

# **Cultural-Based Service-Learning as a Transformative Learning Experience for Undergraduate Students and Community Recipients**

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## **Abstract**

A triangulation mixed-methods design was used to evaluate differences in student development and community engagement outcomes for 82 cultural-based service-learners in a college psychology class, and to detect the value of cultural-based service-learning (CBSL) for community recipients. CBSL intentionally integrates academic learning and service experience with diversity and social justice course content. The results indicate that cultural-based service-learners increase their short- and long-term commitments to community service and decrease their interest in learning about culturally diverse recipients and the diversity content of the academic course. Cultural-based service-learners also develop multicultural competencies through five-stages of cultural-ethnic development from pre-service to post-service. In addition, community recipients evaluated the cultural-based service-learning program post-service (i.e., after the program ended). The results further indicate that teachers and children were generally satisfied with tutors and mentors. Teachers thought cultural-based service-learners were effective in helping the children improve their academic performance and assisting them in the classroom. Implications for developing culturally-based service-learning courses are discussed.

## **Introduction**

Institutions of higher education have incorporated cultural-based service-learning (CBSL) courses as a means to enhance both student development and community service (Vernon & Foster, 2002). CBSL is a pedagogical approach that intentionally integrates academic learning with community service by providing students with opportunities to learn about social disparities associated with culturally diverse and lower income communities (Boyle-Baise, 2005; Waldstein & Reiher, 2001). It also serves as a vehicle through which students examine their personal bias, gain a better understanding of the meaning of diversity, and critically analyze the perceived realities of social injustices that affect the community (Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007). CBSL differs from service-learning in that the academic content and service-learning

experiences are directly connected to diversity and social justice issues (Boyle-Baise, 2005). Research pertaining to CBSL has demonstrated impacts for service-learning on students' interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, diversity and social justice attitudes, and community and civic participation (Ammon, 2002; Eyler & Giles, 1999). One area that has received substantially less attention in the literature is the relationship among the service-learning placement, CBSL, and student and community outcomes (Steinke, Fitch, Johnson, & Waldstein, 2002). In fact, only a few studies provide information about the community's perspective on service-learning (Miron & Moely, 2006). Without assessing the community's view of CBSL, it is difficult to determine the influence of community placements on student development and community engagement, as well as the perceived impacts of students on community recipients. The purpose of the present study was to contribute to this area of research by including a sample of community recipients, quantitative and qualitative methods, and triangulation analytic techniques. Specifically, this study sought to answer four questions:

Do cultural-based service-learners improve their interpersonal and personal development (i.e., civic action, problem solving, leadership, social justice, diversity, and political awareness) and community engagement skills (i.e., experimentation, exploration, assimilation, and affiliation) from pre-service to post-service?

What and how, do students gain from participating in a cultural-based service-learning program?

What are community recipients' perceptions of cultural-based service-learners?

What are the perceived impacts that cultural-based service-learners have on community recipients?

### **Theoretical Background**

As depicted in Table 1, Cross (1991) developed a five-stage model that explains the psychological processes of being black during the Black Power period. Each stage is characterized by self-concept issues and attitudes toward black/white reference groups. Helms (1990) amended Cross's model to suggest that each stage be considered a cognitive template that individuals use to organize racial information. Helms proposed that the development of white racial identity occurs through six stages, beginning with contact between in-group and out-group members and ending with in-group members' acceptance of their own race and the race of out-group members. Racial identity development models explain students' attitude change before, during, and after service, thus contributing to new information about cultural-based service-learning.

## Service-Learning

The few studies that have been conducted on the impacts of service-learners on community programs indicate that an overwhelming number of agencies have positive views of students (Miron & Moely, 2006). Vernon and Ward (1999) surveyed 65 directors of community service agencies, and found that 82% of respondents were generally satisfied with the students' work. Ferrari and Worrall (2000) similarly detected that community-based organization supervisors unanimously rated students as helpful and evaluated their work skills favorably. Miron and Moely (2006) interviewed 40 site coordinators and found that coordinators who had an active role in planning and implementing the service program and those who detected positive interpersonal relationships between members and students positively appraised both the service-learning program and the university-community partnership. In addition, Schmidt and Robby (2002) examined the value of service-learning to the community by focusing on service recipients. They found that tutoring as a service-learning activity produces academic change in children. Vernon and Foster (2002) evaluated the impacts of service-learning and discovered that service-learners enhance academic learning and confidence in at-risk youths. Elson, Johns, and Petrie (2007) also investigated the effect of mentoring on at-risk children and suggest that gains in early language, literacy, and social skills were greater for children paired with service-learners than for those who were not paired.

## Cultural-Based Service-Learning (CBSL)

Scholars suggest that the CBSL placement influences students' diversity attitudes by either promoting tolerance (Root et al., 2001; Umbach & Kuh, 2006) or reinforcing stereotypes (Baldwin et al., 2007; Coles, 1999). Green (2001) detected that students modified their prejudicial attitudes after interacting with culturally diverse recipients and reflecting on issues related to class and economic injustices. Brody and Wright (2004) and Erikson and O'Connor (cited in O'Grady, 2000) propose that CBSL provides students with an opportunity to develop relationships with community recipients and this contact allows service-learners to acquire personal evidence that contradicts their stereotypes. In contrast, Dunlap, Scoggin, Green, and Davi (2007) suggest students' contact with community recipients that does not contradict their cognitive biases will lead to reinforcing stereotypical attitudes and beliefs. Hess, Lanig, and Vaughan (2007) similarly propose that CBSL is a "deficit model" where students view themselves as the advantaged providing a service for the disadvantaged (pg.32); therefore, placements where most recipients are minorities and inequities are vivid further contribute to students' rationalizations for stereotyping and discrimination (Coles, 1999). The

placement may be an effective learning environment, but only when CBSL programs move beyond teaching students tolerance (Dunlap, 1998). This approach will require that CBSL courses shift from an approach centered on what students can learn from recipients to one that establishes mutually beneficial partnerships between students and recipients (Boyle-Baise, 2005).

Without more research on the perceived impacts from CBSL placements on student development and the influence of students on community members, findings on the relationship between the service-learning placement and student and community outcomes are inconclusive. The goals of this study were therefore to determine whether students' attitudes and skills change after participating in a CBSL program from pre-service to post-service, explain the possible change of attitudes through multicultural theories, and detect the impacts from students on community recipients.

## Method

### Participants

**College Students.** College students from a private teaching university in a northern metropolitan area completed a survey about their educational psychology course. Data were gathered from 82 students at the beginning and end of the semester-long course during the 2005-2006 academic year. The educational psychology course is a three-credit, interdisciplinary course intended to prepare students to work with children. In-class time (50 minutes, 3 times per week, 15 weeks) began with a lecture on service-learning. The next two classes consisted of a two-hour orientation on mentoring and tutoring by guest speakers representing one of three placement sites. Students worked as either tutors (67%) or mentors (33%) at one of three placement sites. Service was carried out at an elementary school (i.e., pre-kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade), an elementary-middle school (i.e., kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade), and a community program. The rest of the course was devoted to lecture, activities and discussion. Most students identified themselves as white (87%) and female (62%).

**Community Recipients.** Teachers/agency supervisors completed a post-survey about cultural-based service-learning and rated service-learners on a number of work skills post-service. Most community-based respondents identified themselves as either white (54%) or black (45%) and female (86%). In addition, 14 children ( $M = 8.71$  years old,  $SD = .20$ ) enrolled in a third-grade class participated in one of two focus groups about the benefits of cultural-based service-learning. Children identified themselves as black (68%) and female (57%).

## Measures

A list of assessment methods and theoretical constructs is summarized in Table 2.

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

*Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ).* This measure, developed by Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, and McFarland (2002), assessed civic attitudes and skills. The CASQ, an 84-item self-report questionnaire, yields scores on six scales: 1. Civic Action (respondents evaluate their intentions to become involved in the future in some community service); 2. Interpersonal and Problem-Solving Skills (respondents evaluate their ability to listen, work cooperatively, communicate, make friends, take the role of the other, think logically and analytically, and solve problems); 3. Political awareness (respondents evaluate their awareness of local and national events and political issues); 4. Leadership skills (respondents evaluate their ability to lead and effectiveness as a leader); 5. Social Justice Attitudes (respondents rate their agreement with items expressing attitudes concerning the causes of poverty and misfortune and how social problems can be solved); and 6. Diversity Attitudes (respondents describe their attitudes toward diversity and their interest in relating to culturally different people). Internal consistencies for each scale ranged from .69 to .88, and test-retest reliabilities for each scale ranged from .56 to .81

The CASQ also measured students' views of their course on three satisfaction scales which measured course value, learning about academic field, and learning about the community. Internal consistencies for each scale ranged from .81 to .82.

*Community Service Involvement Preference Inventory (CSIPI).* Developed by Payne (2000), the CSOPI assessed how students become involved in community service. The CSIPI is a 48-item paper and pencil inventory designed to assess 4 preferences: 1. Exploration Involvement Preference (this score reflects the affective nature of apprehension common in new experiences, and it demonstrates the behavioral perspective that commitment is short term and is usually at the convenience of the helper); 2. Affiliation Involvement Preference (this score reflects behavior motivation for recognition and commitments tend to be infrequent and shorter in duration); 3. Experimentation Involvement Preference (this score reflects the desire to make a difference in the lives of others and to learn more about the community); and 4. Assimilation Involvement Preference (this score reflects cognitive processes with career and lifestyle decisions based on the service experience as a way to understand what it means to be a

responsible citizen). Internal consistencies for Exploration ( $r = .63$ ), Affiliation ( $r = .70$ ), Experimentation ( $r = .74$ ), and Assimilation ( $r = .70$ ) preferences were modest.

*Focus Group Questions*, developed by the researchers, were used to inquire about the advantages and disadvantages of a cultural-based service-learning program for community recipients (i.e., children). Open-ended questions that were used to facilitate focus group discussions include: 1. Describe what you liked about participating in the program; 2. Describe what you disliked about participating in the program; 3. Describe what you liked about your tutor/mentor; 4. Describe what you disliked about your tutor/mentor; 5. Describe what you gained from working with a tutor/mentor; 6. Describe how your participation in the program benefited you; 7. Describe an advantage to participating in the program; 8. Describe a disadvantage to participating in the program; and 9. Describe what would you change or add to the program.

*Reflection Items*. Designed by the researchers, these questions were used to inquire about advantages and disadvantages of cultural-based service-learning for service-learners. The six open-ended questions were: 1. Describe what you gained from service-learning; 2. Explain how service-learning helped you with your career decisions; 3. Explain how service-learning helped you understand or apply the course content; 4. Describe how your beliefs, attitudes, views, and feelings changed throughout the semester; 5. Describe the added value of service-learning for you; and 6. Describe the added value of service-learning for the placement site.

*Service-learning Performance Checklist*. The checklist, developed by Payne (2000), measures teachers' views of the students' performance during the service-learning project. Scores for each item range from 1 to 5, and a higher score indicates greater teacher satisfaction with students' performance on a specific task. Alpha coefficient for 25 items is high ( $\alpha = .81$ ).

*Service-learning Teacher Survey*. This measure, a truncated version of a scale developed by Payne (2000b), gathers teachers' satisfaction with the service-learning project. Researchers added four open-ended questions to the original three questions to identify the major advantages and disadvantages of service-learning, including: 1. What did you like the most about having this student come to your class/program; 2. What did you like the least about having this student come to your class/program; 3. What would you change about this service-learning project if you had another student come to your class next semester; 4. What could the university do to make the students' visits more important to you; 5. What were the major benefits for your students and the Widener students; 6. What were the major benefits for you; and 7. Have you changed your teaching methods as a result of your involvement in this project?

## Design and Procedure

A triangulation mixed-methods design was used to evaluate differences in students' personal and interpersonal development and community engagement outcomes from pre-service to post-service, and to detect the value of cultural-based service-learning for community recipients post-service. Creswell (2005) wrote that a triangulation mixed-methods design refers to simultaneously collecting quantitative and qualitative data and merging the results to understand the problem under investigation.

All of the students completed an informed consent form and a survey measuring personal and interpersonal development and community engagement skills. Students completed the survey, placed it in a coded, confidential envelope and gave it directly to the researcher. Surveys took about 45 minutes to complete. Students were required to complete the survey again post-service (i.e., after completing 15 hours of service) and to write one journal entry for each day of service. In addition, teachers and agency supervisors completed a post-survey that measured their overall level of satisfaction with this service project and evaluated each student's performance. The surveys were administered anonymously to teachers/supervisors at the site; they completed the surveys at their own pace and returned them in a coded envelope to the researcher. Fourteen third-graders enrolled in an elementary-middle school participated in one of two focus groups. The research assistant obtained parental consent and facilitated focus groups with the children at the school. The focus groups inquired about the children's likes and dislikes of the cultural-based service-learning program, and each group lasted approximately 45 minutes.

## Results

Do cultural-based service-learners improve their interpersonal and personal development and community engagement skills from pre-service to post-service? A paired t-test was conducted on CASQ and CSIPI scores to measure differences in students' personal and interpersonal development and community engagement skills from pre-service to post-service. Students made improvements in their short- and long-term commitments to community service. They decreased their interest in learning about culturally different community recipients and the academic field as shown in Table 3.

*What and how, do students gain from participating in a cultural-based service-learning program?* Students develop multicultural skills through five of the six stages of racial identity across pre-service, during-service, and post-service. Open coding consisted of categorizing and naming the data according to the theoretical concepts of Eyer and

Giles (1999) and Howard-Hamilton (2000), while Selective coding consisted of systematically analyzing the data using topical codes based on racial identity development models (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990) as shown in Table 4.

Cross (1991) and Helms (1990) describe the pre-encounter/pre-contact stage of racial identity development as an individual's colorblind view of racism (i.e., an individual's inability to acknowledge racial differences). In the pre-encounter stage, many students (74%) described preconceived notions about working in an ethnically-diverse and lower-income community. One student's account illustrates the pre-encounter stage:

Beyond going to Widener's campus, I had never ventured very far into Chester because of the comments I heard from fellow students. The things I had heard about – what 'goes on over the bridge' made me very anxious about this assignment. I cannot say these feelings dissipated easily, as the directions I pulled off of the internet had failed me, leading me into the heart of Chester. As if getting lost where I was unfamiliar wasn't enough to rattle me, the images of squalor and decay I saw had me cursing this assignment and wishing I wasn't even taking this class.

Cross (1991) and Helms' (1990) propose that an individual's salient view of racism continues in the contact stage (i.e., an individual's lack of awareness of racial differences). However, most students (74%) described their early visits at the placement as a cultural-shock or an eye-opening experience. One student's demonstrates the contact stage:

Today was my first day in the classroom, and it was interesting to say the least. For one, I now know what it feels like to be the minority. Most of the students and teachers are African-American. At first it felt awkward, but after the initial hour, I felt more comfortable.

Helms' (1990) proposes that contact between blacks and whites influences white individuals' ethnic identity. For example, whites acknowledge social privileges associated with being white during the disintegration status (i.e., an individual's awareness of the sociopolitical ramifications of their race). Most students (78%) describe gaining a better understanding of diversity and 74% of them provided examples illustrating white privilege in the middle of their journal entries. One student's notation illustrates the disintegration stage:

I noticed one day a girl who was usually well-behaved was lethargic and inattentive during the lesson. I asked her what was wrong, and she said that 'she didn't have breakfast and was very hungry.' Although I marveled how Maslow's self-actualization theory could explain this situation, I learned something more valuable – racial and social oppression. This situation would never have occurred

where I am from - the opportunities available to White, middle-class students are far above those given to the children in Chester.

Cross (1991) and Helms (1990) describe an individual's denial of tension and guilt associated with an awareness of racial problems in the United States during the reintegration stage (i.e., an individual's feelings associated with racial problems). Very few students (23%) described tension or guilt. In fact, 54% of them attributed racial problems to white privilege in the middle of their journal entries. One student's comment demonstrates the reintegration stage:

White privilege is the privilege that White people have and do not realize they have it. I never realized it until this class. For example, when White people walk into a convenience store most of them think nothing of it, but when Black people walk into the same store, they have to deal with the clerks following or watching them. It is a sad reality but one that most White people do not think about.

Helms (1990) describes the pseudo-independent stage as reluctance by the individual to confront his/her racial biases and privileges (i.e., an individual's ability to admit his/her own prejudice). Most students (81%) acknowledged their racial biases and privileges by describing ethnic similarities (36%) or differences (54%) between themselves and community recipients in the middle of their journal entries. Two student comments convey the pseudo-independent stage:

Race in this context was new to me – White kids are the minorities in this school. Most of the kids did not see me as being White, but they did think I was built like a Black wide receiver for the Eagles. However, one student told me that I didn't know anything about his struggles because he was Black and I was White. I explained to him that I could relate to him because I have had my own struggles. There are many Whites who equally struggle.

I am disheartened because I know if a black women came to my school, she would not be viewed the same as a white women going into a predominantly black school for a service-learning project.

Cross (1991) asserts that the immersion-emersion stage is a process in which individuals become interested in their ethnic heritage and develop a positive self-concept in light of historical and contemporary racism (i.e., an individual's positive racial identity). Toward the middle of their journals, most students (75%) reported that they gained personal information about themselves in terms of diversity. One student's notation illustrates the immersion/emersion stage:

I learned that diversity is something that must be understood and accepted. If someone is not willing to accept differences in race or culture, he/she should not be involved in education. I believe that being involved in a multicultural environment allowed me to understand my own culture. Once I was able to understand my own culture, then I was able to understand, appreciate, and respect the different cultures of the students. If it were not for service-learning I may not have been able to acquire multicultural skills.

Cross (1991) describes the internalization stage as an individual's commitment to social change, social justice, and civic rights (i.e., an individual's active participation in activities that promote social change). More than half of the students reported that they had acquired multicultural skills (74%) and developed tolerant attitudes (63%). Of these students, 49% described prejudice reduction attitudes in their post-service journal entries. Two student comments illustrate the internalization stage:

I had a narrow mindset about service-learning. I thought, "Okay, let's help the undereducated community," but this could not be further from the truth. I am in the United States Marine Corps and fought in Iraq, and have learned more from this experience than my other life experiences. I am aware that this is a bold statement, but the fact of the matter is, this experience changed my thinking and showed me I can make a difference. After all, how can one possibly say they understand diversity without experiencing it firsthand?

I plan on teaching in this district through the Teach for American campaign.

***What are community recipients' perceptions of cultural-based service-learning and service-learners?*** Overall, teachers and agency supervisors were generally satisfied with tutors and mentors. Their evaluations of cultural-based service-learners (n = 82) revealed that they thought students were responsible (93%), competent (88%), and dependable (94%) as shown in Table 5.

***What are the perceived impacts that cultural-based service-learners have on community programs and recipients?*** Teachers revealed that the service-learning program helped them with their classroom management and contributed to the children's academic and emotional development as shown in Table 6. One teacher's remark addresses the benefits of cultural-based service-learning for community-based respondents:

The Widener students assisted me in an overcrowded classroom and worked with students who may have fallen behind or through the cracks of the institution. The students made a difference in the lives of the children and me. They helped the children learn their coursework and made them feel good about themselves. I also learned from them to be more student-centered in my approach to teaching.

## Discussion

The current study contributes to new information about the service-learning placement and cultural-based service-learning related to both student and community outcomes. This is one of the first studies to use a triangulation mixed-methods design with undergraduate students and community recipients to demonstrate that participation in CBSL affects students' interpersonal and personal development and community engagement, teachers' pedagogical and instructional methods in the classroom, and children's academic learning and social skills. The incorporation of multiple methods and assessment of a sample that included both undergraduate students and community recipients increased the reliability and validity of these findings.

The first objective of this study was to measure differences in students' interpersonal and personal development and community engagement skills from pre-service to post-service. Cultural-based service-learners showed expected changes in their affiliation and assimilation preferences for community involvement. However, cultural-based service-learners also showed unexpected changes in diversity attitudes, learning about the academic field, and course value. Findings that cultural-based service-learners increase their short- and long-term commitments to community service and decrease their interest in learning about culturally diverse recipients and the diversity content of the academic course are consistent with previous research. Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Ilustre (2002) found that service-learners decrease their diversity attitudes and increase community responsibility from the beginning to the end of the semester. Increases in assimilation preferences for engagement indicate a deeper understanding of power distributions in educational institutions that contribute to inequities in our societies. Most students worked as tutors for ethnically and economically diverse children with substandard academic performance in a public educational system. CBSL gave students an opportunity to see how children are affected by limited resources and overcrowded classrooms, thus decreasing their motivation to learn about cultural differences but increasing their desire to make a difference through community service.

A second objective was to detect what and how students gain from participating in a CBSL program. Students acquired multicultural competencies and skills through five-stages of racial identity development (RID) from pre- to post-service. In contrast to previous studies (Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990), few students described experiencing guilt or tension associated with the reintegration stage or an inability to confront racial privileges associated with the pseudo-independent stage. The reintegration and pseudo-independent stages of racial identity development may not have been

demonstrated among our sample of participants. because these models were specifically designed for individuals developing their black racial identity during the Civil Rights Movement. It is further plausible that differences in student ethnic and linguistic diversity, their greater awareness of cultural differences, and their disconnection from incidents of both historical and contemporary racism may also explain why the reintegration and pseudo-independent stages were not observed among this sample. Therefore, culture-ethnic identity development (CEID) models may be a more accurate paradigm for explaining how students develop their multicultural skills while immersed in a CBSL program (Cross & Cross, 2006).

Students develop multicultural skills through five-stages of culture-ethnic identity. In pre-service, students exhibited preconceived notions about working in a culturally-diverse and lower-income community, and their racial attitudes represent the pre-encounter stage. Students moved through three stages while engaged in cultural-based service-learning during service. First, they described their early visits at the placement as a culture-shock or eye-opening experience, and their racial awareness represents the contact stage. Second, students forged relationships with recipients and gained knowledge about white privilege. They exhibited high or low racial attitudes, and these differences were reinforced by the degree of contact they had with service recipients (Boyle-Baise, 2002). Students gained a deeper understanding of white privilege by attributing educational and economic injustices to racial disparities through their continual contact with recipients during the disintegration stage. Finally, students' reflection of this privilege enhanced their own culture-ethnic identity development. Students had to develop their own culture-ethnic identity, before they could comprehend the racial identity development of the recipients and the culture of the community, and their culture-ethnic identity development represents the immersion-emersion stage. In post-service, students' interactions with community recipients appear to have contributed to students' cognitive dissonance, which, in turn, further influenced them to change their preconceptions. Students developed tolerant attitudes toward community recipients and acquired multicultural competencies - knowledge, attitudes and skills for work with diverse children. They demonstrated prejudice reduction attitudes in their post-service journal entries, and their tolerance, multicultural skills, and anti-prejudice attitudes represent the internalization stage. Placements that provided guidance and support enhanced students' value of diversity (Dunlap, 1999; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

A third objective was to identify community recipients' perceptions of cultural-based service-learners. Tutoring and mentoring as service activities by students were seen as having positive effects on the community, consistent with previous studies that found tutoring promotes academic change (Schmidt & Robby, 2002) and self-esteem (Vernon

& Foster, 2002) in children. Most teachers were generally satisfied with tutors and mentors, and their evaluations of them suggest that they thought cultural-based service-learners were effective in helping students.

A fourth objective was to discover the perceived impacts that cultural-based service-learners have on community recipients. Teachers were satisfied with both the cultural-based service-learners and the CBSL program, consistent with their post-service reports of students. In fact, a major limitation to the cultural-based service-learning program was time. The majority of teachers stated that they wished students could work with them for more than fifteen hours and beyond one semester. Almost all teachers noted that the students provided individual attention to the children, which in turn, motivated children to improve their academic performance. More than half of the teachers also felt that service assisted them with classroom management, allowing them to work with children in small groups and utilize pedagogical techniques that would be inappropriate for large classrooms. Consistent with teacher reports, all of the children felt that their tutor or mentor helped them learn their coursework. Most of them also reported that individual attention enhanced their confidence in their ability to master the material. A few of them described feeling unhappy on the days that their tutor or mentor was not present in class, and wished that their cultural-based service-learner could be at school everyday and take part in activities with them in and out of class throughout the school year. All of the children and teachers requested that we continue the program and further build upon this partnership.

A final objective was to compare the qualitative data with quantitative data to detect similarities and differences. Similarities between the qualitative and quantitative findings were observed in teachers' and children's reports of cultural-based service-learners. For instance, teachers and children unanimously evaluated students as helpful, congruent with previous ratings of service-learners (Ferrari & Worrall, 2000; Vernon & Ward, 1999). Teachers' reports further confirm that students utilize community engagement skills while at the placement site, which is consistent with findings on students' surveys on their short- and long-term commitments to community service. This consistency of data on students' surveys and teachers' reports contribute to the confidence in our claims that both student and community participants benefit from engaging in this pedagogy. Differences between the qualitative and quantitative data were also noted for diversity attitudes. Students decreased their openness to others who are culturally different from preservice to postservice, although most of them reported attitude change in their postservice journal entries. A possible explanation for these inconsistent findings may be attributed to construct validity errors associated with the diversity measure (Heppner et al., 1999). For example, the diversity subscale may lack the specificity needed to measure differences in racial attitudes before and after service-

learning for undergraduate students (Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Ilustre, 2002). Qualitative techniques may be more effective methods for assessing differences in diversity attitudes among students.

While the study adds to the multicultural service-learning research, the results should be viewed in light of a few key limitations that prohibit us from generalizing results to undergraduate students at public institutions. First, the Widener student population is demographically homogenous. Student participants were predominantly white, came from middle-class backgrounds, and usually were the first-generation to attend a 4-year college. Second, students worked in public schools in an urban area where the majority of children were African-American and came from lower-income backgrounds. Third, quantitative and qualitative data were collected with surveys, journals, and focus groups at different points in time, and there are likely testing effects and self-report biases associated with the results. Fourth, participants in the child focus groups was limited by difficulty in obtaining parental consent, which prohibits us from generalizing the results to other community recipients. Finally, the lack of randomization methods precludes us from inferring causality between placement and student development, as well as student impact on community recipients. Future research should replicate this study with randomization methods and larger samples from private and public institutions to draw more definitive conclusions.

Despite the mentioned limitations, there are many important contributions made by this study that have direct implications for CBSL practitioners and researchers. First, students acquire community engagement skills and multicultural competencies from pre-service to post-service in CBSL. It is therefore important that faculty consider the developmental levels, engagement skills, and racial attitudes of the students who enroll in a cultural-based service-learning course. For example, faculty will need to anticipate students' preconceived notions about working with culturally different recipients in diverse placements and plan assignments that not only challenge their attitudes, but also allow them to develop their engagement and multicultural skills. Second, only five of the six stages of racial identity development (RID) were observed, which may be attributed to the fact that students demonstrated a greater level of awareness of cultural differences than expected. It is further plausible that the culture-ethnic identity development (CEID) is a more accurate paradigm than RID for explaining how students develop multicultural competencies (Cross & Cross, 2006). Faculty may want to utilize resources beyond the standard text and consult research on culture-ethnic identity development (CEID). Third, placements influence students' acquisition of diversity knowledge, and, at the same time, cultural-based service-learners impact community recipients. Faculty should forge partnerships with agencies to ensure that service is not simply an extra activity but an integral part of the course. For instance,

directors/teachers should be involved in the planning and implementation of service activities, and these activities should foster interpersonal relationships between students and recipients by allowing them to work together toward a common goal. This will require faculty to spend a great deal of time establishing partnerships with community agencies prior to incorporating cultural-based service-learning into a course. Fourth, reflection is a necessary component for fostering students' multicultural competencies. Faculty will need to develop structured reflection activities that occur in and out of class so that students can become aware of their stereotypes and experience cognitive dissonance to modify their preconceptions. Finally, qualitative and quantitative data expand previous research in this area in two important ways: (1). They provide a model of how students develop multicultural competencies through five-stages of cultural-ethnic development from preservice to postservice; and (2). They provide a framework that describes how CBSL empowers teachers and children in an urban context. Researchers should examine cultural-ethnic development and teacher-empowerment models with larger groups of diverse undergraduate students and community-based respondents to identify a clear and consistent pattern of results that may assist with the future dissemination of CBSL in higher education.

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Table 1. A Summary of Racial Identity Development Models

Cross, 1991	Description	Helms, 1990	Description	Examples
Preencounter	Identified with White culture and denies or rejects membership in the Black culture.	Contact	The person does not think of himself/herself as White.	The person claims to be color-blind and to ignore racial differences (i.e., I treat everyone the same).
Encounter	Identification of the Black culture and rejection of the White culture.	Disintegration	The recognition of the social implications of being White.	The person understands that if Blacks are disadvantaged then Whites are advantaged (i.e., I am not followed around in a department store because I am white).
Immersion-Emersion	Development of a new racial identity associated with being Black.	Reintegration	The person's inability to attribute social problems to being White.	The person does not acknowledge how being part of the White majority contributes to social problems (i.e., If everyone worked, then we would not have poverty).
Internalization	Development of a positive racial identity.	Pseudo-Independence	The person understands, but is resistant to accepting that White people are responsible for racism.	The person is resistant to accepting his/her own racial prejudices and White privileges (i.e., I have personal and financial struggles the same as everyone else).
Internalization Commitment	A commitment to activities and organizations that promote social change.	Immersion-Emersion	The person assumes personal responsibility for racism.	The person engages in activities that combat racism (i.e., I have confronted my peers about their personal ignorance by participating in culture groups on campus).
		Autonomy	A positive racial identity.	The person accepts being White and works toward the elimination of sociopolitical oppression (i.e., I corrected the store clerk who attempted to wait on me before taking care of a Black person).

				who was in line first.)
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Table 2. Methods of Assessment

Methods of Assessment	Measure	Construct	Variable	Subject
Quantitative	CASQ	Personal Development	Civic Action	Student
			Interpersonal and Problem-solving	
			Political Awareness	
			Leadership Skills	
			Social Justice Attitudes	
			Diversity Attitudes	
			Course Value	
			Learning about the Academic Field	
			Learning about the Community	
			Qualitative	
Reflection items	Open-ended items			
Quantitative	CSIPI	Community Engagement	Exploration Preference	
			Affiliation Preference	
			Experimentation Preference	
			Assimilation Preference	
			Structured Journal Questions	
Qualitative	Journal Reflections		Open-ended Questions	
	Reflection Items			
Quantitative	Service-learning Performance Checklist	Perceptions of CB service-learners	Views of students' performance	Teachers
Qualitative	Focus Groups			Children
Qualitative	Service-learning Teacher Survey	Impacts of CB service-learners	Satisfaction with CBSL	Teachers
	Focus Groups			Children

Table 3. Pre- and Post-test Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Personal and Interpersonal Development Outcomes for Multicultural Service-Learners

Measure	Time Points				df	t
	Pretest		Posttest			
	M	SD	M	SD		
<b>CASQ</b>						
Civic Action	31.20	3.89	31.59	4.81	62	-.76
Problem Solving	41.07	4.05	41.31	4.45	64	-.44
Social Justice	29.11	3.44	29.50	6.78	62	-.52
Diversity	18.35	2.70	17.67	2.80	64	2.20*
Political Awareness	18.26	2.70	18.19	3.30	61	.84
Course Value	45.95	5.02	43.72	6.43	62	2.98**
<b>Interest in learning</b>						
about academic field	21.38	2.44	20.43	3.48	67	2.26*
<b>Interest in learning</b>						
about the community	21.53	2.57	20.75	3.11	65	1.98
<b>CSIPI</b>						
Exploration	34.14	3.43	34.22	4.67	62	-.14
Expérimentation	45.81	3.46	46.22	4.98	59	-.62
Affiliation	36.42	4.61	46.13	5.33	61	-11.59***
Assimilation	43.06	5.36	45.50	6.95	62	-3.31**

Note. \*\*\* $p < .001$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .001$ .

Table 4. Major Themes of Cultural-Based Service-Learning for Cultural-Based Service-Learners

Themes	%	Typical Perceptions/Expressions
Diversity Attitudes	100	This activity changed my perceptions; My stereotypes of the children were false – they are intelligent and have amazing potential.
Reward for Helping	88	It felt good to help the children read and learn; It felt good to be a role model.
Community Connections	87	I got close to the children and was upset when the project was over; We learned from each other.
Content Application	82	I was able to observe what we talked about in class; I was able to apply theories the classroom and vice versa.
Diversity Awareness	78	I never worked with African Americans and was afraid they would reject me and think – who is this White guy coming into their class.
Self-Knowledge	78	My attitudes and beliefs changed for the better. I learned what it was like to work with children who are deprived of supplies in an under-funded school.
Self-Esteem	75	I gained a sense of leadership and confidence.
White Privilege	74	I have learned that I am judged differently and afforded more opportunities because I am White.
Diversity Understanding	68	My eyes were opened; I learned what was going on in the world and how race influences education, employment, and everyday situations.
Social/Community Responsibility	66	I made a commitment to the children – I feel that I owe them and it is my duty to help them; I want to make a difference.
Diversity Appreciation – Differences	54	I have learned to see life from more than one perspective; I gained a new respect for others who are culturally different from me.
Prejudice Reduction	49	I realized that I was closed-minded; I do not consider the children from Chester to be Chesterites anymore.
Diversity Appreciation – Similarities	37	I learned to change my beliefs that I was taught; I have a great deal in common with others who differ from me in race and class.
Colorblind Attitudes	36	I didn't understand what it meant to be Black. I though being Black was more of a state of mind until now.

**Table 5. Community Recipients' Views of Cultural-Based Service-Learners**

Items	Extremely Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Attendance	2	0	6	15	77
Reports to community site	0	0	4	12	84
Accepts responsibility	0	0	1	6	93
Enthusiastic and interested	0	0	3	6	91
Appropriate appearance and dress	0	0	7	20	73
Courteous and cooperative	0	0	1	3	96
Emotional maturity	0	0	3	7	90
Exercises good judgment when working with the children	0	0	3	9	88
Sincere	0	0	2	7	91
Relates well to the children and staff	0	0	0	10	90
Shows initiative	0	0	2	19	79
Assumes responsibility for his own learning	0	0	1	15	84
Asks appropriate questions	0	0	3	16	81
Begins work on time	0	0	0	16	84
Appreciates suggestions	0	0	2	13	85
Completes assigned tasks	0	0	0	9	91
Exhibits competence	0	0	0	12	88
Progressively requires less supervision	0	0	0	16	84
Dependable	0	0	0	6	94
Follows directions carefully	0	0	0	7	93
Interactions are appropriate with children and staff	0	0	0	17	83
Develops a good rapport with children and staff	0	0	0	13	87
Level of empathy	0	0	1	18	81
Level of concern or compassion	0	0	2	16	82
Level of commitment	0	0	2	10	88

**Table 6. Major Benefits of Cultural-Based Service-Learning for Community Recipients**

Source	%	Themes	Categories
Teachers/Agency Supervisors	96	Children and classroom	Improved the students' academic performance
			Improved the students' confidence
			Rapport between cultural-based service-learners and children
			Made children feel special
			Fulfilled a community need
	81	Teacher education – student development	Real-life experience
			Urban Education
	66	Community-university partnership	Renewed my faith in a caring university
			Students helped me in the classroom
	65	Pedagogical methods	Changed instructional methods
			Able to use different instructional methods because students were in class and able to assist me
			Learned new skills or techniques from the students
	31	Requests	Time: Students could spend more time in the classroom
			Students: The same student could be in the classroom for the entire year instead of one semester; More students.
	Children	100	Cultural-based service-learners assisted students with learning their coursework.
Tutoring helped me learn the material.			
Tutoring/mentoring helped me feel more confident about the course material.			
Tutoring/mentoring helped me understand the material better.			
93		Motivation to learn the coursework.	Individual attention increased my desire to learn my coursework.
			Tutoring/mentoring made learning the coursework more fun.
			Tutoring/mentoring provided different teaching supplies and tools.
			I learned the material better in small group.
			I learned the material better in one-on-one sessions.
			I was rewarded when I did well during my tutoring session.
57		Social Skills	Interactions with my cultural-based service-learner made me feel special.
			I felt good working in small groups.
			I liked the individual attention.
			I learned to feel better about myself. I gained confidence.
21		I was unhappy when my tutor was not in the classroom.	

		<p>Suggestions for cultural-based service-learners.</p>	<p>I wish my tutor/mentor could come to class everyday. I wish my tutor/mentor could spend more time with me in class.</p>
			<p>I wish my tutor/mentor could come to class for the entire year; I wish I could have the same tutor/mentor for the year.</p>
			<p>I wish my tutor/mentor could spend time with me outside of class; I wish my tutor/mentor could participate in field trips and other out-of-class activities with me.</p>

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