EVALUATING THE COGNITIVE PROCESS OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN

A SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCE WHILE ENROLLED IN A COLLEGIATE

SOCIAL PROBLEMS CLASS

A Dissertation

by

DALE WAYNE PRACHT

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2007

Major Subject: Agricultural Education

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,   Barry L. Boyd
Committee Members, Christine D. Townsend
                                   Alvin Larke, Jr.
                                   Christine Stanley
Head of Department, Christine D. Townsend

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ABSTRACT

Evaluating the Cognitive Process of Students Participating in a Service-Learning

Experience While Enrolled in a Collegiate Social Problems Class. (May 2007)

Dale Wayne Pracht

B.S., Kansas State University; M.S., Kansas State University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Barry Boyd

This study evaluated the cognitive process of students participating in a 20-hour

service-learning experience while enrolled in a collegiate *Social Problems* course. This

study examined student attitudes about social problems and their ability to affect change

and examined relationships between demographic variables, student attitudes, and their

stages of cognitive process.

The population was all students who were enrolled in a *Social Problems* course

during the Fall 2005 semester. Of the 77 students enrolled in the course, 48 completed

both the pre-test and post-test questionnaire and 64 completed the service-learning

journals and papers.

The researcher used a mixed method research design. The quantitative study

used a pre-test and post-test questionnaire to evaluate changes in attitude towards service

learning. The qualitative study evaluated journal entries and papers using the Constant

Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis to assess stages of cognitive development.

The major findings of the study were: 1) Students progressed through six stages

of cognitive development - *Shock, Guilt, Normalization, Cultural Sensitivity,*

Engagement, and *Empowerment*, however no student experienced all stages; 2) Three new stages were discovered - *Guilt*, *Cultural Sensitivity*, and *Empowerment*; 3) All students who had not volunteered before experienced *Shock*; 4) *Shock* occurred for some students who had previously volunteered; 5) Students experiencing *Guilt* were primarily White and from families with parental incomes greater than $75,000 a year; 7) A majority of students experienced *Empowerment*; 8) Most students volunteering more than 10 hours a month experienced *Empowerment*; 9) All People of Color experienced *Empowerment*; 10) Results from pre-test and post-test questionnaires did not indicate a significant change in attitudes towards service-learning as a result of participating in the service-learning experience.

Educators should: 1) Be prepared to assist students as they experience multiple stages of the cognitive process during their service-learning experiences; 2) Give instruction in reflective journaling, provide students with guided journal questions, and monitor stages of the cognitive process; 3) Incorporate service-learning into curriculum to enhance cognitive learning and empower students; 4) Replicate with a more diverse population and larger sample size.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my mom, dad, and sister, Dana. Thank you for supporting me throughout my lifetime, especially during these past few years as I worked on this project. Thank you for listening to me as I tried to explain my research to you from time to time and for constantly encouraging me along the way. Thanks for your unending love, compassion, and support!

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

In an effort to enhance students' education, service-learning, a form of experiential education, has become an increasingly popular addition to college courses across the nation. Service-learning has typically been integrated into college curricula as either a co-curricular or academic model (Howard, 2003). Co-curricular service-learning takes place outside of an academic course, such as student participation in an alternative spring break trip or a one-time community service event. Academic service-learning is a part of an academic course, such as student participation in a service-learning project as assigned in a Social Problems class (Howard, 2003). Academic service-learning provides a needed service to the community while advancing students' learning and increasing civic participation, citizenship, and social responsibility (Howard, 2001).

Kendall (1990) found over 147 terms used in literature to represent service-learning, including community service, volunteerism, citizenship, and internship. However, for this study, service-learning is the term used to represent academic service-learning as determined by Schaffer (2002); service is integrated into the course by means of an assignment(s) that requires some form of reflection on the service in light of course objectives. Service provided by the students flows from course objectives; additionally,

_____

This dissertation follows the style and format of the *Journal of Agricultural Education.*

students provide meaningful service at their placement site.

The community determines this service. Effective service-learning is found at institutions whose leadership provides support for the instructional method, and assignments rooted in service must be addressed and evaluated accordingly. The term "service-learning" was hyphenated to indicate that both service and learning are equally important in the process (Sigmon, 1996). Eyler and Giles state, "The hyphen symbolizes the central role of reflection in the process of learning through community service" (1999, p. 4).

According to Eyler (2000), researchers need to move away from researching the impact of service-learning on students, and move toward researching how and what students learn during their service-learning experiences. A need exists to determine if there is a link between what students learned in the classroom and what students learned by participating in a service-learning experience, and if the service-learning experiences enhance classroom knowledge.

In order to fill the void in the service-learning research dealing with students' cognitive development, Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) attempted to determine how students learned while they are engaged in service-learning. By studying this question, the authors evaluated the cognitive process that students experienced while participating in social problems service-learning and discovered that there were three social-psychological stages of development for the students in this study: S*hock*, *Normalization*, and *Engagement* (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000).

The current study focuses on academic service-learning dealing with social issues because it is a better fit for the objectives established. The researcher evaluated service-learning in an upper-level sociology class, *Social Problems*, at Texas A&M University using both constant comparative analysis and a pre and post-test survey instrument to determine students' cognitive process.

Statement of the Problem

Eyler (2000) determined that researchers needed to move away from researching the impact of service-learning on students, and to move toward researching how and what students learned during their service-learning experiences. There is a need to determine if a link exists between what students learn in the classroom and what they learn by participating in a service-learning experience. It is also necessary to assess if the service-learning experiences enhance both academic and cognitive knowledge. Eyler (2000) states that although service contributed to personal and social development, its impact on learning, when paired with academic work, was uncertain. Further research is still needed to fully ascertain how service-learning affects intellectual outcomes such as knowledge, cognitive development, and problem-solving.

In order to fill the void in service-learning research dealing with students' cognitive process, Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) attempted to determine how students learned while they were engaged in service-learning dealing with social issues. By studying this question, the authors evaluated the cognitive process that students experienced while participating in social problems service-learning. The authors developed a survey instrument that was presented to the participants before and after

their service-learning experience. In addition, they collected qualitative data from guided journal assignments from a sub-group of participants.

The guided journal entries required that students answer five questions throughout their service-learning experience. The questions were: "1) What happened today? And what did I do? 2) What were the effects of what I did? 3) How did my service today make me feel? 4) What relationships am I building? 5) How does what I am observing at my placement relate to the concepts and ideas we are currently learning in class?" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p. 15). The authors then performed content analysis of the journal entries using data analysis procedures developed by McCracken (1988) to extrapolate the meaning of the entries. Through this analysis the authors discovered there were three stages of social psychological development for the students in this study: S*hock*, *Normalization,* and *Engagement* (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000). However, their findings were limited and there was a need to replicate their study with other audiences.

<div align="center">Purpose of the Study</div>

The purpose of this study was to assess the cognitive process of students in an upper level *Social Problems* class at a land-grant university during a 20-hour service-learning experience dealing with social issues.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1) Develop a demographic profile of students in the *Social Problems* class.

2) Describe student attitudes about social problems and ability to affect change at the beginning and end of the semester using a survey instrument.

3) Assess the steps in the cognitive process of students in a *Social Problems* class using the Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis to analyze their journals and papers.

4) Examine relationships between demographic variables, student attitudes, and level of cognitive process**.**

Significance of the Study

The service-learning model should be proven reliable before being implemented in classrooms. It is important for instructors to have the ability to recognize and anticipate the cognitive and affective developmental stages that students will go through as they participate in service-learning experiences. Knowing and understanding these stages will better prepare teachers as they incorporate the service-learning model into their classrooms. This new knowledge will assist them in facilitating conversational learning and reflective discussion, while providing personal assistance to students.

Definitions of Key Terms

Academic Service-Learning: Service is integrated into the course by means of an assignment(s) that requires some form of reflection on the service in light of course objectives. Service provided by the students flows from course objectives; additionally, students provide meaningful service at their placement site. The community determines this service. Effective service-learning is found at institutions whose leadership provides support, and assignments rooted in service must be addressed and evaluated accordingly (Schaffer, 2002).

Affective Domain: Includes objectives that emphasized a feeling, belief, value, or emotion (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1956).

Co-curricular Service-Learning: Service that takes place outside of an academic course, such as student participation in an alternative spring break trip or a one-time community service event (Howard, 2003).

Cognitive Domain: Includes objectives that emphasize remembering or reproducing something that has already been learned, as well as problem solving. Cognitive objectives vary from simple recall to synthesizing new information and ideas (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1956).

Cognitive Process: Descriptive map of the developmental stages that the learner undergoes during a community learning experience (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.14).

Cultural Sensitivity: A social-psychological stage of development that occurs when the learner acknowledges and faces stereotypes within himself or herself or is faced with confronting prejudice/discrimination issues that occur between clients he/she is serving.

Experience: An active-passive affair; it is not primarily cognitive…It includes cognition in the degree in which it is cumulative or amounts to something, or has meaning (Dewey, 1916).

Empowerment: A social-psychological stage of development in which the learner feels he/she has or can make a difference and is compelled to act on this.

Engagement: A social-psychological stage of development where the learner questions why his/her clients were in poverty and needed the services that their organizations provided. The learner becomes engaged in the learning process. The learner "is forced to reconcile the content of the coursework with their previous propensity toward individual attributions" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.19).

Guilt: A social-psychological stage of development in which the learner expresses feeling privileged, selfish, or shameful about what resources he/she has and how these resources have made it easier to live in society and achieve success.

Learning: The process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience (Kolb, 1984).

Normalization: "A social-psychological stage of development in which the learner slowly becomes accustomed to their new environments and working with people less fortunate than themselves. The learner begins to feel comfortable with his/her role in the community agency and begins to view their clients' social condition as normal. In this stage of development, many describe their clients as being very similar to themselves in many ways" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.17).

Psychomotor Domain: Examines the use of motor skills (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1956).

Reflection: Occurs when the learner becomes aware, transforms, analyzes recaptures, relives, explores, or links parts of an experience (Knapp, 1992).

Social Psychological Stages of Development: Descriptive map of the developmental stages or Cognitive Process that the learner undergoes during a community learning experience (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.14).

Shock: A social-psychological stage of development that "creates a jolt to the learner's perception of reality" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.16).

Limitations and Delimitations

The limitations and delimitations of this study design are that this is a sample of convenience in which students have self-selected the course. The researcher is only able to delimit the findings of the study to this class. Sample bias was present and this study will not be generalizable to all service-learning settings. Because the journals and survey instrument are based on self-report, respondents could have concealed information that they did not want others to know. Respondents may either intentionally or unintentionally provide inaccurate information when completing a journal or survey instrument (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

Assumptions

It is assumed that the students were truthful when writing their journal entries and final paper for class. It is assumed that the instrument used in the study measured attitudes about service-learning. The subscales measured were *Engagement* and *Empowerment*.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Service-Learning Defined

Service-learning definitions have ranged from simple and concise; "A pedagogy of learning through service" (Chisholm, 1987, p. 3) to complex and all encompassing definitions described in The National and Community Service Act of 1990 (as cited in Cairn & Kielsmeier, 1991)

> A method: (a) under which students learn and develop through active
> participation in thoughtfully-organized service experiences that meet
> actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the
> school and community; (b) that are integrated into the students' academic
> curriculum or provides structured time for the student to think, talk, or
> write about what he/she did and saw during the actual service activity, (c)
> that provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and
> knowledge in real life situations in their own communities; and (d) that
> enhances what is taught in the school by extending student learning
> beyond classroom and into the community and helps to foster the
> development of a sense of caring for others. (p. 75)

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 sought to bring consensus to the meaning of the term, service-learning. Likewise, Kendall (1990) emphasized ten principles for practitioners to apply to their service-learning experiences. Those principles are summarized in the following five categories: (a) engaging students in

worthwhile, challenging structured service experiences that allow for critical reflection during the experience, (b) establishing clearly defined goals and responsibilities and commitment of each person and organization involved, (c) providing training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to achieve the learning goals established, (d) insuring that time commitment for service and learning is flexible, and (e) committing to program participation by and with diverse populations. After conducting an extensive review of service-learning literature, Schaffer (2002) identified seven factors or characteristics of effective service-learning programs or courses. These characteristics were: (a) service is integrated into the course by means of an assignment(s) that requires some form of reflection on the service in light of course objectives, (b) service provided by the students flows from course objectives, (c) students in the course provide meaningful service at their placement site, (d) members of the community define the need, (e) service the students provide meets a need or goal of some kind, (f) effective service-learning is found at institutions whose leadership provides support, and (g) assignments rooted in service must be addressed and evaluated accordingly.

For the purpose of this research, the seven characteristics of effective service-learning programs or courses will be used as the working definition of service-learning. Schaffer's definition was chosen because it represents the most extensive current review of 70 articles or texts of service-learning literature. From this review, Schaffer found that 30% or more of the literature contained these seven characteristics, one of which, institutional support, is not discussed in either Kendall's *Principles of Good Practice in*

Combining Service and Learning or The National and Community Service Act of 1990 (Schaffer, 2002).

Background of Service-Learning

According to Eyler (2000), service-learning engages students in meaningful activity that stimulates intellectual curiosity and motivates and empowers students into social action. A service-learning experience enhances learning of material from the traditional classroom curriculum, promotes personal development, fosters the development of civic responsibility and other values of citizenship, and benefits the community (Waterman, 1997).

 "Surveys conducted by the Independent Sector [suggested] that one quarter of all high school students [were] involved in service-learning courses" (as cited in Ferrari & Chapman, 1999, p. 1). Levine (as cited in Ferrari & Chapman, 1999, p. 1), found that over one-half of all college students had participated in volunteer activities. Ferrari and Chapman (1999) state that service-learning programs developed bonds between the community and the service-learning institution. Students were placed into a community setting as volunteers and gained educational and psychological benefits from the experience. Students also applied principles learned in the classroom to their community experience.

In their book, *Educating Students to make a Difference*, Ferrari and Chapman (1999) cite multiple examples where students and faculty perceived service-learning to have a positive impact on academics. In addition, they found service-learning had

positive impacts on student perceptions of personal growth in areas of self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as problem solving and leadership skills. They also discovered that students and faculty participating in service-learning have a greater awareness of social issues, a stronger sense of social responsibility, and a greater appreciation of diversity (Ferrari & Chapman 1999). Stafford, Boyd, and Lindner (2003) examined students' level of leadership skills following a service-learning project. They discovered, "Participants that engaged in immediate reflection following the service activity had a significantly higher level of development in the areas of Development, Contributor to Community, and Personal Leadership Development" (p. 10).

Theoretical Framework

Early service-learning practitioners drew from theorists such as Bandura (1986), Dewey (1916), and Kolb (1984), to develop service-learning programs (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). More recent researchers who have built upon this early framework include Toole and Toole (1993), Cone and Harris (1996), and Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000).

Bandura (1986) created Social Cognitive Theory in which people are driven by external stimuli. The interaction of behavior, personal factors, and environmental factors influence human function. Behavior is regulated through a cognitive process and is learned vicariously through observing other people's behavior.

"Dewey's philosophy and writings, greatly contributed to the foundation of service-learning. Dewey linked education to experience, democratic community, social service, reflective inquiry, and education for social transformation" (Saltmarsh, 1996, p. 13), and

defined education as "the reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience" (Dewey, 1916, p. 91). Dewey (1916) defined experience as, "an active-passive affair; it is not primarily cognitive…It includes cognition in the degree in which it is cumulative or amounts to something, or has meaning" (p. 164). Thus, experience must have a cognitive component to avoid losing its value. He then expanded on this by saying that reflection occurs as one thinks about the relationship between what is attempted and the consequence of that action. According to Dewey (1916), all meaningful experiences require thought and as the quality of the experience changes, the experience becomes reflective. Experiential education integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor factors into the learning process (Carver, 1996).

Experiential learning theory provides a holistic model of the learning process as well as a multilinear model of adult development. These models are consistent with what we knew about how people learn, grow, and develop (Kolb & Boyatzis, 2000). Kolb (1984) defines learning as, "the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience" (p. 38). Kolb developed the four-stage model of experiential learning: (a) the concrete experience, (b) followed by reflection and observation, (c) abstract conceptualization and generalization, and (d) active experimentation of new concepts in new situations (Kolb, 1984). This model included the four learning abilities of divergent knowledge, assimilative knowledge, convergent knowledge, and accommodative knowledge (Kolb, 1984). This is a cyclical process and

one can begin at any stage. Service-learning is one of many experiential learning opportunities for students to engage in.

In both Dewey's and Kolb's theoretical models, reflection serves as an important component of the learning process. Reflection occurred when the learner was "becoming aware, transforming, analyzing, recapturing, reliving, exploring, or linking parts of an experience" (Knapp, 1992, p.17). Through reflection, students gained greater understanding and appreciation of new information, particularly when this activity took place within a nurturing environment (Knapp, 1992).

King and Kitchener (1994) stated that reflective judgment is a neglected facet of critical thinking and educators are responsible for teaching students to make judgments about social issues. "Critical thinking is typically characterized as a set of skills that can be acquired through a learning of increasingly complex behavior or rules" (p. 18). Students will develop as a result of continuous experience combined with guided reflection.

In addition to Kolb's model of experiential learning, the service-learning cycle, developed by Toole and Toole (as cited in Cumbo and Vadeboncoeur, 1999), was presented as an instrument to assess the cognitive development that occurs during a student's service-learning assignment. The service-learning cycle guided students through reflection by asking questions that fall into three categories: What, so what, and now what?

The service-learning model developed by the Louisiana State University Cooperative Extension Service (1997) combines Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model and Toole and Toole's (as cited in Cumbo and Vadeboncoeur, 1999) service-learning cycle. It consists of several steps that include creating partnerships with stakeholders (i.e. community members, schools, businesses), electing service-learning projects, preparing youth for service through the organizations' mission and goals, structuring reflection, and evaluation. This model has been used effectively in the Extension community and was effectively used by Stafford (2001) to study the effects of using service-learning to teach leadership skills to a 4-H youth population.

In an effort to clarify and make existing service-learning theories and models more applicable to educators, Cone and Harris (1996) developed a six-stage lens model. This model is based on the concept that students have different learning styles and come from unique experiences. Instructors used this model to define cognitively pragmatic tasks, assign the service experience, and facilitate critical oral and written reflection utilizing both academic and journal questions. Instructors then mediated learning; and evaluated learners on applications of their newly integrated concepts.

Using Lewis' model - Knowledge = the intersection of theory and experience - Cone and Harris (1996) believe the role of the service-learning educator is to "promote conceptual knowledge by uniting the abstract world of theories from the academy with the unique experiences of students at work in communities" (p. 41). Cone and Harris (1996) also believe that it is critical to help students recognize their privileged status and move from a sheltered view of the world to a more empathetic, multicultural perspective.

As cited in Cone and Harris (1996), Tierney describes this shift as a three-step process of "cultural learning":

1. Step (ping) out of (one's) geographic and temporal spheres of influence and in to the spheres of others. Such a step is more complex than it appears, for in doing so, the learner is consciously giving up components of a strategy of power in order to learn about the other.

2. Developing the desire and ability to listen…we listen to individuals' stories so that we understand their views of the world, and in doing so, we may have to radically transform our own understandings.

3. The internalization of the other's needs, wants, and desires…to understand different people's views of the world so well that we incorporate these views into our own outlook. (p. 40)

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) found that students participating in service-learning progressed through three identifiable stages of development - *Shock*, *Normalization*, and E*ngagemen*t**.**

The first stage, S*hock*, is described as being a "psychological jolt to student's perceptions of reality" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.16). For the most part, the college students came from economically privileged home environments and had generalized their own personal experiences to the rest of society. As the students began working with underprivileged clients, their perceptions of reality quickly changed (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000).

The second stage, *Normalization*, began to appear in the journal entries about the third week of the service-learning experiences. Students slowly became accustomed to their new environments and working with people less fortunate than themselves. Students began to feel comfortable with their role in the community agency and began to view their clients' social condition as normal. Many students described their clients as being very similar to themselves in many ways. Students indicated in their journals that they were beginning to understand the importance of service and comprehend the missions of the organizations for which they were volunteering. Many students also recognized their own stereotypes and negative perceptions that they brought with them to the experience. Students' viewpoints of their clients changed from individual attribution to structural attribution during this stage (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000).

During the third stage, *Engagement*, students questioned why their clients were in poverty and needed the services that their organizations provided. Students became engaged in the learning process because the clients they worked with were not just hypothetical characters in a case study but were seen as "real people." In this stage, the students "were forced to reconcile the content of the coursework, which heavily emphasized the size and scope of structural inequalities in American society, with their previous propensity toward individual attributions."

If students perceived their clients as similar to themselves, then they began to consider structural attributions. "If they viewed their clients as dissimilar, undesirable, or unpleasant they tended to retain the individual level attributions that they brought to the course" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p. 19).

People in western cultures tend to believe that others' misfortunes are due to internal traits rather than external (structural) circumstances. In particular, this bias is directed at groups that tend to be targets of prejudice. Researchers have tended to describe attribution as either internal or external. However, Sperling, Wang, Kelly, and Hritsuk (2003) suggest that this model is too simple and propose a four-dimensional model – dispositional, cultural-deterministic, situational, or structural. They use the term dispositional rather than internal and they believe that the cultural-deterministic is "grounded in misinformed cultural stereotypes" (p. 7). They define two types of external attributions, situational or structural. They developed this new model because the traditional model failed to "capture the complexity of the attributional preferences" (p.6).

Another service-learning model, The Active Citizen Continuum developed by Break Away: the Alternative Break Connection, Inc. (2006) provided a model that explains this process. This model explains how students move from being a *Member* of society to becoming an Active Citizen. In this model students begin as members in the community and are generally not concerned with social problems. After serving as a *Volunteer*, the members become more educated about social issues and become *Conscientious Citizens* concerned about why the issues are present. Eventually students move towards becoming *Active Citizens* in the community.

Cognitive and Affective Domain Theories

Although no true separation of domains can occur in any learning experience, educational psychologists typically separate human learning into three conceptual

domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Martin & Briggs, 1986). The cognitive domain includes objectives that emphasize remembering or reproducing something that has already been learned, as well as problem solving. Cognitive objectives vary from simple recall to synthesizing new information and ideas. The affective domain includes objectives that emphasized a feeling, belief, value, or emotion. The psychomotor domain examines the use of motor skills (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1956).

Bloom's Taxonomy classifies student cognitive behaviors into distinct hierarchical levels. The levels that were created to describe cognitive learning were: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The categories of the affective domain include receiving, responding, valuing, organizing, and characterization by a value or value complex. Unlike cognitive behaviors, these categories were not found to be hierarchical (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1956).

Learning Theories Compared

Kolb and Boyatzis (2000) established that Experiential Learning Theory is differentiated from both cognitive and affective learning theories because it places an emphasis on experience as the central component of the learning process. In experiential learning, how one learns was as important as what one learns. Cognitive theories placed their emphasis on cognition while affective learning theories focused more on behavior and emotions. However, both place less emphasis on experience in the learning process. Another significant difference between experiential learning theory and other cognitive development theories was that experiential learning theory supports a multilinear process of development over a unilinear process (Kolb, 1984). Cognitive theorists such as

Piaget, Loevinger, Kohlberg, and Perry subscribe to the thought that individuals form cognitive structures to make sense of what they experience. The stages evolved in a developmental sequence becoming more complex, differentiated, and integrated. Development proceeds in a predictable sequence, but at an uneven pace, to the next stage. Once one is ready, he/she progresses to the next cognitive level. Both maturity and readiness from the person and stimulation from the environment are essential for growth to occur (Chickering & Reiser, 1993).

<div align="center">Summary of Review of Literature</div>

Service-learning engages students in meaningful activity that stimulates intellectual curiosity and motivates and empowers students into social action (Eyler, 2000). Early service-learning practitioners drew from theorists such as Bandura (1976), Dewey (1916), and Kolb (1984), to develop service-learning programs (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). All meaningful experiences require thought and as the quality of the experience changes, the experience becomes reflective (Dewey, 1916). Kolb (1984) defined learning as, "the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience" (p. 38) and developed a four-stage model of experiential learning: (a) the concrete experience, (b) followed by reflection and observation, (c) abstract conceptualization and generalization, and (d) active experimentation of new concepts in new situations. This model included the four learning abilities of divergent knowledge, assimilative knowledge, convergent knowledge, and accommodative knowledge.

More recent researchers who have built upon this early framework include, Cone and Harris (1996), Toole and Tool (1993) and Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000).

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) found that students participating in social problems

service-learning progressed through three identifiable stages of development - *Shock*,

Normalization, and *Engagement*. Another service-learning model, The Active Citizen

Continuum developed by Break Away: the Alternative Break Connection, Inc. (2006)

provided a model that explains this process. This model explains how students move

from being a *Member* of society to becoming an Active Citizen.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the cognitive process of students in an upper level *Social Problems* class at a land-grant university during a 20-hour service-learning experience dealing with social issues.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1) Develop a demographic profile of students in the *Social Problems* class.

2) Describe student attitudes about social problems and ability to affect change at the beginning and end of the semester using a survey instrument.

3) Assess the steps in the cognitive process of students in a *Social Problems* class using the Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis to analyze their journals and papers.

4) Examine relationships between demographic variables, student attitudes, and level of cognitive process.

Study Design

A mixed method research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative research methods, was used for this study. The strengths of combining the two methods helped to distinguish the attitudes of the participants and provided both quantitative and qualitative information (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of all students who were enrolled in an upper level Sociology course, *Social Problems*, at Texas A&M University (TAMU) during the Fall 2005 semester. This course was selected for this study as it is one of the few courses at TAMU to utilize service-learning as pedagogy. The instructor provided an optional 20-hour service-learning experience for the students enrolled in the course. This experience allowed students to work with non-profit agencies in the Bryan/College Station area. Agencies that were selected dealt with social problems such as assisting the elderly, homeless, rape victims, migrants, domestic violence, diseases, abuse, disabilities, youth, families, and the poor. Agencies represented were: Crestview Retirement, Migrant Tutoring Program, Barbara Bush Parent Center, Phoebe's Home, AIDS Services of Brazos Valley, Lincoln Recreational Center, American Cancer Society, Bryan High School ESL Newcomer/Tutorial Program, Services for Students with Disabilities, Habitat for Humanity, Camp Summit, Youth Club of the Permian Basin, United Way, Head Start, Boys and Girls Club, Brazos Valley Rape Crises Center, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Twin City Missions, Paul Green's Law Practice, Teen Pregnancy Agency, Elderly Need Agency, Service Learning Center, Law Office of Patrick Gendron, Faith Mission Storm Center, Safe Harbour, Child Protective Services, and the Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority.

Quantitative Research

Descriptive research utilizing a pre-test and post-test questionnaire (Appendix A) was used to describe the participants' attitudes towards serving their community both before and after their service-learning experience. All students present in class that day participated in the pre-test and post-test surveys. Non-response error was minimized as great care was taken to administer the pre-test and post-test during class periods that did not conflict with a pre-holiday or other determined low-attendance day. Students placed their names on the survey instruments to assist the researcher in distinguishing the surveys of students who elected to participate in the service-learning project from those who did not elect to participate in the service-learning experience.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire (Appendix A) was administered to all participants in the Social Problems class before and after their service-learning experience. The researcher requested permission to use and modify the questionnaire designed by Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000). One modification included questions related to the amount of community service students had completed prior to enrolling in the Social Problems class. Additional demographic questions were added to the questionnaire to determine socioeconomic status, student age, and ethnic background. The demographic information additions were needed to replicate the study performed by Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000), as they were able to obtain this information through their university records. The participants were asked to indicate their self-perceived view towards the issues using a six point Likert scale. The points on the scale were: 1 = Strongly

Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Slightly Disagree; 4 = Slightly Agree; 5 = Agree and 6 =

Strongly Agree.

The sub-scales *Engagement* and *Empowerment* (Appendix C) were used to

measure change in attitude towards social issues. Five additional questions were

examined. Reliability of the sub-scales was determined by calculating Cronbach's

alpha. Reliability for Engagement was 0.749 and for Empowerment, 0.738. The

questionnaire adhered to requirements established by Salant and Dillman (1994) for

validity and reliability. The questionnaire was pilot tested in the Summer 2005 Social

Problems class to ensure reliability and validity (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

To address Objectives #1 and #2, the quantitative analysis of data was conducted

using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. Confidence intervals

for statistical significance were set *a priori* at the .10 alpha levels. Data T-tests were run

to determine if the students developed any significant attitude changes between the first

day of class and the end of class. Correlation coefficients were then administered to

determine if a relationship existed between levels of cognitive development and select

variables (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

<div align="center">Qualitative Research</div>

Students wrote journal entries for each day of service. A grounded theory

approach was used to perform content analysis of the daily journals (Glaser & Strauss,

1967). The Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis (Denzin & Lincoln,

2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to analyze journal entries to identify the

common themes that emerged during the students' service-learning experience.

Only those students in the class who elected to participate in the social problems service-learning experience were analyzed. The researcher then performed a qualitative analysis of the content of all students' journal entries and agency evaluation papers (Henry, 1990; Salant & Dillman, 1994).

Students were provided with an informed consent form (Appendix E) to sign at the beginning of the semester. Confidentiality was preserved, as students were instructed to submit two separate copies of all journal entries and final papers to the instructor. The journals and papers that were given to the researcher had the names removed and replaced with a code to ensure that a dependable audit trail existed. Coding the instruments and adhering to evaluation strategies developed by Salant and Dillman (1994) reduced non-response error.

To address Objective #3, the Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to analyze the journal entries and papers from all 66 students who participated in the service-learning experience. Questions guiding the journaling process were "1) What happened today? And what did I do? 2) What were the effects of what I did? 3) How did my service today make me feel? 4) What relationships am I building? 5) How does what I am observing at my placement relate to the concepts and ideas we are currently learning in class?" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p. 15).

The Constant Comparative Method consisted of these four steps: 1) Comparing incidents applicable to each category, 2) Integrating categories and their properties, 3) Delimiting the theory, and 4) Writing the theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

For the first step of the Constant Comparative Method, *comparing incidents applicable to each category*, the researcher reviewed the journal entries and papers to determine themes that emerged and coded them into categories. Colored markers were used to differentiate respondent themes and to provide visual indications of emerging categories (Murphrey & Dooley, 2000). Then the themes were typed onto note cards to be easily placed into categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While coding, each incident was compared with those previously recorded to determine if it fit into an existing category or should be placed into its own category. The researcher then recorded findings and formed logical conclusions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

As coding continued, the analyst entered step two of the Constant Comparative Method, *integrating categories and their properties.* As themes emerged, the researcher determined their relatedness to an already existing category as well as determined new categories. Categories were then reduced and details elaborated upon. As each journal and paper was reviewed, new cases appeared. When the new cases were "theoretically saturated," the analyst started over on the original journal and papers that had already been reviewed until a saturation point occurred (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Themes determined by the analyst were then recorded onto note cards. Quotes from papers were indicated with a P and quotes from journals were coded using a J. Once the themes were established, the researcher then examined their relationships between demographic variables and level of cognitive process. The second level of coding was used to identify ethnicity, parents' combined annual income, and number of hours students volunteered monthly and were as follows: ethnicity (W, N), parents combined annual income, (H, L),

and number of hours volunteered monthly (<4, >4). Students indicating that they had no

hours of service as well as students indicating that they contribute more than 10 hours of

service per month were also coded using symbols. Code sheets (Appendix G) were

developed to determine the relationships that existed

The last step in the Constant Comparative Method was *writing the theory*.

During this stage of the process, the analyst coded data, a series of names, and a set of

unified themes. Once the categories were discovered the results were recorded (Glaser

& Strauss, 1967). See Appendix F.

<div style="text-align:center">Trustworthiness Criteria</div>

The researcher implemented triangulation, peer debriefing, a reflexive journal,

thick description, purposive sample, and an audit trail to ensure trustworthiness.

Credibility was ensured through triangulation as a survey instrument was administered

and content analysis was performed on both journal entries and a final paper. The

researcher used committee members and faculty and staff from outside the study to

analyze materials, working hypothesis, and the researcher's ideas and thoughts

(Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). See Appendix D.

Confirmability and dependability were ensured as the researcher maintained a

reflexive (methodological) journal highlighting the researcher's thoughts, ideas, and

progress on the research study. An audit trail consisting of papers, journals, index cards,

and computer records was maintained (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Writing a reflexive journal ensured transferability. Naturalistic inquiry relied on

purposive sampling to maximize the range of information obtained as well as to generate

the information upon which the emergent design or grounded theory was based. The decision to stop the qualitative portion of the study was made once all of the papers and journals were reviewed and redundancy of information occurred (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

CHAPTER 1V

FINDINGS

The study consisted of all students who were enrolled in an upper level

Sociology course, *Social Problems*, at Texas A&M University (TAMU) during the Fall

2005 semester. As a learning tool, the instructor provided an optional 20-hour service-

learning experience dealing with social issues for the students enrolled in the course.

The students selected agencies that dealt with social problems such as assisting the

elderly, homeless, rape victims, migrants, domestic violence victims, those with

diseases, abuse victims, the disabled, youth, families, and the poor. Agencies

represented were: Crestview Retirement, Migrant Tutoring Program, Barbara Bush

Parent Center, Phoebe's Home, AIDS Services of Brazos Valley, Lincoln Recreational

Center, American Cancer Society, Bryan High School ESL Newcomer/Tutorial

Program, Services for Students with Disabilities, Habitat for Humanity, Camp Summit,

Youth Club of the Permian Basin, United Way, Head Start, Boys and Girls Club, Brazos

Valley Rape Crises Center, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Twin

City Missions, Paul Green's Law Practice, Teen Pregnancy Agency, Elderly Need

Agency, Service Learning Center, Law Office of Patrick Gendron, Faith Mission Storm

Center, Safe Harbor, Child Protective Services, and the Mental Health Mental

Retardation Authority.

The purpose of this study was to assess the cognitive processes of students

participating in a 20-hour service-learning experience dealing with social issues while

enrolled in an upper level *Social Problems* class at a land-grant university. This study

was based on Dewey's theory of experiential learning and models that have built upon

that theory and was a replication of Rockquemore and Shaffer's (2000) study, *Toward a*

Theory of Engagement: A Cognitive Mapping of Service-Learning Experiences.

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) found that students participating in service-learning

in a social problems setting progressed through three identifiable stages of development

- *Shock*, *Normalization,* and *Engagement*.

Rockquemore and Schaffer's (2000) study was conducted at Pepperdine

University in Malibu, California. Their sub-sample included 120 students enrolled in

service-learning courses; 69 percent female and 31 percent male. Over half of their

students were from families with combined annual yearly incomes of at least $75,000,

and one-fourth were from families with combined yearly incomes of at least $150,000.

Their respondents were between the ages of 18-22 years of age. Their sub sample of

students was 80 percent White.

The sample of students participating in the study at Texas A&M University had

similar demographics. There were 77 students enrolled in the Social Problems Class.

There were 80 percent female and 20 percent male represented in the qualitative sample

and the majority fell within a similar age range of 18-22. There were 84 percent of

students who identified as White and 16% as People of Color. About half (47.9%) of the

students enrolled in the *Social Problems* class at Texas A&M University indicated that

their parents combined annual income was above $ 75,000 and over one fourth (27.1%)

indicated parents combined incomes of over $100,000.

The objectives of the study were to:

1) Develop a demographic profile of students in the *Social Problems* class at Texas A&M University.

2) Describe student attitudes about social problems and ability to affect change at the beginning and end of the semester using a survey instrument.

3) Assess the steps in the cognitive process of students in a *Social Problems* class using the Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis to analyze their journals.

4) Examine relationships between demographic variables, student attitudes, and level of cognitive process.

<div align="center">Findings Related to Objective One</div>

<div align="center">*Students Completing Questionnaires and Service-learning*</div>

The Sociology 314 *Social Problems* class at Texas A&M served as the population for this study. The total class participation was 77 students. Of those 77 students, 48 completed both the pre-test and post-test evaluation instrument and 64 completed the service-learning papers and journals. Of the 48 that completed the pre and post-test questionnaires, only one did not also participate in the service-learning component and complete the paper and journal assignments. It should be noted that the 16 students completing the service-learning experience did complete either the pre or post-test questionnaire but not both. Therefore, they were excluded from that part of the study. The gender representation of those respondents is presented in Table 1. Of the students completing questionnaires (Q), ten (20.8%) were male and thirty-eight (79.2%)

were female. In the group completing service-learning (SL), ten (15.6%) were male and

fifty-four (84.4%) were female.

Table 1

Gender Distribution of Participants from Social Problems Class, Texas A&M University

	Students Completing Questionnaire (Q)		Students Completing Service-learning (SL)	
Gender	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Male	10	20.8	10	15.6
Female	38	79.2	54	84.4
Total	48	100.0	64	100.0

Table 2 represents the age distribution of participants from the *Social Problems*

class. Of the Q group, thirteen (27.1%) students were age 19, thirteen (27.1%) were 20

years of age, seventeen (35.4%) were 21 years, one (2.1%) student was age 22, two

(4.2%) students were 23 years of age and one (2.1%) student was over 25 years of age.

Of the SL group, one (1.6%) student was age 18, eighteen (28.1%) were 19, eighteen

(28.1 %) were 20 years of age, twenty-one (32.8 %) were 21 years, two

(3.1 %) student was age 22, and four (6.3 %) students were 23 years of age.

Table 2

Age Distribution of Participants from Social Problems Class, Texas A&M University

Age	Students Completing Questionnaire (Q)		Students Completing Service-learning (SL)	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*
18	1	2.1	1	1.6
19	13	27.1	18	28.1
20	13	27.1	18	28.1
21	17	35.4	21	32.8
22	1	2.1	2	3.1
23	2	4.2	4	6.3
>25	1	2.1	0	0.0
Total	48	100.0	64	100.0

Table 3 describes the ethnic make-up of participants in the *Social Problems* class. Of the Q group, 40 (83.3%) of the students were White, four (8.3 %) students were Hispanic, two (4.2%) students were Asian American, and two (4.2%) students were African American. Of the SL group, four (6.2%) of the students were White, two (3.1%) students were Hispanic, six (9.4%) students were Asian American, and 52 (81.3%) students were African American.

Table 3

Ethnicity of Participants from Social Problems Class, Texas A&M University

		Students Completing Questionnaire (Q)		Students Completing Service-learning (SL)	
Ethnicity		*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
African American		2	4.2	4	6.2
Asian American		2	4.2	2	3.1
Hispanic		4	8.3	6	9.4
White		40	83.3	52	81.3
	Total	48	100.0	64	100.0

Table 4 represents the best estimate of parents' combined income. Of the Q group, two (4.2%) reported a combined income of <$25,000, ten (20.8%) reported combined incomes of $25,000-50,000, thirteen (27.1%) reported combined incomes of $50,001-$75,000, ten (20.8%) reported combined incomes of $75,001-$100,000, and thirteen (27.1%) reported incomes greater that $100,000. Of the SL group, two (3.1%) reported a combined income of <$25,000, thirteen (20.3%) reported combined incomes of $25,000-50,000, twenty-one (32.8%) reported combined incomes of $50,001-$75,000, eleven (17.2%) reported combined incomes of $75,001-$100,000, and seventeen (26.6%) reported incomes greater that $100,000.

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Table 4
Combined Parental Income of Participants from Social Problems Class, Texas A&M University

Annual Income	Students Completing Questionnaire (Q)		Students Completing Service-learning (SL)	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*
<25,000	2	4.2	2	3.1
25,000-50,000	10	20.8	13	20.3
50,001-75,000	13	27.1	21	32.8
75,001-100,000	10	20.8	11	17.2
>100,001	13	27.1	17	26.6
Total	48	100.0	64	100.0

The number of hours per month students had volunteered in their community prior to taking the *Social Problems* class is outlined in Table 5. Of the Q group, forty-six (95.8%) of the students had volunteered in the community prior to taking this class. Two (4.2 %) students had not volunteered any hours prior to taking this class. Four (8.3%) had volunteered less than 1 hour/month, eleven (22.9%) had volunteered 1-3 hours/month, sixteen (33.3%) had volunteered 4-6 hours/month, six (12.5%) had volunteered for 7-9 hours/month and nine (18.8%) had volunteered for >10 hours/month. Of the SL group, sixty-one (95.3%) of the students had volunteered in the community prior to taking this class. Three (4.7 %) students had not volunteered any hours prior to

taking this class. Six (9.4%) had volunteered less than 1 hour/month, thirteen (20.3%)

had volunteered 1-3 hours/month, sixteen (25.0%) had volunteered 4-6 hours/month,

eleven (23.4%) had volunteered for 7-9 hours/month and fifteen (23.4%) had

volunteered for >10 hours/month.

Table 5

Hours Volunteered Monthly by Participants Prior to Taking Social Problems Class,
Texas A&M University

	Students Completing Questionnaire (Q)		Students Completing Service-learning (SL)	
Hours volunteered	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
0	2	4.2	3	4.7
<1	4	8.3	6	9.4
1-3	11	22.9	13	20.3
4-6	16	33.3	16	25.0
7-9	6	12.5	11	17.2
>10	9	18.8	15	23.4
Total	48	100.0	64	100.0

Of the Q group, thirteen (27.1%) reported that their parents did regularly

volunteer in the community. Thirty-five (72.9%) reported that their parents did not

volunteer regularly in the community. Of the SL group, sixteen (25.0%) reported that

their parents did regularly volunteer in the community. Forty-eight (75.0%) reported

that their parents did not volunteer regularly in the community. This can be found in

Table 6.

Table 6

Representation of Parents of Participants from the Social Problems Class Who Volunteered in Their Communities

		Students Completing Questionnaire (Q)		Students Completing Service-learning (SL)	
Hours Parents' volunteered		*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Yes		13	27.1	16	25.0
No		35	72.9	48	75.0
	Total	48	100.0	64	100.0

Findings Related to Objective Two

Students Completing Questionnaire

Objective two was to describe student attitudes about social problems and their

ability to affect social change. This was accomplished by administering a pre and post-

instrument adapted from Rockquemore and Schaffer by the researcher. The instrument

was further divided into two sub scales: *Engagement* and *Empowerment.* Survey items

for each subscale are identified in Appendix C. The researcher compared the pre and

post-test scores on the *Engagement* scale using a paired-samples t-test and found no

significant differences. The researcher then compared the pre and post-test scores on the

Empowerment scale using paired-samples t-test and also found no significant

differences. These findings can be found in Table 7.

Table 7
Paired Sample t-test of Pre and Post Test Scores on the Attitude Scale (N=48)

Stages	Mean		SD		*t*	Sig. *
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post		
Engagement	3.98	4.00	.32	.46	-.42	.67
Empowerment	3.97	4.02	.33	.28	-.82	.41

* p<.10

Findings Related to Objective Three

Students Completing Service-learning

The third objective was to assess the cognitive process of students in a *Social*

Problems class using the Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis to

analyze journal and paper entries of each student. Students were required to write daily-

guided journal entries (Appendix B) as well as write a final agency evaluation paper.

The researcher to determine student cognitive development then evaluated these journals

and papers. All three stages discovered by Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) were

represented in student writings, and three additional stages also emerged in this study.

The codes for each respondent can be found in the Audit Trail in Appendix F.

Stage 1 – Shock

The first stage, *Shock,* is described as being a "psychological jolt to student's perceptions of reality" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.16). Students were shocked to encounter the social and economic hardships of the people they were serving in the respective social agencies in which they volunteered for. However, the levels of shock varied depending on students' past experiences. This was the first stage of Rockquemore and Shaffer's model and there was evidence that this stage was present in this study. Sixteen students experienced the *Shock* stage. The following students indicated experiencing shock, (4P, 4J, 9P, 11J, 13P, 14P, 18P, 24J, 26P, 34J, 39P, 39J, 43P, 43J, 47P, 48P, 50J, 62P, 63J).

An example of shock dealing with low socioeconomic status and lack of money is represented by what the following student had written in a journal entry:

It was just crazy how few of these students came in with no money and left with sad, disappointed faces. One little boy actually started crying when I told him he didn't have enough to buy a $4.00 book. I wanted so badly to buy it, but had no money on me. I guess it's just another thing he has to live without. (63J)

The same student was even more shocked when a student attempted to steal a book at the book fair:

I really couldn't believe it. I was always taught that stealing was wrong and I never really thought of trying. I never needed to steal. Unlike these kids I was given a significant amount of money for book fairs. (63J)

Other students were shocked about the poor neighborhoods and conditions people were living in throughout their community (14P, 39J, 39P). This condition was best expressed in this student's paper:

> I found it hard to believe that there are actually people in my community living in such deplorable conditions. I couldn't help but get a bad and uncomfortable feeling as I drove these streets on my way to the project house that would soon be an eye-opening experience for me. I couldn't help but feel as though I didn't belong in the area in which I had so unwittingly trudged…as I mentioned earlier, I have seldom been exposed to such dilapidated neighborhoods and the sights were quite sobering for me. (39P)

Other students were shocked at the lack of resources many underprivileged people had and how hard they had to work to survive (14P, 34J, 43P, 43J, 47P, 48P). One student wrote, "It was surprising to me that the girl had no textbook nor did she know what chapter the homework was from." (43J)

> Another student wrote:

> I never realized how difficult babies are. I mean not to sound dumb or anything, but they're work! I've never changed so many diapers, heated so many bottles, or played with so many babies. These kids with babies must really have it in them to work hard. I mean they go to school, take care of their babies, and some even hold part-time jobs. (34J)

Stage 1.5 – Guilt

A new stage that was encountered was *Guilt*. *Guilt* falls between *Shock* and *Normalization* in the original stages attributed to cognitive development by Rockquemore and Shaffer (2000). *Guilt,* defined as students feeling privileged, selfish, or shameful about what resources he/she has and how these resources have made it easier to live in society and achieve success (9P, 10P, 26P, 45J). Four students expressed experiencing this stage through their journals and papers.

A student wrote:

Working with the Agency students has definitely infused some degree of guilt in me. I am in the honors program at a university that I love, yet I can't help but think how drastically different things might be for me if I had simply been born to a different family. We often take the opportunities and privileges that we are given for granted; I hope this stays with me. (10P)

Another student described feeling ashamed of the nice car he/she drove and the full tank of gas he/she had in it (9P). A student expressed forms of guilt by writing this journal entry, "I would not consider myself a selfish person, but sometimes I wish I could do more without being asked to because I have so much to offer the world." (45J)

And this student expressed guilt by writing:

I am a college student with a loving family, a nice place to live, a car and great friends and I was letting something small ruin my day. The clients that came into the café are faced with so many hardships and struggles, which make my struggles pale in comparison. (26P)

Stage 2 – Normalization

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) define normalization as a level of development in which students become accustomed to their new environments and to working with people less fortunate than themselves. During this stage, students begin to feel comfortable with their role in the community agency and began to view their clients' social condition as normal (Rockquemore and Schaffer, 2000). The *Normalization* stage was also evident in this study as 22 students showed evidence of experiencing these thoughts in their journals and papers.

Many of the students developed strong bonds and relationships with the clients they were serving (3J, 16P, 18P, 20P, 21J, 22P, 26P, 30J, 33P). A student wrote:

Throughout my 20 hours of service, I formed a friendly network of relationships between the employers and individuals, and I developed a larger attachment to one particular individual. Spending time with her and the other seniors gave me a desire to focus more on the elderly and make strides toward offering them a friendship and source of happiness where needed. (20P)

Another student described the relationship that was being formed in this way:

I was completely taken by surprise at how much Mary had opened up to me, especially on my first day, which made me feel that I really made a difference in someone's life by forming a relationship with her. After sharing this with me, I realized how much Mary wanted to learn and I could see how hard she was trying. (16P)

Students began developing a stronger appreciation and understanding of the clients they were serving (26P, 39P, 58J, 61J, 64J). An excerpt from a paper reads:

Once I loosened up and looked past stereotypes, I realized that most of the clients were compassionate and kind with a good sense of humor. My greatest accomplishment from my volunteering experience was to not be afraid to befriend someone what has had a different life experience than me. I stopped looking at their negative label as homeless people but as individuals. When I was at the agency I was challenged to look outside of my previous experience and become familiar with people I had unknowingly overlooked before. I found myself inspired by the strength displayed by some of the clients at the agency. (26P)

Another student expressed appreciation in this way:

At that time, little did I know that I was soon to gain an appreciation and greater understanding of the people residing in this area. Nor did I realize that I was soon to gain much pride in my actions that were to follow. (39P)

One student's view changed completely after his/her service-learning experience:

As I walked away from the site I had a different feeling toward the recipients of the homes. They are not lucky lotto winners of a free house; they are innovators who want more for themselves and their families and work hard to achieve the means to their goal. (64J)

Students also began to gain a greater degree of respect for different generations and cultures (20P, 30J, 37J, 58P).

A student expressed this respect by writing:

I enjoyed every moment I had with my client. It was easy for me to open up and

tell her personal aspects of my life without any fear. She was genuinely

interested in my life and vice versa. I never thought I would have gained and

learned so much from her about my life, history, and the joys that come with

aging. Even with our generation gap, we both have an understanding of each

other and appreciate the different values we contribute to society. (58P)

Stage 2.5 –Cultural Sensitivity

During the students' experiences dealing with social issue, many of the students

were faced with acknowledging and facing stereotypes within themselves or were faced

with confronting prejudice/discrimination issues that arose between clients they were

serving. Rockquemore and Shaffer (2000) did show examples of students

acknowledging and facing stereotypes during the *Normalization* stage, however, there

was significant enough evidence that this category existed to develop Stage 2.5, *Cultural*

Sensitivity. During this stage, students learned to accept differences, deal with racial

issues that occurred between clients, and overcome their own stereotypes and prejudice

(4J, 9P, 13P, 18J, 21J, 30J, 33P, 33J, 41J, 56P). Nine students (3 People of Color and 6

White students) showed evidence of experiencing this stage.

Racial issues between clients were addressed by students performing their *Social*

Problems service-learning experience (4J, 9P, 18J,). The following quote described in

detail a racial issue that was addressed by the facilitator in the agency:

Today was an interesting day a little White girl had crackers and cheese that she had brought to share with the class. The one little Black girl in the class wanted some cheese and the White girl didn't want to give her any. When asked why she said because she was not like her. The teacher, African American herself, asked her what she meant and she said that she was Black and Whites don't share with Blacks because she is not like her. The teacher and I sat down with her and read books to her and explained to her that here was no difference. That skin color meant nothing and there was no reason not to share. I was totally surprised by her answers. Surprised and shocked I think. (4J)

Another example of a situation in which the student tried to deal with a racial situation that arose in the best way the student knew how is described in this journal entry:

They even had preferences for the kinds of boys they would "date". They told me that they didn't want to date a Black boy. At first I was confused because all the girls were black. But by black they meant too dark-skinned…Of course, I tried to tell them that all black people are beautiful, and that they shouldn't make fun of the darker kids. I really don't think that what I said mattered. They already had their mind made up, and I'm pretty sure that this color complex is affirmed at home. What bothered me more is that these were young kids talking like that. (18J)

Another example of a time in which a student was forced to confront a

discrimination issue between clients is shown from an excerpt from this paper:

"Why am I so much different than you? How come my skin doesn't look like

yours?" She put her little hand on top of mine, "You see?" The visual cues are

obvious that she is African American and I am Caucasian. I didn't answer her

questions because I didn't have one. As she maneuvered into my lap with a

book, I told her, "The only difference between me and you is our skin color, and

that's it." She looked up at me with a grin and said, "Read to me." I really

hope I said the right thing. (9P)

Many observations dealing with discrimination issues were also observed by

students who were participating in their 20-hour service-learning experience. One

student observed that assimilating students of multiple nationalities into a classroom was

a way to help teach others to accept differences and was expressed through this journal

entry:

If anyone there was racist or felt uncomfortable, I was unable to tell. I couldn't

help but to think that these groups of children were subtly being taught to accept

each other's differences. That is a lesson we all should be taught as children.

(41J)

Yet another student observed that racial profiling takes place and wrote:

"I have seen a lot of racial grouping. The White kids play with White kids, the Hispanic

kids play with Hispanic kids, etc." (21J)

The following excerpt also demonstrates an example of students who were faced with overcoming his/her own prejudices:

> While I was working at the agency, there were actually many more people serving community service hours than volunteering hours. It was funny because they would often share their stories about what crime they had committed in order to have to serve hours. Most of them were very hard working, down to earth people. Although I must admit, when I first heard I would be working with criminals I was a little on edge. I'm glad I took the time to get to know each of them, and didn't prejudge them due to their existing stereotype. (13P)

Some students experienced what it feels like to be a minority by participating in their service-learning experience. One student wrote:

> Because I do not speak Spanish, while working there I always felt inadequate and much like an outsider (33J). I was usually not placed with these students, for I do not have the slightest skill in speaking Spanish. It was in my duties here that I for the first time in my life felt like a minority. It was only a small glimpse into a truth that unfortunately has defined their existence in America to this point. (33P)

Another student felt discriminated against because he was a male in a female dominated setting he wrote:

> I felt very unwelcome when volunteering at the agency because of the treatment I received while I was volunteering. A big challenge that the agency faces is that it is hard for men to be accepted. Wanting to volunteer at the center, I got many

negative vibes from many trainers. It was difficult for me to be accepted, even

though I probably had more experience than most of the other volunteers. I

wanted more than anything to learn how to help with this type of situation, but I

felt that because of my gender it was more difficult. (56P)

Stage 3 – Engagement

During the third stage, E*ngagement*, students questioned why their clients were

in poverty and needed the services that their organizations provided. Students became

engaged in the learning process because the clients they worked with were not just

hypothetical characters in a case study but were seen as "real people." In this stage, the

students "were forced to reconcile the content of the coursework, which heavily

emphasized the size and scope of structural inequalities in American society, with their

previous propensity toward individual attributions" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.

19). Twenty-five students indicated evidence of experiencing the stage E*ngagement* in

their writings.

One student wrote, "My volunteering experience made me realize that poverty

and homelessness are real and that is exists right here in my community" (26P). Another

student wrote, "My service today made me feel sympathy for the immigrant students,

especially those that want to succeed and are hindered by their inadequate structural

assimilation" (30J). This same student recognized the hurdles in place for students

despite the programs that are developed for them:

During my experience as a tutor I felt ambivalent in that I sometimes felt that I

was making a difference with the students, stimulating hope, building

relationships, and instilling skills in them that will be beneficial to their

acquisition of English. Simultaneously though, I felt that my efforts were not

enough to aide in complete structural assimilation, considering the lack of

certified teachers and intellectual capital in the program. (30P)

Another student came to a similar conclusion:

Although very satisfied in my role as a volunteer, it was still tough to realize that

even her 93 on her math test (and even programs such as this) are not enough to

enable her to succeed in life beyond high school. (47P)

After the service-learning experience dealing with social issues, one student

realized the importance of education:

This experience opened my eyes to how I viewed these children and how I can

help to alleviate this social issue. Education was always stressed to me to be the

key, however until now I never realized its true importance. For all one hundred,

thirty-five children enrolled in the migrant ESL tutoring program education is

their only key. As a volunteer I, along with the other volunteers and

director, are providing a positive role model to these children, which is important

when trying to alleviate the poverty cycle. (48P)

Students were able to successfully connect or "engage" classroom-learning

theory with what they were experiencing on their service-learning experiences (1P, 3P,

6J, 9P, 10P, 11P, 12P, 14P, 15J, 24P, 27P, 28J, 30P, 34P, 41P, 42P, 47P, 48P, 49P, 53J,

63P, 64P, 66J).

An example of *Engagement* is written in a student's paper:

As I have learned through class this semester, equity theory very clearly applies

to rape…the agency is dedicated to targeting this problem by teaching and re-

teaching this reality to its clients. (1P)

A student working in an agency that assisted AIDS clients wrote:

Poverty is so strictly tied to this disease. People feel so helpless in their situation

that they often don't want to continue treatment. Not only do they have a disease

that threatens their life, it also threatens their economic stability. People come

into the office just for food or toilet paper because they cannot afford it. (6J)

This excerpt from a student's paper indicates evidence that the student was

engaged in learning:

This is an example of the cultural approach in solving social problems by the

needing of a mentor of the same cultural background in order to be successful,

however, structurally, the school system should, in my opinion, be able to

provide the migrant students with a sufficient tutor that can meet all the

educational needs of the student. (3P)

An example of how one student was able to connect his/her experience with the

agency and what was learned in the classroom is as follows:

The solutions discussed in class to reduce inter-group conflict are some examples

of this agency's strategies. The agency stresses multi-ability, provides role

models, decreases inequality by educating minorities, shares common goals,

provides a positive environment and proactive leaders. The agency continues to

try to solve the social problem of poverty affecting education. (63P)

Another student even connected what was being learned at the agency with a

book that was assigned for class:

It was interesting to listen to the caseworker interact with clients and hear the

combination of personal factors and structural factors contributing to poverty.

The way they talked about problems getting jobs and staying on SSI for medical

or psychological problems reminded me of the stories in *The Working Poor*.

(28J)

One student even stated that the agency was not necessarily relieving social

issues according to theories learned about in class. This student wrote:

As far as my knowledge runs, this agency is not doing anything on the prevention

of students dropping out of high school. This means that if nothing is done for

the prevention then they are not aiding in the solution of student drop

outs…What can be done to motivate young people to stay in school and become

a high school graduate rather than a drop out...Cultural and structural factors

must be taken care of first. (9P)

An example of views that were strengthened is shown from this example:

This experience has been an extremely valuable one – both rewarding and

sobering. I haven't necessarily had my views changed; but they've definitely

been cemented, the value of education, the importance of honesty and motivation

from teachers, the often overlooked efforts of tracking and teacher expectations.
(10P)

Stage 3.5 Empowerment

Empowerment is a stage that is defined as feeling that one can make a difference and is compelled to act on this. In this stage, students indicated that they felt empowered to make a difference in society or in the agency in which they volunteered. Some students' service-learning experiences dealing with social issues even helped to confirm their career paths. And other students indicated that their experience made them feel like a better person and even others described their experience as rewarding. Forty-one students indicated that they became empowered to do more after their service-learning experience.

Students described that it was rewarding to do their service-learning experience and that they felt that they were able to make a positive difference for others (13P, 21J, 27P, 36P, 37J, 41J, 45J, 46P, 50P, 53P, 58J, 60P, 62P, 64P). One student described the experience in this way:

One of the kids told me that they really like that I read to them when I am at the Agency. She told me that she enjoys reading when I read to her. Hearing that little girl tell me that made my day. No it made my week. I feel like I am making a difference! Whoop! That is awesome! (21J)

Another student wrote:

I felt that I contributed a great deal to the agency during my volunteering

experience. I put in a lot of hours of sweat and hard work to help make a

difference at my agency. (13J)

The student then wrote:

Every day I went home feeling like I was a better person for what I had

accomplished that day. No matter how my day was going   before I volunteered,

I always left with a smile on my face. (13P)

Other students indicated that they became a positive influence and served as a

role model for others during their social problems service-learning experience (3J, 7J,

8P, 21J, 23P, 32P, 34P, 37J, 42P, 53J). One student wrote,

There are so many teen parents out there who just need encouragement and

support to stay in school, and while I cannot keep all of them from dropping out,

I can make a difference with a few. And that is what I feel like I have done. I

truly feel like my time was spent encouraging and helping these teens to learn

that they have the ability and the means to succeed in school and life. (34P)

The service-learning experience even confirmed some students' career paths (3J,

7P, 19J, 21J). A student wrote, "This semester I have been debating on whether I should

teach. After my experience at the agency and tutoring I have a clearer sight on teaching

in the future" (7P). Another student wrote, "Her job seems like a lot of fun, just like one

I'd love to have one day" (19J).

Some students even developed a desire to do more (48P, 53P). And even others indicated that they were going to do more by volunteering with their agency in the future (1P, 8P, 13P, 14J, 18J, 20P, 21P, 22J, 24P, 36P, 39P, 40J, 41J, 43J, 45P, 47P, 50P, 51P, 58P, 64P,).

A student wrote:

> Thank you for giving me the opportunity to reach out and help people. I can honestly say that if I did not have to do this for a class, I probably never would have made the time do it on my own. Now that I have done this, I am looking forward to the next year with the agency…given the opportunity to volunteer at the agency was an unbelievable experience for me. It has always been a goal of mine to help people with their problems. (50P)

Some students even felt empowered to do more for their community as well as continue to contribute to society (6J, 16P, 24J, 56J, 57P, 14J, 52P). A statement that a student wrote summed this up:

> I have learned from my agency, and from class, that volunteering is not just for the community but is also for me. Volunteering helps me to own my community, and to have a special connection with the people in my community (16P).

> And one student wrote, "There has to be no room in our society for excuses – it is up to us to make it that way" (24J).

Findings Related to Objective Four

Students Completing Questionnaires

Objective four was to examine relationships between demographic variables, student attitudes, and level of cognitive process. Survey items for each subscale of the survey instrument are identified in Appendix C. ANOVAS were conducted to assess relationships between demographic variables gender, age, ethnicity, parents' combined annual income, hours per month of service, and parent participation in community service, and student attitudes on *Engagement* and *Empowerment* scales. The researcher also examined relationships between qualitative findings and demographic variables for ethnicity, income, and number of volunteer hours completed per month.

An ANOVA was conducted to assess differences by gender. The analysis of variance for gender showed no significant difference between males and females on the two sub-scales, *Engagement* and *Empowerment*. This data is shown in Table 8.

Table 8
Analysis of Variance of Scales Measuring Student Attitude by Gender Among All Respondents (N=48)

Scale	Mean Score by Gender		F	*P**
	Male	Female		
	N=9	N=39		
Engagement Post-test	4.18	3.96	1.62	.209
Empowerment Post-test	3.91	4.04	1.70	.198

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3=Slightly Disagree 4 = Slightly Agree 5=Agree 6=Strongly Disagree
*p<.10

Because there was only one student that was age 18, 18-19 year-old students were combined to run the analysis of variance for the age variable. Students 23 years of age or older were also combined into one category to run the analysis of variance. The analysis of variance scales measuring student attitude by age among all respondents showed no significant differences among the subscales *Engagement* and *Empowerment* and is represented in Table 9.

Table 9
Analysis of Variance of Scales Measuring Student Attitude by Age Among All Respondents (N=48)

Scale	Mean Score by Age					F	*P* *
	18-19	20	21	22	23+		
	N=11	N=13	N=16	N=5	N=3		
Engagement Post-test	4.15	3.98	3.91	4.20	3.73	.918	.462
Empowerment Post-test	4.10	3.97	4.08	3.87	3.83	1.249	.305

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3=Slightly Disagree 4 = Slightly Agree 5=Agree 6=Strongly Disagree
*p<.10

Because there were too few African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and Native American, all ethnic groups other than White were recoded into one variable called People of Color. No significant differences were found for the *Engagement* and *Empowerment* scales.

Table 10

Analysis of Variance of Scales Measuring Student Attitude by Ethnicity Among All Respondents (N=48)

	Mean Score by Ethnicity			
Scale	White	People of Color	F	*P**
	N=40	N=8		
Engagement Post-test	3.99	4.10	.418	.521
Empowerment Post-test	4.03	3.97	.269	.607

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3=Slightly Disagree 4 = Slightly Agree 5=Agree 6=Strongly Disagree
*p<.10

An ANOVA was conducted to assess differences between parents' combined annual income on each sub-scale. The analysis of variance for parents' combined annual income showed that no significant differences existed between parents' combined annual income levels on any of the two subscales. This data is shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Analysis of Variance of Scales Measuring Student Attitude by Parents' Combined Annual Income Among All Respondents (N=48)

Scale	Mean of Parents' Combined Income						F	*P**
	0	<25,000	25,000-50,000	50,001-75,000	75001-100,000	>100,001		
	N=1	N=2	N=7	N=12	N=12	N=14		
Engagement Post-test	4.00	4.20	3.77	4.18	3.97	3.97	.822	.541
Empowerment Post-test	4.0	4.33	3.86	4.13	3.97	4.00	1.52	.206

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3=Slightly Disagree 4 = Slightly Agree
5=Agree 6=Strongly Disagree
*p<.10

An ANOVA was conducted comparing the amount of hours students volunteered per month in their communities on each sub-scale. The analysis of variance measuring student attitudes by hours per month of service showed no significant differences among the two sub-scales of *Engagement* and *Empowerment.* This finding is represented in Table 12.

Table 12

Analysis of Variance of Scales Measuring Student Attitude by Hours per Month of Service among All Respondents (N=48)

	Mean Hours Per Week of Service						
Scale	<1	1-3	4-6	7-9	>10	F	*P**
	N=3	N=5	N=10	N=18	N=12		
Engagement Post-test	3.80	3.96	4.04	4.09	3.92	.420	.793
Empowerment Post-test	3.97	4.02	4.00	4.01	4.04	.048	.995

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3=Slightly Disagree 4 = Slightly Agree 5=Agree 6=Strongly Disagree
*p<.10

An ANOVA was conducted to assess student attitudes by parents' participation in community service activities. The analysis of variance between student attitudes and parent participation in community service showed no significant differences on any of the two sub-scales. This finding is shown in Table 13.

Table 13

Analysis of Variance of Scales Measuring Student Attitude by Parent Participation in Community Service for All Respondents (N=48)

	Mean of Parents Volunteer Community Service			
Scale	Yes	No	F	*P**
	N=19	N=29		
Engagement Post-test	3.89	4.08	1.84	.182
Empowerment Post-test	4.08	3.97	1.90	.175

Note: 1 = Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3=Slightly Disagree 4 = Slightly Agree 5=Agree 6=Strongly Disagree
*p<.10

Students Completing Service-learning

Using the results from the SL group, the researcher discovered relationships between the cognitive stages *Shock, Guilt, Normalization, Cultural Sensitivity, Engagement,* and *Empowerment* and the demographic variables for ethnicity, income, and number of volunteer hours completed per month. The following relationships were found.

Shock

All three students who indicated they had not volunteered before experienced the *Shock* stage of the cognitive process. However, no relationships were evident because of parents' combined income levels or ethnicity.

Guilt

Of the four students who indicated *Guilt,* all were expressed by White males and females. Three of the four examples of *Guilt* were from students from families with a combined annual income of over $75,000.

Normalization

Of the students that indicated they experienced the cognitive stage of *Normalization*, no significant relationships were found in any of the three demographic areas of parents' combined income levels, ethnicity, or number of hours volunteered.

Cultural Sensitivity

No relationships were found between the students who indicated that they experienced the cognitive stage of *Cultural Sensitivity* and their report of parents' combined income levels, ethnicity, or number of hours volunteered.

Engagement

There were no relationships found between students who experienced the *Engagemen*t stage of cognitive processing and their demographic information.

Empowerment

All People of Color in the study showed evidence that they had experienced the E*mpowerment* stage of development. All students who had indicated that they volunteered over 10 hours per month also showed evidence through their papers or journals that they had experienced the *Empowerment* stage of development.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Statement of Problem

Eyler (2000) determined that research is needed to determine what students learn during service-learning experiences. There is a need to determine if a link exists between what students learn in the classroom and what they learn by participating in a service-learning experience. Further research is still needed to fully ascertain how service-learning affects intellectual outcomes such as knowledge, cognitive development, and problem-solving.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to assess the cognitive process of students in an upper level *Social Problems* class at a land-grant university during a 20-hour service-learning project dealing with social issues.

The objectives of the study were to:

1) Develop a demographic profile of students in the *Social Problems* class.

2) Describe student attitudes about social problems and ability to affect change at the beginning and end of the semester using a survey instrument.

3) Assess the steps in the cognitive process of students in a *Social Problems* class using the Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis to analyze their journals and papers.

4) Examine relationships between demographic variables, student attitudes, and level of cognitive process**.**

Summary of Review of Literature

According to Eyler (2000), service-learning engages students in meaningful activity that stimulates intellectual curiosity and motivates and empowers students into social action. Early service-learning practitioners drew from theorists such as Bandura (1976), Dewey (1916), and Kolb (1984), to develop service-learning programs (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999). According to Dewey (1916), all meaningful experiences require thought and as the quality of the experience changes, the experience becomes reflective. Kolb (1984) defined learning as, "the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience" (p. 38). Kolb developed the four-stage model of experiential learning: (a) the concrete experience, (b) followed by reflection and observation, (c) abstract conceptualization and generalization, and (d) active experimentation of new concepts in new situations (Kolb, 1984). This model included the four learning abilities of divergent knowledge, assimilative knowledge, convergent knowledge, and accommodative knowledge (Kolb, 1984).   More recent researchers who have built upon this early framework include, Cone and Harris (1996), Toole and Tool (1993) and Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000). Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) found that students participating in service-learning progressed through three identifiable stages of development - *Shock*, *Normalization*, and *Engagement*. The first stage, *Shock*, was described as being a "psychological jolt to student's perceptions of reality" (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000, p.16). The second stage, *Normalization*, emerged as students became accustomed to their new environments and began to describe their clients as being similar in many ways (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000). During the

third stage, *Engagement*, students questioned why their clients were in poverty and needed the services that their organizations provided as well as became engaged in the learning process (Rockquemore & Schaffer, 2000).

Delimitations and Limitations

The limitations and delimitations of this study design are that this is a sample of convenience in which students have self-selected the course. The researcher is only able to delimit the findings of the study to this class. Sample bias was present and this study will not be generalizable to all service-learning settings. Because the journals and survey instrument are based on self-report, respondents could have concealed information that they did not want others to know. Respondents may have either intentionally or unintentionally provided inaccurate information when completing their journals or survey instruments (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

Summary of Methodology

Study Design

A mixed method research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative research methods, was used for this study. The strengths of combining the two methods helped to distinguish the attitudes of the participants and provided both quantitative and qualitative information (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of all students who were enrolled in an upper-level Sociology course, *Social Problems*, at Texas A&M University (TAMU) during the Fall 2005 semester. This course was selected for this study as it is one of the few courses at TAMU to utilize service-learning as pedagogy. The instructor provided an optional 20-hour service-learning experience dealing with social issues for the students enrolled in the course. This experience allowed students to work with non-profit agencies in the Bryan/College Station area.

Quantitative Research

Descriptive research utilizing a pre-test and post-test questionnaire (Appendix A) was used to describe the participants' attitudes towards serving their community both before and after their service-learning experience. All students present in class the day each instrument was given participated in the pre-test and post-test surveys. Non-response error was minimized as great care was taken to administer the pre-test and post-test during class periods that did not conflict with a pre-holiday or other determined low-attendance day. Students placed their names on the survey instruments to assist the researcher in distinguishing the surveys of students who elected to participate in the service-learning experience from those who did not elect to participate in the service-learning experience.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire designed by Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) was administered to all participants in the *Social Problems* class before and after their

service-learning experience. The survey was modified to obtain additional demographic information such as socioeconomic status, student age, and ethnic background. The questionnaire adhered to requirements established by Salant and Dillman (1994) for validity and reliability. The questionnaire was pilot tested in the Summer 2005 *Social Problems* class to ensure reliability and validity (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

To address Objective One and Two, the quantitative analysis of data was conducted. Confidence intervals for statistical significance were set *a priori* at the .10 alpha level. T-tests were run on pre and post-test data to determine if the students developed any significant attitude changes between the first day of class and the end of class. Correlation Coefficients were then calculated to determine if relationships existed (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005).

Qualitative Research

Students wrote guided journal entries (Appendix B) for each day of service. In addition they wrote an agency evaluation paper. A grounded theory approach was used to perform content analysis of the daily journals (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to analyze journal entries and final papers to identify the common themes that emerged during the students' service-learning experience. The researcher performed a qualitative analysis of the content of all students' journal entries and agency evaluation papers (Henry, 1990; Salant & Dillman, 1994).

Trustworthiness Criteria

Trustworthiness was maintained through triangulation, peer debriefing, a reflexive journal, thick description, purposive sample, and an audit trail. Credibility was ensured through triangulation as a survey instrument was administered and content analysis was performed on both journal entries and a final paper. To ensure confirmability and dependability the researcher maintained a reflexive (methodological) journal highlighting the researcher's thoughts, ideas, and progress on the research study. An audit trail consisting of papers, journals, index cards, and computer records was also maintained (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Writing a reflexive journal ensured transferability. The decision to stop the qualitative portion of the study was made once all of the papers and journals were reviewed and redundancy of information occurred (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Summary of Key Findings

The findings of this research suggest the following conclusions pertaining to the cognitive process of students who participate in a service-learning experience while enrolled in a *Social Problems* class at Texas A&M University. The findings can only be generalized to the *Social Problems* class. Key findings are explained by objective in the following section.

Objective One

Students Completing Questionnaires and Service-learning

The first objective was to develop a demographic profile of students in the *Social Problems* class. This objective was addressed by finding frequencies and percentages on each of the following characteristics asked by participants' gender, age, ethnicity, combined parental annual income, hours volunteered per month by students, and parents' volunteer efforts. Conclusions to the objective are as follows:

In Rockquemore and Schaffer's (2000) sample there were 69% female and 31% male. There was a similar representation of students participating in this study (Table 1). A disproportionate number of females were represented in the two studies and should be noted. Research indicates that women are more likely to be interested in service-learning experiences as they are more inclined to enter into service oriented careers (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

All respondents of the Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) study and the majority of the students from this study (Table 2) were between the ages of 18-22 years of age. Both samples studied similar age groups in university settings consisting of traditional age college students. All conclusions made from these two studies must take into consideration that the findings came from a homogenous age group of 18-22 year old. The findings may not be similar when compared to non-traditional student populations.

The Rockquemore and Schaffer sample consisted of 80% White students and 14% Hispanic, 4% Black, and 2% Asian. The representative samples of ethnicity in this study (Table 3) were similar. Both studies had a larger numbers of White students

enrolled than People of Color. Both universities also had larger percentage of White

students enrolled than People of Color. Therefore, these findings are relatively limited.

The sample of students represented in the Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000)

research reported that over half were from families with combined incomes of at least

$75,000, and one fourth were from families with yearly incomes of at least $150,000.

The representative samples of parents combined incomes in this study (Table 4) were

similar. Therefore, the findings of these two studies are limited.

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) did not ask their participants to indicate the

number of hours they had participated in community service prior to completing their

community-service experience. The fact that the Texas A&M University students

participated in substantial hours of service (Table 5) prior to enrolling in the Social

Problems class could explain the emergence of the theme *Empowerment.* One could

conclude that since these students self-selected this course, as well as have volunteered a

substantial amount of hours in the community prior to enrolling in this course, that they

are interested and feel empowered to contribute to the community through service.

Another explanation for the addition of the *Empowerment* stage of development

is represented in The Active Citizen Continuum developed by Break Away: the

Alternative Break Connection, Inc. (2006) provided a model that explains this process.

This model explains how students move from being a *Member* of society to becoming an

Active Citizen. In this model students begin as members in the community and are

generally not concerned with social problems. After serving as a *Volunteer*, the

members become more educated about social issues and become *Conscientious Citizens*

concerned about why the issues are present. Eventually students move towards

becoming *Active Citizens* in the community.

Only about one quarter (Table 6) of the Texas A&M University sample reported

that their parents volunteered regularly in the community. Rockquemore and Schaffer

(2000) did not ask this question so no comparisons can be made. However, since over

50% of the students enrolled in the Social Problems class at Texas A&M University

reported parents combined incomes of less than $75,000, this could indicate that both

parents may have had to work and raise children leaving very little time to volunteer.

<div align="center">*Objective Two*</div>

Students Completing Questionnaire

The second objective of this study was to describe changes in student attitudes

about social problems and their ability to affect change using a pre and post-test survey

instrument. Two sub-scales were analyzed through comparative statistics as follows: 1)

Engagement, and 2) *Empowerment*.

The researcher found no significant differences between students' pre and post-

test scores on the *Engagement* and *Empowerment* scales. This could occur because the

sample of students only consisted of 48 students. This sample size may be too small to

indicate any statistical significance. This is also new research in the field and more

research may be needed.

A second reason this could have occurred is that students' limited knowledge at

the beginning of the class prevented them from accurately assessing baseline behaviors

related to service-learning and social issues. Rockwell and Kohn (1989) detected a

similar phenomenon when they found participants of Extension programs who lacked

prior knowledge would indicate that they had actually decreased in knowledge after the

educational program. Therefore, students in this study may have rated themselves

higher during the pre-test than they did after they had taken the *Social Problems* course

(Rockwell & Kohn, 1989).

The third conclusion is that there was not a significant difference in students'

attitudes after completing the class. Many of the students indicated that they had

volunteered as many as 10 hours per month already. By the time students enrolled in an

upper level *Social Problems* class at Texas A&M University, they may have already

formed their values about the impacts of service in their communities. However, even

though the quantitative instrument did not indicate any significant changes in attitude,

the qualitative study did provide ample evidence of students' changing thought patterns

and behaviors. Therefore, a qualitative approach may be the best method to use in

evaluating students who participate in social problems service-learning experiences.

Also, service-learning should always include a reflective component. This may require

educators, as well as students, be taught reflective writing.

Objective Three

Students Completing Service-Learning

The third objective was to assess the stages in the cognitive development of

students in a *Social Problems* class using the Constant Comparative Method of

Qualitative Analysis to analyze their reflective journals and papers. The researcher

discovered that students engaged in all three of the original stages, *Shock,*

Normalization, and *Engagement.* An additional 3 stages also emerged in this study. These stages were *Guilt, Cultural Sensitivity,* and *Empowerment.*

Students who participated in social problems service-learning experiences that also are required to reflect upon their experiences are likely to express that they have experienced multiple stages of development. This cognitive process included stages of *Shock, Guilt, Normalization, Cultural Sensitivity, Engagement, and Empowerment.* The researcher did not find any student who had experienced all stages during their 20-hour social problems service-learning experience. However, most students' experienced multiple stages of development.

Even though guided journal questions were provided and a paper was written, some students expressed themselves and their feelings and thoughts better and more articulately than others. Some students wrote very little in their reflection journals while others wrote volumes. The quantity and quality of students' writings impacted the researcher's ability to evaluate the students' cognitive learning process. It was found that in order to improve results class time should be devoted to teaching students how to write reflectively before they begin the journaling process.

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) indicated that that their students all experienced the three stages of cognitive development, *Shock, Normalization*, and *Engagement,* at nearly the same times during their service-learning experience. The researcher in this study found that all three stages of cognitive development did exist and multiple students encountered many of the stages. However, the researcher in this study lacked evidence that students experienced these stages at roughly the same times. The

researcher was unable to ascertain that all students experienced all stages of development while participating in their social problems service-learning experiences. Furthermore, there was significant evidence in the qualitative research that indicated that multiple students did encounter multiple stages of cognitive development during their social problems service-learning experiences.

Sixteen students expressed that they experienced *Shock* during their service-learning experiences dealing with social issues. There was a relationship between students who had not volunteered before and their frequent experience of the *Shock* stage of development. One can conclude that students who have not been exposed to volunteering with social issues prior to participating in a service-learning experience dealing with social problems will more than likely experience the *shock* stage of cognitive development.

Although Rockquemore and Shaffer (2000) did not report a cognitive processing stage, *Guilt,* in their findings, four Texas A&M University students enrolled in the *Social Problems* class did express experiencing *Guilt* during their social problems service-learning experiences. Therefore, it was determined that this was a significant enough finding to include in this model. The students who indicated that they experienced *Guilt* were White males and females and tended to be in families in which parents annual incomes were greater than $75,000 a year. This suggests that students who come from affluent families may encounter feelings of guilt as they participate in their social problems service-learning experiences.

The *Normalization* stage was evident in both the Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) study and the Texas A&M University study. In the Texas A&M University *Social Problems* class, 22 students experienced the cognitive development stage, *Normalization*. A resounding number of students indicated that they felt comfortable with their role and began viewing their client's conditions as similar to theirs during their social problems service-learning experiences.   One can conclude that this cognitive stage of development does occur for most students who participate in a service-learning experience dealing with social issues as long as students are allowed to have direct contact with clients.

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) included issues with dealing with stereotypes in their *Normalization* stage of cognitive development. However, the researcher determined this to be a separate and unique stage of cognitive development that deserved to have its own descriptive heading. This stage of development is now labeled *Cultural Sensitivity* and falls directly after *Normalization.* Nine Texas A&M University students expressed that they experienced the cognitive stage of *Cultural Sensitivity* while participating in their social problems service-learning experiences. Many students who experienced this stage needed to act upon these feelings immediately during their social problems service-learning experience. Students wrote of experiences in which their supervisors would assist them. Some students dealt with tense issues and wrote in their journals that they hoped they handled the situation correctly. It is important for educators to know that students are faced with these issues daily on their social problems service-learning experiences. Educators may want to explore journal entries further

depending on how the student responds to situations he/she is presented with during the service-learning experiences dealing with social issues.

The *Engagement* stage of cognitive development emerged in both the Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) study as well as in the Texas A&M University *Social Problems* study. Twenty-five Texas A&M University students wrote of how they connected coursework with their experiences in their social problems service-learning experiences. Evidence existed through excerpts from both journals and analysis papers that students drew connections between what they were studying in class and what they were experiencing through their service-learning experiences dealing with social issues. By replicating the Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) study, this study further showed evidence of students experiencing the cognitive stage of *Engagement.* One can be confident that findings from both studies adds to the vast amount of research that currently exists that reaffirms the need to continue to offer co-curricular service-learning experiences for students.

Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) included a few statements from students indicating that they would continue to work for agencies after completing their service-learning experience. Rockquemore and Schaffer (2000) included these findings in their *Normalization* stage of development. However, the researcher discovered that 41 Texas A&M University students enrolled in the *Social Problems* class indicated that they felt empowered to do more or felt that they were convinced to pursue a career in this field. Due to the numbers that expressed this desire as well as the importance of this finding, the researcher decided that this category deserved a name of its own. Therefore, the

stage *Empowerment* was added to the Rockquemore and Shaffer (2000) model. Students

who encountered the stage of *Empowerment* felt that they could make a difference and

would participate in future volunteer and community service activities. In this class

students experienced a move from being a *Member* of society to becoming an *Active*

Citizen, an indicator of their development along the Active Citizen Continuum (2006).

Students who indicated that they volunteered more than 10 hours per month also

showed evidence that they had experienced the E*mpowerment* stage of the cognitive

process. This implies that students who volunteer more than 10 hours a month have

possibly reached the stage of their development in which community issues have

become a priority for them.

Since Rockquemore and Schaffer's (2000) study, recent literature has indicated

that attribution theory may be a more complex process than the original internal/external

model most researchers have used. Sperling, Wang, Kelly, and Hritsuk (2003) proposed

that the traditional model did not capture the complexities of client experiences. They

proposed a four dimensional model categorized as dispositional, cultural-deterministic,

situational, or structural. This could be a factor in the three additional stages that were

identified in this study. The modern literature on attribution theory should be considered

for any future research.

<div align="center">Objective Four</div>

The purpose of objective four was to examine relationships between

demographic variables, student attitudes, and level of cognitive process. To determine

differences between demographic variables and student attitudes, two subscales were analyzed through comparative statistics: *Engagement* and *Empowerment*.

The analysis of variance for gender showed no significant differences between males and females on either of the two sub-scales. One could conclude that there is no difference in attitudes between males and females. However, this could also be because there were too few males represented in the study.

The analysis of variance scales measuring student attitude by age among all respondents showed no significant differences among the subscales *Engagement* and *Empowerment*. One could conclude that age did not affect any change in student attitudes. Or this result could be due to the researcher studying a sample from traditional college student population ranging from 18-22 years in age. Another factor that could have affected these findings could be due to the small number of students in some categories.

No significant differences by ethnicity were found for the *Engagement* and *Empowerment* scales. This could be because ethnicity does not affect students' attitudes toward *Engagement* and *Empowerment.* This could also be because of the small number of total students in the sample as well as the limited number of People of Color represented in the sample.

The analysis of variance for parents' combined annual income showed no significant differences existed between parents' combined annual income levels on any of the three subscales. This could be because the difference in parents' combined

incomes did not affect the attitudes of the students towards *Engagement* or *Empowerment.* This could have also resulted because the sample size was small.

The analysis of variance measuring student attitudes by hours per week of service showed no significant differences within the two subscales of *Engagement* and *Empowerment*. This could be because there was no difference in student attitudes within the two subscales or due to the fact that the sample size was relatively small. This could also be due to the fact that all but two of the students regularly volunteered prior to taking the class.

The analysis of variance between student attitudes and parent participation in community service showed no significant differences on any of the two subscales. This could indicate that there were no significant differences reported from students who had parents who had participated in volunteer service and those who did not. This could have also resulted in showing no significant difference because of the small sample size that was used.

Students Completing Service-Learning

To determine differences between demographics and level of cognitive process, writings of students who had completed their service-learning experiences were analyzed to determine if any relationships existed. The cognitive process stages 1) *Shock*, 2) *Guilt*, 3) *Normalization*, 4) *Cultural Sensitivity*, 5) *Engagement*, and 6) *Empowerment* were analyzed and coded. Demographic factors of ethnicity, parents' combined annual income, and hours of volunteer service were evaluated.

All three students who indicated that they had not volunteered before experienced the *Shock* stage of cognitive development. This stage occurred because students were assimilated into communities that they had not been exposed to before. No conclusions or relationships connected to the cognitive stage *Guilt* could be drawn for students when looking at parents' combined income levels or ethnicity. Fourteen students who had previously volunteered also experienced the *Shock* stage of development. Therefore, it can be concluded that students with all levels of previous volunteer experience can still experience shock if placed in service-learning settings that are different from those they had originally experienced.

The four students who participated in the social problems service-learning experience that had indicated that they experienced the cognitive development stage, *Guilt,* were White males and White females. Three of the four examples of *Guilt* were from students whose families had a combined annual income of over $75,000. Two of those students indicated that their families had combined annual income of over $100,000. However, it must be noted that twenty-eight students from families with a combined income of over $75,000 did not experience guilt. The student who was from a family with a combined annual income of $25,000-75,000 was placed in an agency dealing with homeless people and indicated that it was her first contact with them. All four students experiencing guilt had direct exposure to clients and worked for agencies that provided service to clients from a low socio-economic status. One can conclude that students' from affluent families or students that are exposed to the poor for the first time may experience feelings of guilt as they participate in their service-learning experiences.

Of the students who participated in the social problems service-learning experience that indicated they experienced the cognitive stage of *Normalization*, no significant relationships were found in any of the three demographic areas of parents' combined income levels, ethnicity, or number of hours volunteered. It can be concluded that there were no significant differences among all these variables.

Of the students who had participated in the social problems service-learning experience, no relationships were found for the cognitive stage of *Cultural Sensitivity* and their report of parents' combined income levels, ethnicity, or number of hours volunteered. One could conclude that there were no significant differences in this study as well as well as conclude that there was too small of a sample to determine if a relationship did exist.

Of the students who had participated in the social problems service-learning experience, there were no relationships found between students who experienced the *Engagement* stage of cognitive development and their demographic information. One could conclude that there were no significant differences between demographic segments and the students' ability to experience the *Engagement* stage of cognitive development.

All 12 People of Color in the service-learning study showed evidence they had experienced the E*mpowerment* stage of development. It was not necessary for these students to have completed 10 hours of service to indicate that they experienced the *Empowerment* stage of development as one student indicated volunteering less than four hours per month and still indicated being empowered. However that was only one

student out of twelve. Therefore, one could conclude that People of Color are likely to experience the *Empowerment* stage of development. One must be very cautious in making this conclusion due to the limited number of students represented in this study. All students in the study who had indicated that they volunteered over 10 hours a month also showed evidence through their papers or journals that they had experienced the *Empowerment* stage of development. Volunteering more than ten hours a month may empower students to make a difference in their communities. These students indicated that they were interested in continuing their involvement in their communities. They place a higher priority on social issues and also experience The Active Citizen Continuum (2006) stage of development, *Active Citizenship.* Both models show a direct relationship between time involved in participating in a service-learning experience dealing with social issues and the amount of involvement students will have in their communities upon the completion of the service.

Recommendations for Practice

It is recommended that, before instructors incorporate service-learning into their pedagogy, they should understand that students will experience multiple stages of social psychological development during their service-learning experience. Understanding these stages will assist instructors in developing proper community placements, reflection assignments, guest speakers, and provide proper case study and discussion opportunities throughout the students' service-learning experience.

It is recommended that students be given instruction in reflective journaling and be provided guided journal questions to aid them in the reflection process of their service-learning experience. This will enable students and instructors to better understand the students' cognitive processes.

Educators need to be aware that students who have not volunteered prior to participating in a service-learning experience or who are placed in an environment that is not similar to where they have volunteered previously may encounter the *Shock* stage of cognitive development. It is recommended that educators survey students prior to placing them in social problems service-learning environments in order to identify those students who may encounter the *Shock* stage of cognitive development and to assist in facilitating the students' experience. Educators implementing social problems service-learning into their curriculum should be aware that students who encounter the *Shock* stage may need additional opportunities to discuss their new perceptions in class or in private and need to be made aware that this stage may occur. Educators should facilitate the students working through this stage of development.

Students who encounter the *Guilt* stage of cognitive development may need avenues to express their emotions as well. Educators should be aware that this stage may develop for a small percentage of their students. It is recommended that educators require journals be turned in to them periodically throughout the semester in order to address those students who indicate that they have encountered these feelings.

It is critical that educators work hard to ensure that student placements with non-profit agencies will include direct contact with clients for the *Normalization* stage to occur. It is also important for educators to know that students are faced with the cognitive development stage, *Cultural Sensitivity,* throughout their service-learning experience. It is recommended that class assignments and discussions be developed to educate students about social prejudice issues. Educators must also read and respond to journal entries in a timely manner frequently throughout the semester to address students' cognitive stages of development and issues students may be encountering.

Students who participate in a service-learning experience process through a cognitive development stage of *Engagement* and may reach *Empowerment*. It is recommended that educators continue to offer co-curricular service-learning experiences to further enhance cognitive learning. More instructors of *Social Problems* classes should incorporate service-learning into their curriculum to assist students in becoming more engaged with their curriculum, more empowered to make a difference in their communities, and more aware of social issues within their own communities.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. This study should be replicated in other classrooms where co-curricular service-learning is taking place to further validate the themes that have emerged.

2. This study should be replicated with more diverse ethnic classrooms to determine if differences among the cognitive stages of development are found.

3. This study should be replicated in a setting where students have not previously volunteered in their communities to validate the relationship findings found in this study in which all students encountered the *Shock* stage of the cognitive process.

4. This study should be replicated in a setting where students continually volunteer more than 10 hours months to see if the relationship between volunteer service and a sense of feeling empowered are truly connected.

5. This study should be replicated to determine if the *Guilt* stage of development will continue to emerge, and if it does indeed immerge, is it primarily a relationship that exists among Whites as well as those who come from families with relatively high levels (greater than $75,000) of combined incomes.

6. This study should be replicated using a post then pre-survey instrument to account for pre and post-test bias (Rockwell & Kohn, 1989).

7. The quantitative portion of this research should be replicated with more participants. A greater N might show more significant differences in attitudes towards service-learning.

8. Further research is needed to indicate differences between various institutions of higher education as well as different student populations such as Historically Black Universities, universities with a high Hispanic population, community college, and private colleges.

9. Further research should be replicated at Universities that have a non-traditional age student body.

10. This study should be replicated having students date all journal entries to determine if students encounter stages at roughly the same time periods during their service-learning experiences.

11. Further researchers should utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods when researching service-learning experiences.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Circle the number that best describes your response from 1 = strongly disagree, to 6 = strongly agree.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am motivated by courses that contain hands on applications of theories to real life situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I am certain of what's required to succeed in the career that I want to pursue.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I feel that I can make a difference in the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. There is little I can do to end racism.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I learn course content best when connections to real life situations are made.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. It is important to find a career that directly benefits others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I am an active member of my community	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. It is important that I work toward equal opportunity for all people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I make very few assumptions about others.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I think that people should find time to contribute to their community.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
12. It is not necessary for me to volunteer my time.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. There is no relation between my real life experience and what I learn in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I have a good understanding of the needs and concerns of the community in which I live.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. The world would be a better place if differences between people were ignored.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I have a good understanding of the strengths and resources of the community in which I live.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. The things I learn in school are not applicable to my life outside of school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. To be effective in the community, all you need is a caring heart.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Being involved in a program to improve my community is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I do not feel well prepared to embark on my post-graduate plans (e.g. graduate school, employment, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I have very little impact on the community in which I live.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. In the United States, people basically have equal opportunity to do what they want in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I learn more when a course curriculum is relevant to my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please select the one best answer that describes you the best.

24. Gender
   A. Male
   B. Female

25. Age
   a. 18
   b. 19
   c. 20
   d. 21
   e. 22
   f. 23
   g. 24
   h. 25
   i. >25

26. Which is your primary Ethnicity
   a. African American
   b. Asian America
   c. Hispanic
   d. Native American
   e. White

27. What is your best estimate of your parents combined income?
   a. < $25,000
   b. 25,000 - 50,000
   c. 50,001 - 75,000
   d. 75,001 – 100,000
   e. >100,001

28. Have you volunteered in your community before?
   a. Yes
   b. No

29. If you answered yes to #28 please indicate the number of hours you volunteer per month.
   a. <1 hour
   b. 1-3
   c. 4-6
   d. 7-9
   e. >10

30. Do your parents regularly volunteer in the community?
   a. Yes
   b. No

                              Thank You

APPENDIX B

GUIDED JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Journal Questions

1. What happened today and what did I do?

2. What were the effects of what I did?

3. How did my service today make me feel?

4. What relationships am I building?

5. How does what I am observing at my placement relate to the concepts and ideas we are currently learning in class?

APPENDIX C

SURVEY INSTRUMENT SUB-SCALES

SURVEY INSTRUMENT SUB-SCALES

ENGAGEMENT

1.   I am motivated by courses that contain hands on applications of theories to real life situations.
5.   I learn course content best when connections to real life situations are made.
13. There is no relation between my real life experience and what I learn in school.
17. The things I learn in school are not applicable to my life outside of school.
23. I learn more when a course curriculum is relevant to my life.

EMPOWERMENT

2.   I am certain of what's required to succeed in the career that I want to pursue.
3.   I feel that I can make a difference in the world.
6.   It is important to find a career that directly benefits others.
7.   I am an active member of my community.
11. I think that people should find time to contribute to their community.
12. It is not necessary for me to volunteer my time.
14. I have a good understanding of the needs and concerns of the community in which I live.
16. I have a good understanding of the strengths and resources of the community in which I live.
18. To be effective in the community, all you need is a caring heart.
19. Being involved in a program to improve my community is important to me.
20. I do not feel well prepared to embark on my post-graduate plans (e.g. graduate school, employment, etc.).
21. I have very little impact on the community in which I live.

INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

4.   There is little I can do to end racism.
9.   It is important that I work toward equal opportunity for all people.
10. I make very few assumptions about others.
15. The world would be a better place if differences between people were ignored.
22. In the United States, people basically have equal opportunity to do what they want in life.

APPENDIX D

PEER DEBRIEFING

DISSERTATION PEER DEBRIEF MEMORANDUM

To: **Dr. Barry Boyd**
        Dr. Kim Dooley
        Dr. Alvin Larke, Jr.
        Dr. Christine Stanley
        Dr. Christine Townsend

From: **Dale Pracht**

Subject: **Dissertation research – Research findings at this point**

Date: **4/17/2006**

Time: **2:00 PM**

Location: **Scoates 102**

Research Summary

This research is built upon the three stages of development; *Shock, Normalization*, and *Engagement* discovered in the research study, *Toward a theory of Engagement: Cognitive mapping of service-learning experiences* (Rockquemore & Shaffer, 2000). At this point of my research, students have participated in a pretest and posttest survey instrument as well as wrote daily journals and a paper explaining their twenty hour service-learning experience. For the qualitative portion of my research, I have reviewed ten of the 66 journals and papers using constant comparative analysis to determine emerging themes.

I began this process by reviewing the journals/papers written by students in a *Social Problems* Class and by using constant comparative analysis; I have searched for categories discovered by Rockquemore & Shaffer (2000), as well as searched for any additional categories that may be emerging. Up to this point I have found *Shock*, *Normalization* and *Engagement*. In addition to these categories, I have also discovered two additional themes emerging; guilt, and confronting prejudice/discrimination.

At this point I am not sure if the new categories will become new stages of development or will eventually be categorized within the original 3 stages already determined by Rockquemore & Shaffer (2000). I am also finding that only one or two categories are emerging in each subject's journal/paper and there are subjects that do not indicate that they are experiencing any of these stages of development.

Synthesis of Journal and Paper Content

Of the 10 subjects journals/papers I have reviewed the following categories have emerged:

*Shock***:**

- Very tiring today, and I didn't realize how hard this was going to be. I knew that these kids would have low proficiency of English, but I wasn't prepared at how little they were exposed to and how much they would have to learn at such little a time. (3)

- Volunteering at the Agency really opened my eyes to a side I had never seen or thought really existed in the College Station area. (4)

- It was really interesting talking to one of the ladies who I worked with, she came [from] Africa and was letting me about the life she lived there and oh my God I don't think anybody should go through that. She had to walk miles and miles to get water, to go to school and to wash their clothing. Now she is living in the United States but still has to support people that are living in Africa. (4)

- Today was an interesting day. A little White girl had crackers and cheese that she had brought to share with the class. The one little black girl in the class wanted some cheese and the White girl didn't want to give her any. When asked why she said because she was not like her. The teacher, African American, herself asked her what she meant and she said that she was black and Whites don't share with blacks because she is not like her. The teacher and I sat down with her and read books to her and explained to her that here was no difference. That skin color meant nothing and there was no reason not to share. I was totally surprised by her answers. Surprised and shocked I think. (4)

- It then occurred to me that in order for most of these people to try and receive their GED it took a village to help them. Someone had to drop them off, take care of their children, find a quick dinner, and then find someone to pick them up. No wonder the class ever started on time. (9)

*Guilt***:**

- I was suddenly ashamed of the nice car I drove and the full tank of gas I had in it. (9)

- Working with the Agency students has definitely infused some degree of guilt in me. I am in the honors program at a University that I love, yet I can't help but think how drastically different things might be for me if I had simply been born

to a different family. We often take the opportunities and privileges that we are given for granted; I hope this stays with me. (10)

Normalization:
- I've discovered how extremely kindhearted these youth are. (3)

- I could relate too many of the client that were being served by the agency, because I myself am ESL. (4)

- I felt a great connection with the kids and the workers. (4)

Confronting Prejudice/Discrimination
- Today was an interesting day. A little White girl had crackers and cheese that she had brought to share with the class. The one little black girl in the class wanted some cheese and the White girl didn't want to give her any. When asked why she said because she was not like her. The teacher, African American, herself asked her what she meant and she said that she was black and Whites don't share with blacks because she is not like her. The teacher and I sat down with her and read books to her and explained to her that here was no difference. That skin color meant nothing and there was no reason not to share. I was totally surprised by her answers. Surprised and shocked I think. (4)

- "Why am I so much different than you? How come my skin doesn't look like yours?" She put her little hand on top of mine, "You see?" The visual cues are obvious that she is African American and I am Caucasian. I didn't answer her questions because I didn't have one. As she maneuvered into my lap with a book, I told her, "The only difference between me and you is our skin color and that's it." She looked up and me with a grin and said, "Read to me." I really hope I said the right thing. (9)

Engagement:
- "You go to A&M?" Suddenly at her question, I realize, "Oh my God, I could really be a mentor for someone…I can possibly be an inspiration to another Latino," which is a very underrepresented group in college enrollment when compared to the rest of the American population and when responsibility and pressure dawned on me, I felt terrified and doubted myself in being able to truly be a good example….I suddenly felt like the rest of her life almost rested in my ability to help her apply to college…Gotta make a change. (3)

- I remember my old friends and teachers who impacted my life. It made me realize that I can impact a life here too. (7)

- Today was my last day to volunteer at the agency. But who knows, I might try to work with another program through Texas A&M.

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF CONSENT

Evaluation of Service-Learning in a Collegiate *Social Problems* Class Using constant Comparative Analysis

I have been asked to participate in a research study that will access the cognitive and affective development of students in a twenty-hour service-learning project. I was selected to participate because I am enrolled in this section of Sociology 314. A total of 80 people have been asked to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to:
- Evaluate the cognitive development of students by evaluating journal entries and the writing assignment
- Observe student attitudes about social problems and ability to affect change at the beginning and end of the semester using a survey instrument
- Develop a demographic profile of students in the *Social Problems* Class
- Examine relationships between demographic variables, student attitudes, and cognitive level of development.

If I agree to be in this study, I will be asked to complete a pre and post test survey, complete journal entries, and a writing assignment. The study will only take one semester to complete. There are no risks associated with this research. There are also no benefits for the research participants.

This study is confidential. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking me to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Research records will be stored securely and only Dale Pracht and Dr. Barry Boyd will have access to these records. My decision whether or not to participate will not affect my status in Sociology 314 or my current or future relations with Texas A&M University. If I decide to participate, I am free to refuse to answer any of the questions that may make me uncomfortable. I can withdraw at any time without my status in Sociology 314 or my relations with the University, job, benefits, etc. being affected. I can contact Dale Pracht at 979-845-0614 or Dr. Barry Boyd at 979-862-3693 with any questions about this study.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board - Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, I can contact the institutional Review Board through Ms. Angelia Raines, Director of Research Compliance, Office of Vice President for Research at (979) 458-4067 (araines@vprmail.tamu.edu).

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this consent document for my records. By signing this document, I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date:_____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F

AUDIT TRAIL FOR

OBJECTIVE 3

Audit Trail for Objective 3 (Cognitive Process Stages of Development)

Theme	Codes
Shock	4P, 4J, 9P, 11J, 13P, 14P, 18P, 24J, 26P, 34J, 39J, 39P, 43P, 43J, 47P, 48P, 50J, 62P, 63J
Guilt	9P, 10P, 26P, 45J
Normalization	3J, 4P, 4J, 7P, 14J, 15J, 16P, 16J, 18P, 20P, 21J,21P, 22J, 22P, 26P, 30J, 33P, 34J, 34P, 37J, 39P, 46P, 53J, 58J, 58P, 61J, 63J, 64J
Cultural Sensitivity	4J, 9P, 13P, 18J, 21J, 30J, 33P, 33J, 41J, 56P
Engagement	1P, 3P, 6J, 9P, 10P, 11P, 12P, 12J, 14P, 15J, 24P, 26P, 27P, 28J,30J, 30P, 34P, 41P, 42P,47P, 48P,49P, 53J,56J, 63P, 64P,66J
Empowerment	1P, 3J, 4P, 6J, 7P,7J, 8P, 11J, 13P, 14J, 16P, 18J, 19J, 20P, 21J, 21P, 22J, 23P, 24P, 24J, 27P, 32P, 34P, 36P, 37J, 39P, 40J, 41J, 42P, 43J, 45J,45P, 46P, 47P, 48P, 50P, 51P, 52P, 53P,53J, 56J, 57P, 58J, 58P, 60P, 62P, 64P

APPENDIX G

AUDIT TRAIL FOR

OBJECTIVE 4

Audit Trail for Objective 4 (Relationship between Demographics and Cognitive Process Stages of Development)

Students	Shock	Guilt	Normalization	Cultural Sensitivity	Engagement	Empowerment
1WH>4+					P	P
2WL>4						
3NL>4+			J		P	J
4NL<4 *	P, J		P, J	J		P
5WL<4						
6WH>4+					J	J
7WL<4			P			P, J
8WL>4+						P
9WH>4	P	P		P	P	
10WH<4		P			P	
11NL>4	J				P	J
12WH<4					P, J	
13WL.4	P			P		P
14NL>4	P		J		P	J
15WL<4			J		J	
16NL>4			P, J			P
17WL>4+						
18NL>4	P		P	J		J
19WL>4						J
20 WL<4			P			P
21WH>4			J, P	J		J, P
22NL>4			P, J			J
23WH<4						P
24WH<4	J				P	P, J
25WL>4						
26WL>4	P	P	P		P	
27WH>4					P	P
28WH<4					J	
29WL<4						
30WL<4			J	J	J,P	
31WH<4						
32NH<4						P
33WH>4			P	P,J		
34	J		J, P		P	P
35WL>4						
36WH>4						P
37WH>4+			J			J
38WH<4						
39WH<4*	J,P		P			P
40WL<4						J
41WH>4+				J	P	J
42NL>4+					P	P

ID	Col1	Col2	Col3	Col4	Col5	Col6
43WH>4	P,J					J
44						
45WH>4		J				J, P
46WL<4			P			P
47WH>4	P				P	P
48WL>4+	P				P	P
49WH>4					P	
50WL<4*	J					P
51NL>4+						P
52WH>4						P
53NH>4			J		J	P,J
54WL>4						
55WH<4						
56NH>4				P	J	J
57WH<4						P
58WL>4			J, P			J, P
59WH>4						
60WH>4+						P
61WL<4			J			
62WH>4+	P					P
63WL>4	J		J		P	
64WH>4			J		P	P
65WL>4						
66WH>4					J	

Note:

W = White

N = People of Color

H = Parents Combined Income Greater than $75,000

L = Parents Combined Income Less than $75,000

>4 = Students that Volunteered More than 4 Hours per Month

<4 = Students that Volunteered Less than 4 Hours per Month

* = Students who do not volunteer at all

+ = Students who Volunteered more than 10 Hours per Month

VITA

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