



麗澤大学

Reitaku University

Serving Other People: An Empirical Study of the Impact of Service Learning on the Moral Character of Students in Japanese Higher Education-A Pilot Test

Kazunobu Horiuchi

Professor

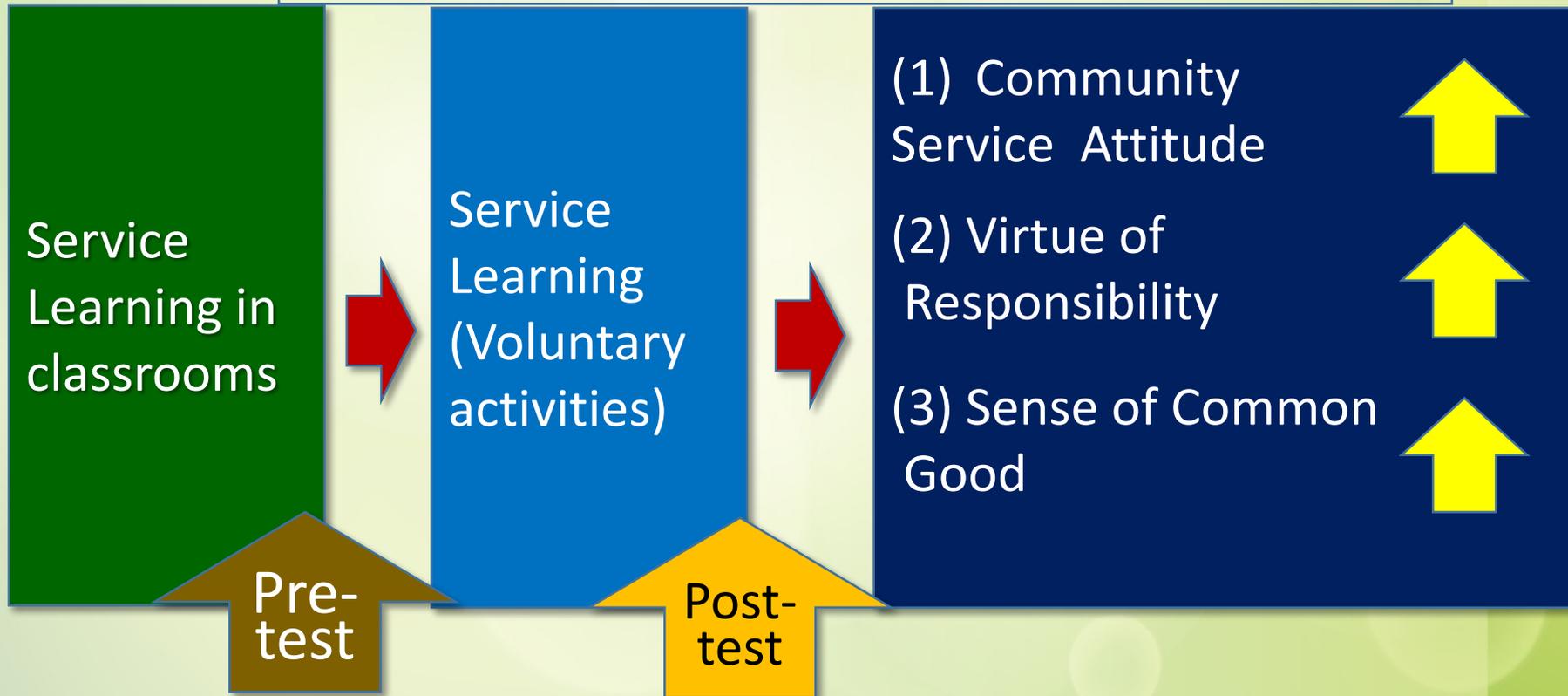
Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

Reitaku University

Kashiwa, Chiba Prefecture, Japan



Service Learning and Its Impacts on Students' Moral Character





Four challenges found in the literature review on Service Learning's Impact on Students' Attitude

- Short duration of the program & small sample size
- Mixed results of the moral impact on students
- Need for more rigorous research designs
- Importance of increased understanding of SL's role and students' interest in the quality SL activities

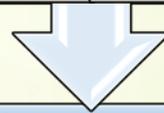


Pre- and Post-tests

Pre-test to students **with** SL experience

Jul. 15, 2017

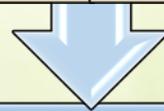
N=35 (49)



Pre-test to students **without** SL experience

Dec. 12, 2017

N=31 (58)



Post-test to students with SL experience

Nov. 24, 2017 and Jan. 26, 2018

N=17 (20)



Major volunteer activities and students' destinations

- Assisting organizing a walking event for a long distance for children (Japan)
- Helping at nursing homes (Japan)
- Helping physically and mentally challenged children (Japan)
- Teaching children earthquake disaster prevention (Nepal)
- Teaching children traffic safety (Cambodia)
- Food loss education (Philippines)



Hypothesis

This research hypothesizes that students' scores on the following four measures would increase after being involved in voluntary activities between pre- and post-tests.

- (1)Community Service Attitudes Scale
- (2)Virtue of Responsibility
- (3)Environmental Common Good
- (4)National Common Good



(1) Community Service Attitudes Scale (CSAS)

CSAS, a scale that measures university students' attitudes concerning community service adapted from Shiarella et al.(2000), consists of the following four measures:

- (1) Awareness (to community needs)
- (2) Connectedness (to one's community)
- (3) Normative Helping Behavior
- (4) Seriousness for moral obligation (to help one's community)
- (5) Intention (to community service)

One example of a question asked was, "I feel bad that some community members are suffering from a lack of resources."

Cronbach's alpha for this scale at pre-test was 0.7891 and at post-test was 0.8094 (>0.7).



(2) Virtue of Responsibility

Virtue of Responsibility is defined as “an attitude in which we perceive our role and the duties tied to that role,” a duty for which someone is held accountable to oneself, family members, neighborhood and local community, school and workplace, and one’s country (Ryan et al., 2011: 197).

One example of a question asked was, “I assume responsibility for my words and behavior.” Cronbach’s alpha for this scale at pre-test was 0.7746 and at post-test was 0.8407 (>0.7).



(3) Environmental Common Good

Environmental problems are result of a collective action of individual human beings. According to Mercedes Pardo et al. (2003: 68), “increasing importance of the environmental values” is one of the social factors which support the interpretation of the environment as a “common good of human society.”

One example of a question asked was, “I assume responsibility for protecting natural environment of the planet Earth.” Cronbach’s alpha for this scale at pre-test was 0.8474 and at post-test was 0.9369 (>0.7).



(4) National Common Good

Aristotle said: “For even if the end is the same for a single man and for a state, that of the state seems at all events something greater and more complete whether to attain or to preserve: ■ ■ ■ it is finer and more godlike to attain it for a nation or for city-states.” (Aristotle 1925) He meant that if one attains something for a nation, it is by far greater than doing it for oneself, because the achievement can positively affect and profit the members of the nation by which the members are protected.

One example of a question asked was, “Nothing is more important than the national security.” Cronbach’s alpha for this scale at pre-test was 0.8207 and at post-test was 0.7935 (>0.7).



Research Questions

- RQ 1: Does service learning have an impact on students' attitude toward community service?
- RQ 2: Does service learning have an impact on students' virtue of responsibility?
- RQ 3: Does service learning have an impact on students' sense of common good, i.e. environmental protection and awareness for national security?



Measures

A scale of 7 was set up for all the measures:

1 = strongly disagree

2 = rather disagree

3 = somewhat disagree

4 = neither disagree nor agree

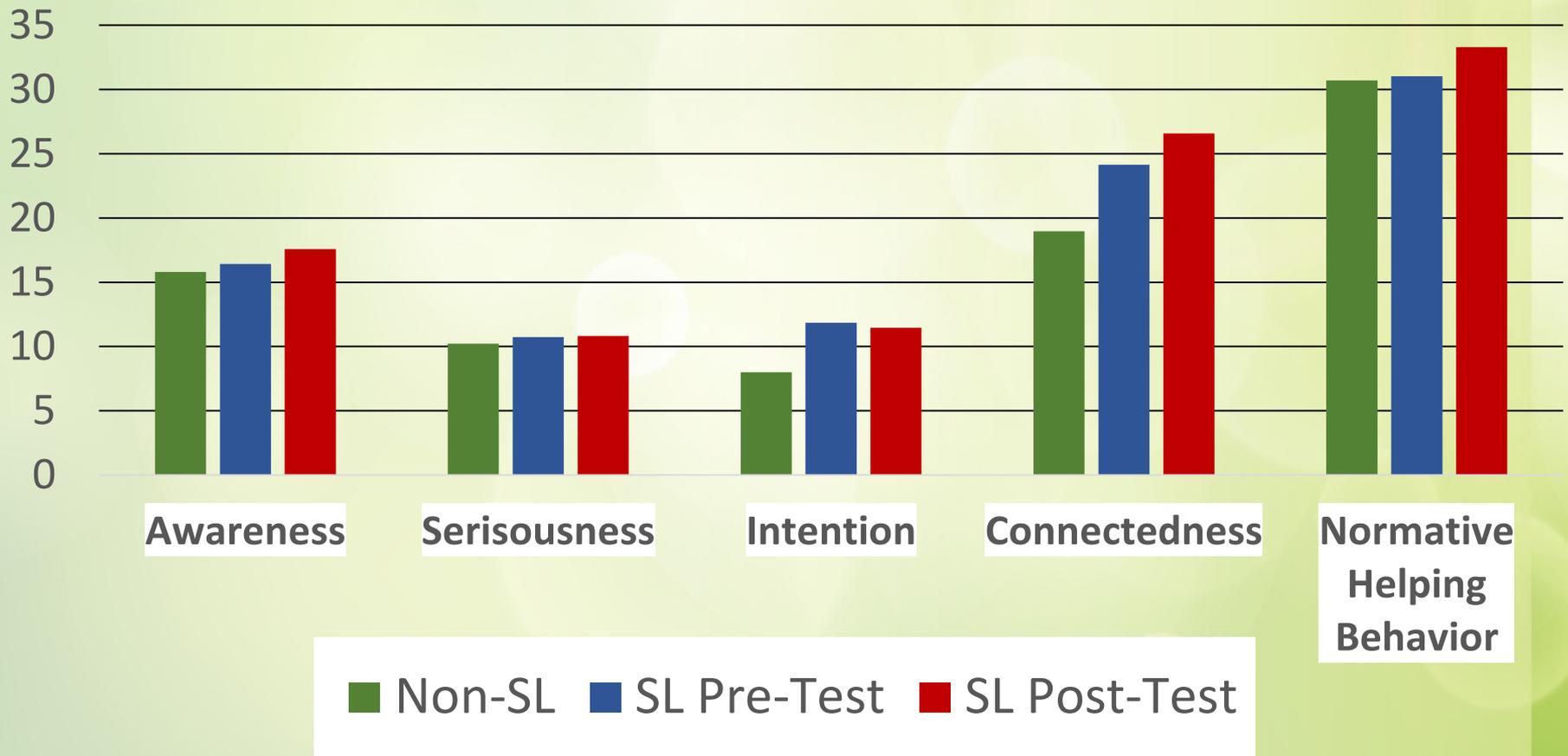
5 = somewhat agree

6 = rather agree

7 = strongly agree

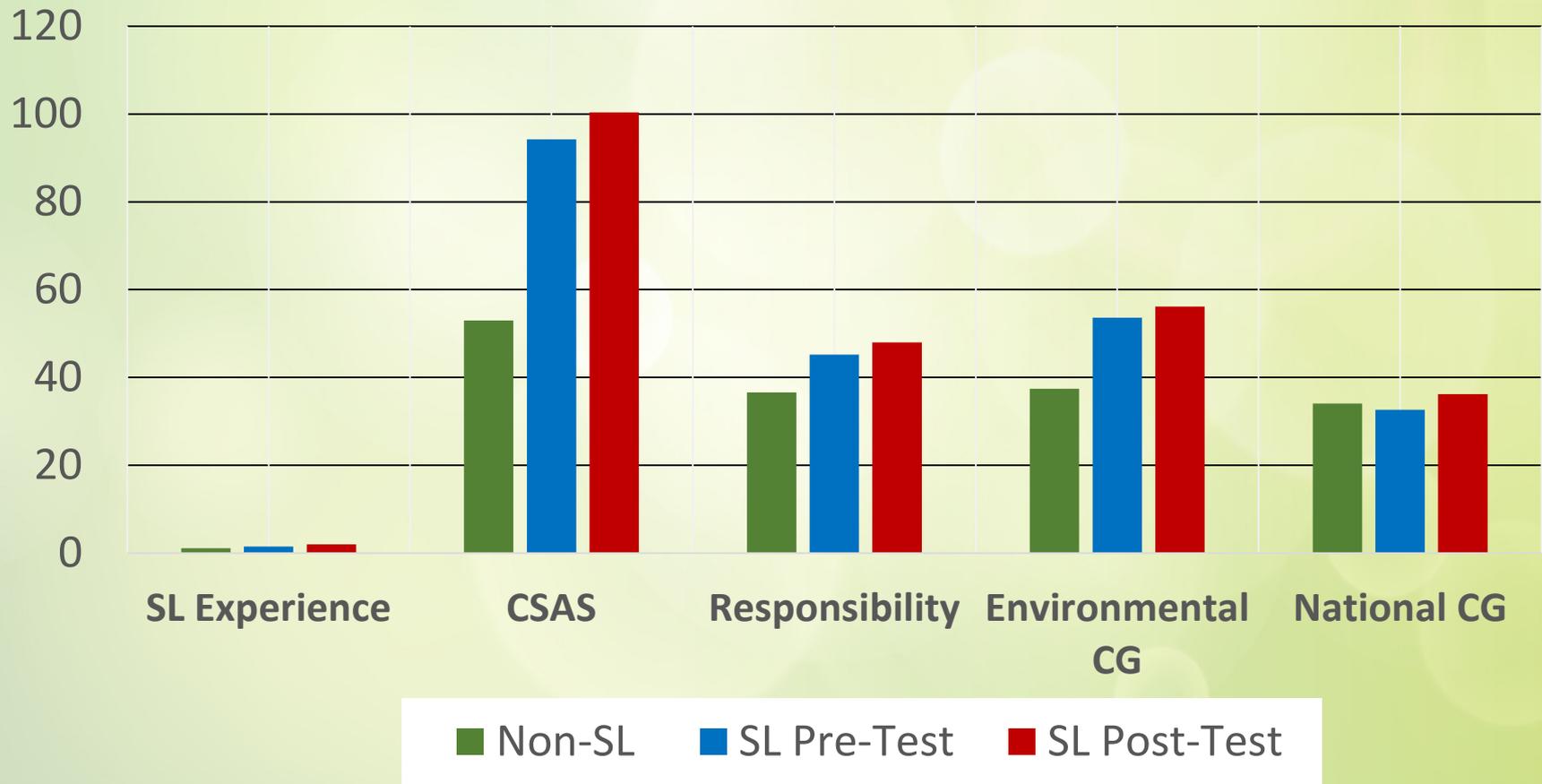


Community Service Attitude Scale





Service Learning and Five Variables



Repeated measures ANCOVA (Analysis of Covariance) test

Correlation Matrix of Study Variables

* : p<0.05; ** : p<0.01

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 School year	-										
2 SL Ex: Pre	1.514	-									
3 NSL Ex: Pre	1.129	0.410	-								
4 CSAS: Pre	0.944	0.885	0.271	-							
5 CSAS: Post	0.321	0.982	0.869	0.670	-						
6 R: Pre	0.694	0.282	0.901	0.168	0.335	-					
7 R: Post	0.659	1.000	1.000	0.679	0.018*	0.037*	-				
8 ECG: Pre	0.525	0.171	0.983	0.591	0.295	0.180	0.683	-			
9 ECG: Post	0.218	0.207	0.132	0.939	0.034*	0.291	0.218	0.102	-		
10 NCG: Pre	0.748	0.097	0.347	0.462	0.636	0.504	0.190	0.108	0.239	-	
11 NCG: Post	0.394	0.020*	0.745	0.723	0.872	0.024*	0.024*	0.621	0.075	0.083	-



Multiple Regression Analysis

* : $p < 0.05$; ** : $p < 0.01$

Variables	Variables	P value
Responsibility Pre-test	National C G Post-test	0.5671
SL experience Pre-test	National C G Post-test	0.3682
CSAS Post-test	Environmental C G Post-test	0.1572
Responsibility Post-test	National C G Post-test	0.5671
CSAS Post-test	Responsibility Post-test	0.0020**
Responsibility Pre-test	Responsibility Post-test	0.0093**



Findings

RQ 1: Does service learning have an impact on students' attitude toward community service?

Despite the fact that it suffers lack of valid data (N=17), this study established, in the mean level, that those who had previous classroom service learning experience showed higher value than those who had not (N=31) by 0.385. This showed that the mean value increased after the period in which students experienced voluntary activities; however, this does not necessarily indicate that service learning caused the mean value of CSAS to increase.



RQ 2: Does service learning have an impact on students' virtue of responsibility?

Regarding the virtue of responsibility, this research showed a significant positive change in the mean level. It also indicated a strong causal relationship between Pre- and Post-tests of the virtue of responsibility; however, it does not necessarily show that SL has significant impact on the virtue of responsibility. It may be fair to conclude that service learning was one of the major impacts on students' sense of responsibility in this study.



RQ 3: Does service learning have an impact on students' sense of common good, i.e. environmental protection (ECG) and awareness for national security (NCG)?

In regards to ECG, the data here showed a positive outcome in the mean level and in the significant difference level; however, multiple regression test did not support this result. Major reasons for this are that very few students are interested in ecology related volunteer activities, and that not many ecology related activities are available.



RQ 3: Does service learning have an impact on students' sense of common good, i.e. environmental protection (ECG) and awareness for national security (NCG)?

In regards to NCG, the data here showed a positive result in the mean level and in the significant difference level as well. Though multiple regression test supported the latter result, this research failed to present evidence in which service learning has positive impact on students' sense of national defense.



Open-ended Questions

- 13 (76%) of 17 students have come to think it positively to spend their time for others' wellbeing and for their own future through SL. 4 (24%) of them did not answer.
- 11 (65%) of them believe that through SL they could obtain encouragement for their own lives, they could learn about other people, they could broaden their view, and they could morally grow. 6 (35 %) of them did not answer. 8 (47%) of 17 students said that they grew morally.
- All 17 students said they care nothing about spending their time for others because spending their own time for service to other people makes them gain self-confidence and makes them enjoy the time spent for these people.



Since the sample size is very small, the increase found in the mean or significant difference found in the repeated measures ANCOVA could have happened by chance.



This concludes my presentation.

Thank you very much
for your kind attention.