. M. (2012). Higher education as a force for societal change in the twenty-first century. In L. McIlrath, A. Lyons, & R. Munck (Eds.), *Higher education and civic engagement: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 31–40). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Grobman, L. (2004). Thinking differently about *difference*: Multicultural literature and service-learning. *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, 31(4), 347–357. <https://library.ncte.org/journals/tetyc/issues/v31-4/3019>
- Halsted, A. (1998). Educación redefinida: la promesa del aprendizaje servicio. In *AAVV, El servicio a la comunidad como aprendizaje escolar* (pp. 23–24). Ministerio de Educación de la Nación.
- Hartman, E., & Kiely, R. (2014). Pushing boundaries: Introduction to the global service-learning special section. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 21(1), 55–63. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/p/pod/dod-idx/introduction-special-section-on-global-service-learning.pdf?c=mjcs;idno=3239521.0022.104;format=pdf>
- Kiely, R. (2004). A chameleon with a complex: Searching for transformation in international service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 11(2), 5–24. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3239521.0010.201>

- Kraft, R. J., & Dwyer, J. F. (2000). Service and outreach: A multicultural and international dimension. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 6(1), 41–47. <https://openjournals.libs.uga.edu/jheoe/article/view/441/441>
- McBride, A. M., Johnson, E., Olate, R., & O’Hara, K. (2011). Youth volunteer service as positive youth development in Latin America and the Caribbean. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33, 34–41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.08.009>
- McBride, A. M., Olate, R., Johnson, L., Kon, R., Bottinnelli, L., Cabrera, F., & Estarellas, M. (2008). *Youth volunteer service in Latin American and the Caribbean: A regional assessment; executive summary (CSD Executive Summary)*. Washington University, Center for Social Development. <https://doi.org/10.7936/K7V124B7>
- Méndez, M. (2021). Aprendizaje-servicio, actitudes y habilidades cívicas en un grupo de estudiantes de una universidad privada en Lima, Perú. *RIDAS*, (11), 64–79. <https://doi.org/10.1344/RIDAS2021.11>
- Moely, B., Mercer, S., Ilustre, V., Miron, D., & McFarland, M. (2002). Psychometric properties and correlates of the Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ): A measure of students’ attitudes related to service-learning. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 8(2), 15–26. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3239521.0008.202>
- Niehaus, E. K., & Crain, L. K. (2013). Act local or global?: Comparing student experiences in domestic and international service-learning programs. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 34, 31–40. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cehsedadfacpub/34>
- Prins, E., & Webster, N. (2010). Student identities and the tourist gaze in international service-learning: A university project in Belize. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 14(1), 5–32. <https://openjournals.libs.uga.edu/jheoe/article/view/1174>
<https://revista.vocesdelaeducacion.com.mx/index.php/voces/article/view/72>
- ¿Quiénes somos? (n.d.). Gobierno de la República Dominicana: Ministerio de Educación Superior, Ciencia y Tecnología. Retrieved August 5, 2022, from <https://mescyt.gob.do/sobre-nosotros/quienes-somos/>
- Reseña histórica. (n.d.). PUCMM: Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra. Retrieved July 27, 2022, from <https://www.pucmm.edu.do/somos/resena-historica>
- Salazar, N. (2004). Developmental tourists vs. development tourism: A case study. In A. Raj (Ed.), *Tourist behavior: A psychological perspective* (pp. 85–107). Kanishka Publishers.
- Schamber, J. F., & Mahoney, S. L. (2008). The development of political awareness and social justice citizenship through community-based learning in a first-year general education seminar. *The Journal of General Education*, 57(2), 75–99. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ812657>
- Schuetze, H. G. (2012). Universities and their communities—Engagement and service as primary mission. In L. McIlrath, A. Lyons, & R. Munck (Eds.), *Higher education and civic engagement: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 61–80). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Situación del personal docente en el presupuesto 2020. (n.d.). Ministerio de Educación, República Dominicana. Retrieved March 28, 2023, from <https://www.ministeriodeeducacion.gob.do/transparencia/media/presupuesto/evolucion-contratacion-de-recursos-humanos/7Ns-situacion-del-personal-docente-de-la-republica-dominicana-2020pdf.pdf>

- Tapia, M. N. (2007). The potential effects of service-learning and community service in educational settings in Latin America. In A. Moore McBride & M. Sherraden (Eds.), *Civic service worldwide: Impacts and inquiry* (pp. 133–156). Routledge.
- Tapia, M. N. (2010). La Propuesta Pedagógica del Aprendizaje-Servicio: Una Perspectiva Latinoamericana. *Revista Tzhoecoen, Universidad Señor de Sipan*, 3(5), 23–43.
http://sgpwe.izt.uam.mx/files/users/uami/sabi/Aprendizaje_y_servicio/pdfs/La_propuesta_pedagogica_del-Aprendizaje_servicio-una_perspectiva_latinoamericana.pdf
- Tapia, M. N. (2012). La solidaridad como pedagogía: la propuesta del “aprendizaje-servicio.” *Stodium Educationis*, 1, 23–36.
<https://ojs.pensamultimedia.it/index.php/stodium/article/download/578/558/1784>
- Tonkin, H. (Ed.). (2004). *Service-learning across cultures: Promise and achievement. A report to the Ford Foundation*. International Partnership for Service-Learning and Leadership.
- Vortuba, J. (2005). Leading the engaged institution. In A. J. Kezar, A. C. Chambers, & J. C. Burkhardt (Eds.), *Higher education for the public good: Emerging voices from a national movement* (pp. 263–271). Jossey Bass.

About the Author

Dr. Megan Jeanette Myers is Associate Professor of Spanish at Iowa State University. Myers is the author of *Mapping Hispaniola: Third Space in Dominican and Haitian Literature* (2019) and co-editor of *The Border of Lights Reader: Bearing Witness to Genocide in the Dominican Republic* (2021). She publishes on Caribbean literature, community engagement, and Languages for Specific Purposes.