Leading and Learning: How Leader Behaviors Predict Outcomes of Service

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INTRODUCTION

- The Citadel's mission is to educate and develop principled leaders in all walks of life. Service Learning and Community Engagement (SLCE) are considered essential components of our college's Leadership Development Model.

- An annual campus-wide day of service ("Leadership Day") engages the entire freshman and sophomore class in service. 2nd year students choose to serve with a diverse array of engagement sites on "Leadership Day".

- The institution adopted and began implementing in 2016 a theoretically grounded, empirical model of servant leadership. The model and its validated survey instrument focus on eight characteristics as defined by Dierendonck and Nuijten (2010).

- Saylor et al. (2017) report that student leaders involved in SLCE at The Citadel have measured high on servant leader effectiveness, suggesting that "single exposure could allow team members to form an opinion about their leaders".

- Findings of Cress et al. (2001) suggest that students who participate in leadership development and education programs show growth in civic responsibility, leadership skills, multicultural awareness, understanding of leadership theories, and personal and societal values.

- The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the leadership behaviors of sophomore team leaders and the higher quality of service provided to the community.

METHODS

Subjects

- Participants were **560 sophomores** aged 19-21 who engaged in a campus-wide service day in fall 2017 and were part of the 81% who consented to participate in an IRB-approved research study

- The final research sample consisted of **154 sophomores** between the ages of 19-21 who indicated they had enough information to rate their leaders on all eight characteristics and completed all five questions about the quality of their experience.

Measures & Procedures

- On our annual Leadership Day sophomores participate in service to the community undergoing various volunteer activities throughout the low country.

- Sophomores complete pre- and post-surveys measuring Eight Leadership Behaviors and Community Service Self-Efficacy.

- Student survey answers were recorded using both the Leadership Behavior Scale (LDRS), a 7-point Scale and the Community Service Self-Efficacy Scale (CSSES), a 10-point scale.

- These measures were analyzed through both a Pearson Correlation assessment and a Independent Samples T-test analysis using a quantitative method of research.

- Per IRB approved protocols, students had the option to consent for their answers for research at both pre and post assessment intervals
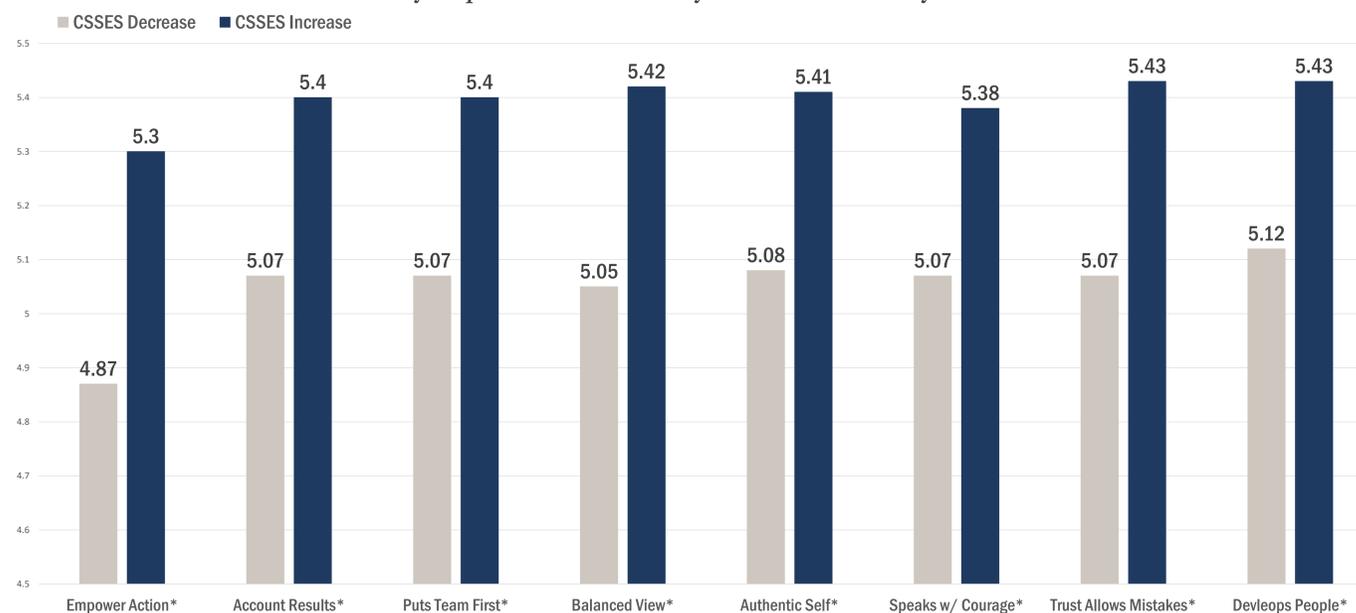
Table 1 – Summary of Pearson Correlation between leadership behaviors and quality of service

Impact Item	Hours of Previous Service	Total Eight Behaviors	I learned about the population I would be serving	I look forward to doing this service activity	I met the people I was serving	I worked in a different culture
I had fun	.129	.321**	.439**	.709**	.443**	.445**
I learned something	.148	.345**	.570**	.687**	.376**	.531**
This helped me develop	.057*	.432**	.545**	.664**	.457**	.606**
I would like to do more volunteering	.134	.391**	.482**	.775**	.384**	.504**
This changed my perception/beliefs	.047	.335**	.500**	.468**	.342**	.611**
This is a worthwhile use of my time	.126	.309**	.434**	.617**	.326**	.401**

*=p<.05
**=p<.01

Table 2 – Summary of t-tests comparing ratings of leader behaviors by respondents community service self-efficacy scores

CSSES Decrease | CSSES Increase

Behavior	CSSES Decrease	CSSES Increase
Empower Action*	4.87	5.3
Account Results*	5.07	5.4
Puts Team First*	5.07	5.4
Balanced View*	5.05	5.42
Authentic Self*	5.08	5.41
Speaks w/ Courage*	5.07	5.38
Trust Allows Mistakes*	5.07	5.43
Develops People*	5.12	5.43

FINDINGS

- Majority of the students rated all eight behaviors which suggested that even a single exposure experience could allow team members to form an opinion about their leaders.

- As summarized in **Table 1**, the Pearson Correlation found that there was a positive significant correlation between overall Leadership scores with all the post service outcomes:
  1) I had fun
  2) I learned something
  3) This helped me develop as a leader
  4) I would like to do more volunteering based on this service experience
  5) This service experience changed one or more of my perceptions or beliefs
  6) This is a worthwhile use of my time

- As seen in **Table 2**, the T-Test analysis compares those who improved versus those who declined on the CSSE revealed significant differences on all eight behaviors.

- The respondents who rated their leaders highly on the eight behaviors also showed greater benefit from their service experience in the realm of community service self-efficacy.

- Higher peer-team leader scores were more likely to lead to a higher reporter quality of service amongst sophomores.

DISCUSSION

- Based on this study, it is shown that offering a stronger leadership program would help produce stronger leader development that would achieve a higher quality of service.

- Educational programs that involve service learning and community engagement will offer students the opportunity to learn about cultures different from their own and the ability to change their belief or perspective.

- As seen from the Pearson Correlation, the students who are more invested in the population they have serve are more likely to want to serve again.

- In conclusion, students with higher community self-efficacy are more likely to rate their leadership behaviors higher.

- This is the first examination, therefore further research is needed for leadership behaviors of team leaders and their quality of service.

REFERENCES

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