Gendered Attitudes and Outcomes of Community Service-Learning

Milosh Raykov

Department of Education Studies

Faculty of Education

University of Malta

Email: milosh.raykov@um.edu.mt

Alison Taylor

Department of Educational Policy Studies

University of Alberta

Email: alison.taylor@ualberta.ca

Abstract: *This study analysed survey data from 525 students who took a community service-learning (CSL) course between 2005 and 2012 at the University of Alberta. Since just over three-quarters of these students was female, this study explores gender differences in student experiences of service learning. For example, there are significant differences regarding the type of male and female involvement in community. The study also found significant gender differences in motivations for participating. In addition, while similar proportions of male and female students would recommend this form of learning to other students, they do so for different reasons. Finally, the analysis of open-ended questions shows other gender differences in experiences and suggests actions that might mitigate the gender gaps in CSL..*

Keywords: Community service-learning, Gender differences, Outcomes of education, Attitudes

Introduction

Community Service-Learning (CSL) programmes exemplify the commitment of universities to promoting innovative teaching and an enrichment of student experience (e.g. University of Alberta Plan, Dare to Deliver, 2011-2015). Curricular service-learning involves a course-based educational experience and student participation in a service activity that meets community needs. Through course-based activities, students reflect on their off-campus learning to gain further understanding of course content and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996).

Increasingly, universities are implementing programmes like service-learning and cooperative education to encourage students' connections with the community and to develop their employability skills as labour markets become increasingly competitive and global. For example, the number of Community Service-Learning (CSL) programmes in colleges and universities across Canada grew from about half a dozen before 2005 to approximately thirty by 2009 (Charbonneau, 2009). Such programmes integrate learning, community involvement and reflection to instill in students a sense of civic engagement while offering service to the community (Dubinsky, 2006). These programmes are seen as particularly relevant for students in liberal arts whose initial labour market outcomes are generally poorer than for students in applied programmes (Adamuti-Trache et al,. 2006; Finnie & Frenette 2003; Lin et al., 2000).

Despite constant growth of the CSL programme at the University of Alberta that started with 230 students in 2005/2006, and enrolled 1,920 students in 2013/2014, a persistent gap regarding male and female student participation is evident. With small variations, the CSL programme enrolls between 72% and 78% while the proportion of male participants is just slightly above a quarter of all CSL participants, ranging between 22 and 30% (Figure 1).
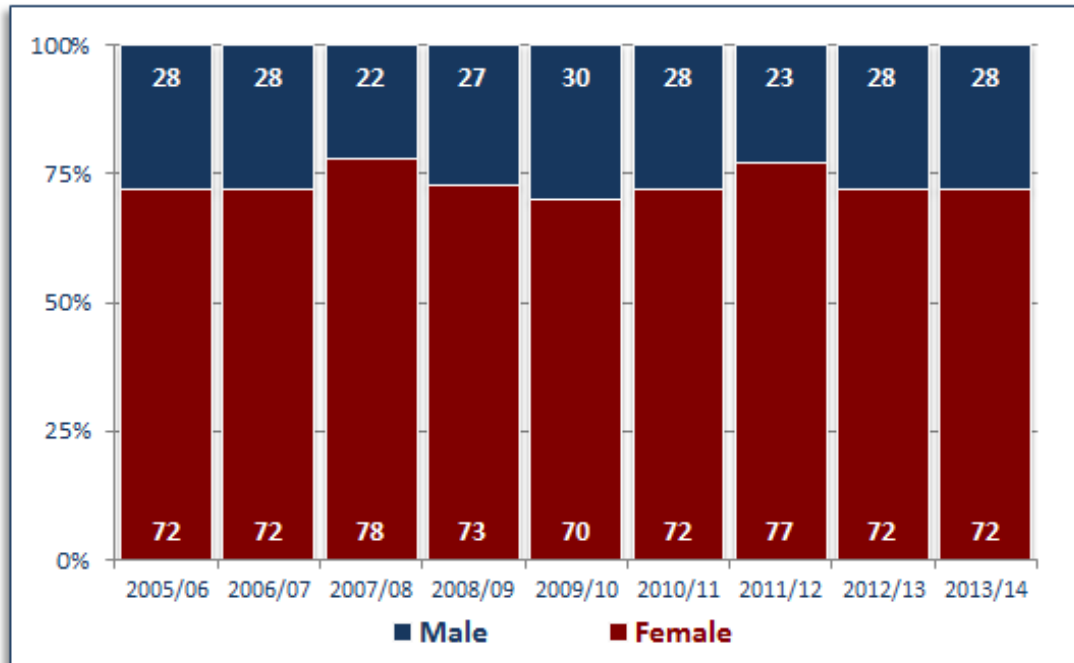
Figure 1: Gender and Enrollment in Community- and Classroom-based CSL
Source: University of Alberta Evaluation Surveys, 2005/2006-213/2014

Butin (2010) suggests that a spectrum of programmes fall under the rubric of 'service-learning' including those that give more emphasis to the service component and others that focus more on learning provision. Our study focuses on the role of such programmes in meeting the learning needs of all, female students as well as male students who are underrepresented in the most of CSL courses.

Since a large body of studies provide the evidence of gender differences regarding the attitudes and significantly lower participation of male students in community service learning, this applied research study aims to examine some of the insufficiently explored factors that may lead to these differences.

The number of CSL courses and students involved in Canadian university programmes is rapidly growing. Programme evaluation reports undertaken by institutions provide valuable evidence for the improvement of teaching practice and student experiences (cf. Mohammed & Hayward, 2012; Mohammed, 2013). However, there is a lack of studies

that examine the longer-term outcomes of CSL as well as the gender differences regarding participation in CSL.

Regarding gender differences, a number of writers have observed that female students (Chesler & Vasques, 2000; Lin et al., 2009) and female faculty (Itin, 1997; Verjee, 2012) in higher education are more likely to undertake CSL. Some of the explanations suggested are that females have a greater affinity for service work, may be preparing for service oriented careers, and display a greater openness to non-traditional educational programmes (Chesler & Vasques, 2000). At the University of Michigan, writers note also that African American students were overrepresented in CSL courses. Butin (2006) further observes that CSL in the US is commonly undertaken by the least powerful and most marginalised faculty (people of colour, women, and the untenured) and in the softest and most vocational disciplines (e.g., English, social work).

This study goes beyond the previous exploratory (Raykov, Taylor & Dorow et al., 2011; Taylor, 2014; Taylor & Raykov, 2014) and qualitative studies (Dorow et al., 2011; Rukavina & Richards, 2012; Simpson, 2012; Bell & Ocampo, 2011) of CSL at a Canadian university by including an analysis of student socio-demographic characteristics and gender in relation to participation in and outcomes of participation. It aims to provide insights into the participation of female and male students in this programme as a way of better supporting students' experiential learning and ensuring equitable outcomes.

Research methods

Our analysis includes data from 525 former CSL students who completed an online survey. It integrates quantitative and qualitative methods and compares CSL student outcomes at all three University of Alberta (U of A) campuses—North campus, Campus Saint-Jean, and Augustana campus. To place our CSL survey results in a broader context, we also analysed relevant data from the 2011 National Study of Student Engagement (NSSE), which included 3,662 first and fourth year students at the U of A.

This study applies a unique mixed-method research design involving a combination of exploratory and explanatory sequential methods (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007). Our CSL survey population was drawn from a database of students who participated in at least

one CSL course between 2005 and 2012 and who agreed to take part in follow-up research at the completion of their course. The online survey was developed with input received from a few focus groups with current students, instructors and community partners and also with assistance from four undergraduate research assistants in fall 2013. The survey builds on the previously developed CSL course evaluation instruments, with added focus on longer-term impacts of CSL participation. The CSL student survey (CSL SS) included a core group of questions for all students and modules specific for community-based and classroom-based CSL students. We differentiate between community-based and classroom-based CSL students because although community placements are mandatory in some courses, many instructors make them optional. In these cases, community-based CSL students are those who complete placements or projects in the community while classroom-based students were enrolled in CSL classes but opted out of community placements.

In total, 1,834 former CSL students were invited to participate between October and November 2013 and the overall response rate was 29% (525 of 1,834), which exceeds the usual participation rates for this type of study. This sample consists of 438 community-based students and 87 classroom-based students.

The analysis uses descriptive and bivariate statistics to establish basic profiles of participants and evaluate the impact of CSL participation on the outcome measures evaluated through this study. To determine factors that affect participation in community-based activities, the study also applies multivariate logistic regression. The findings represent all classroom and community-based participants but, in some sections, only community-based students were asked questions specific to their community experience. All statistically significant results are indicated in the following manner: $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$, and $p < .001 = ***$.

Results

The NSSE survey is widely used to measure student engagement (Kuh, 2009). Similar to other studies of student social engagement and the outcomes of higher education (e.g. Arum & Roksa, 2011), our analysis of the 2011 NSSE data shows that a very small number of students at the U of A (10%) are intensively engaged in community-based activities.

Our CSL SS sample participated in one or more courses with a CSL component. As noted above, a significant majority of respondents (83%) participated in a community-based placement or project for 20 hours over the semester; the other 17% were classroom-based students enrolled in CSL courses where placements were optional. Previous evaluations have found that most classroom-based participants do not participate in CSL projects because of time constraints (Mohammed, 2012).

Our comparisons of community-based and classroom-based students found no significant socio-demographic differences. The average age of the survey participants at the time of the survey was 24.3 years. More than one-third of participants (42%) were between 21 and 23 years of age and approximately one-third of participants (37%) were 24 years of age or older. A relatively small proportion of participants (6%) self-identified as Aboriginal (Status Indian, Non-status Indian, Inuit, Métis) and 14% considered themselves to be members of a visible minority group. Most participants in this study are living alone (83%) while 16% are married or common-law, and a very small number (1%) are divorced or separated. A relatively small number (8 percent) of participants reported having children.

A majority (80%) of the CSL survey participants was female, and this result is similar to findings of the annual U of A programme CSL evaluation surveys (71 % of 940 community-based CSL students and 66% of 525 classroom-based CSL students were female in 2012/13). This is partly due to the fact that most CSL courses are in the Arts faculty where there are more female students (62% of the undergraduate population in Arts was female in 2013/14). However, when CSL placements in community are optional in classes, disproportionately more female than male students participate.

The survey found that 42 % of former CSL participants' mothers attained a university degree and an additional 32% have some college, trade or CEGEP diploma or certificate. Comparing participants' mother's educational attainment from the CSL students and the 2011 NSSE data shows a very similar distribution of mothers' educational attainment. Statistical differences between the samples are not statistically significant (Chi-Square = 4.51). In contrast, a comparison of CSL survey participants' father's educational attainment with the NSSE data shows significant differences. According to our study, fathers from the NSSE sample were more likely to have attained a university degree (47% vs. 37%). In contrast,

fathers from the CSL survey more frequently reported some college, trade or CEGEP diploma or certificate (Chi-square is 21.49 and significant at a level above .001).

Consistent with other studies that demonstrate a positive correlation between university enrolment and parental education (e.g., Davies and Guppy, 2014), our study shows that most mothers of U of A students have educational attainment that is significantly higher than the average in Alberta and Canada (Statistics Canada, 2009). However, logistic regression of the NSSE data shows that, among enrolled students' parents, educational attainment is not significantly associated with participation in CSL and indicates that the students' social background is probably not a barrier to participation in SL (Table 1).

	Mother				Father			
	Sig.	Odds Ratios	-Lower 95% C.I.	Upper 95% C.I.	Sig.	Odds Ratios	-Lower 95% C.I	Upper 95% C.I.
Did not finish high school	.773	**1**			.342	**1**		
High school diploma	.881	**1.027**	.722	1.462	.958	**.992**	.729	1.349
Some or completed college	.672	**.928**	.657	1.311	.162	**.809**	.600	1.089
Attended university	.789	**1.063**	.679	1.666	.576	**1.125**	.744	1.702
Bachelor's degree	.753	**.948**	.679	1.323	.301	**.859**	.643	1.146
Master's degree	.516	**.877**	.590	1.303	.632	**.923**	.664	1.283
Doctoral degree	.230	**.712**	.410	1.239	.160	**.760**	.518	1.115

Table 1: Participation in SL and parents' educational attainment, Raw Odds Ratios
Source: **NSSE, 2011.**

When community-based respondents were asked about their primary activity in their CSL projects, most of them (42%) mentioned teaching or mentoring, followed by education and outreach (34%) and research and evaluation (33%). Less commonly mentioned activities included marketing and fund development (5%). These responses may reflect the kind of CSL courses offered at the U of A and instructors' learning objectives.

Figure 2 suggests that more women were involved in teaching or mentoring in CSL placements while more men were involved in research and evaluation and administrative projects. Gender differences regarding these three items are statistically significant. These activities are probably related to a degree to the kind of CSL projects offered in particular courses (e.g., marketing classes vs. women's studies classes) but also reflect gendered occupational differences; they warrant further investigation into whether or not CSL disrupts or reproduces these differences.
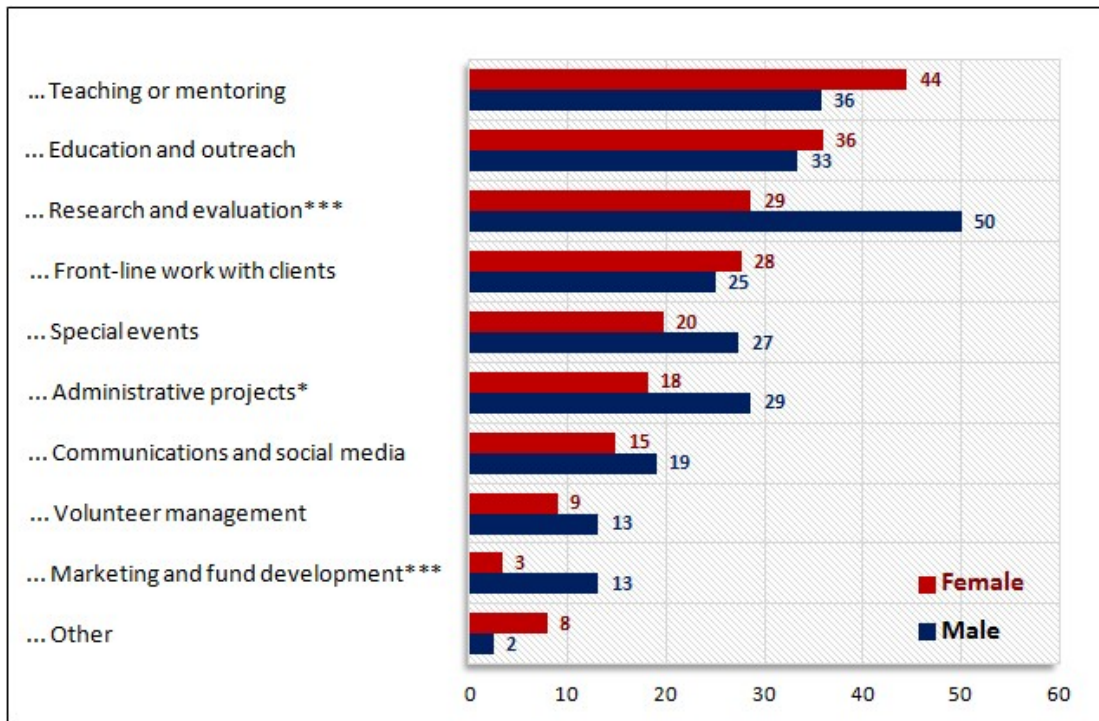

Figure 2: Primary activity Involved in CSL placement by Gender
Source: CSL Survey 2013

Further analysis shows that an overwhelming majority of both genders of former CSL students believe that participation in community organisations is important for overall social development (98%), developing their professional networks (95%), and developing employability skills (96%).

Despite the overwhelmingly positive perception of CSL, statistical tests (see Table 2) show significant differences between male and female CSL students regarding beliefs about the impact of community service-learning on overall social development (93% for men vs. 99% for women, Chi-square=13.617[***]). There is also a significant difference regarding the perceived impact of CSL on the development of professional networks (87% for men vs. 97% for women, Chi-square=15.002[***]).

	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chi-square and Sig.
Overall social development	98	93	99	13.617[***]
Developing employability skills	96	94	96	1.120
Developing professional networks	95	87	97	15.002[***]

**Table 2: Gender and Beliefs about Community Service Learning
Source: CSL Survey 2013**

In the context of such statistically significant differences, a number of students indicated the transformative impact of CSL, and the changes they experienced through participation in community component of CSL. For example:

CSL has changed the way I look at education. I hope that as a future elementary school teacher, I can provide enriching learning opportunities for my students the way that CSL has for me. (Female student)

I loved my CSL course. It changed my life. I wish I had had an opportunity to take more CSL courses. (Female student)

Completely changed my life in a positive way. (Male student)

It opened my eyes to a whole new realm of life that was occurring in my community that I was unaware of and had no understanding for. I know am aware, sympathetic and knowledgeable. (Male student)

Still many other male and female students spoke about the importance of CSL for understanding community and building relationships:

I became a lot more involved in the community on and off campus which made me more aware of many things from politics to environmental issues that I believe could have passed me by otherwise. (Female student)

I did my CSL course in my last term and I wish I would have done it sooner ... I had a great experience and made lifelong friendships and memories. (Female student)

CSL had a positive impact since university is mostly theoretical learning, but CSL was a great opportunity to get out in the community, get some work experience/relevant skills you wouldn't get by staying in the classroom, make connections (and later get references when applying for future jobs), and I increased my knowledge ... In a way, it made me more receptive to find other intern opportunities. (Male student)

It gave me a chance to connect with professionals working in my field of study. (Male student)

In addition, there are also evident gender differences regarding student attitudes toward CSL and other courses in their programme of studies. This study found (Table 3) that female and male evaluate "CSL courses" differently. In comparison to male community-based CSL students, female participants perceive CSL courses as more exciting, ($t=2.812^{**}$), easier ($t=2.048^*$), more valuable ($t=3.086^{**}$), more empowering ($t=2.109^*$) and more reflective ($t=2.313^*$).

In contrast, as the same table shows, comparisons of female and male CSL students regarding their perception of "Other courses" demonstrates no statistically significant differences. Both groups perceive other courses in their programme of study as similarly exciting, difficult, valuable, relevant, empowering and reflective.

Courses / Gander	CSL Courses			Other Courses		
	Male	Female	Independent t-test	Male	Female	Independent t-test
Exciting - Boring	2.51	2.18	2.812**	2.32	2.44	-1.128
Easy - Difficult	3.25	3.00	2.048*	3.45	3.52	-.692
Valuable - Worthless	2.16	1.79	3.086**	2.05	2.12	-.663
Relevant - Irrelevant	2.13	1.92	1.74	2.14	2.13	.102
Empowering-Discouraging	2.36	2.12	2.109*	2.43	2.61	-1.486
Reflective - Unreflective	2.31	2.02	2.313*	2.38	2.43	-.392

Table 3: Gender and Attitudes toward CSL and Other Courses
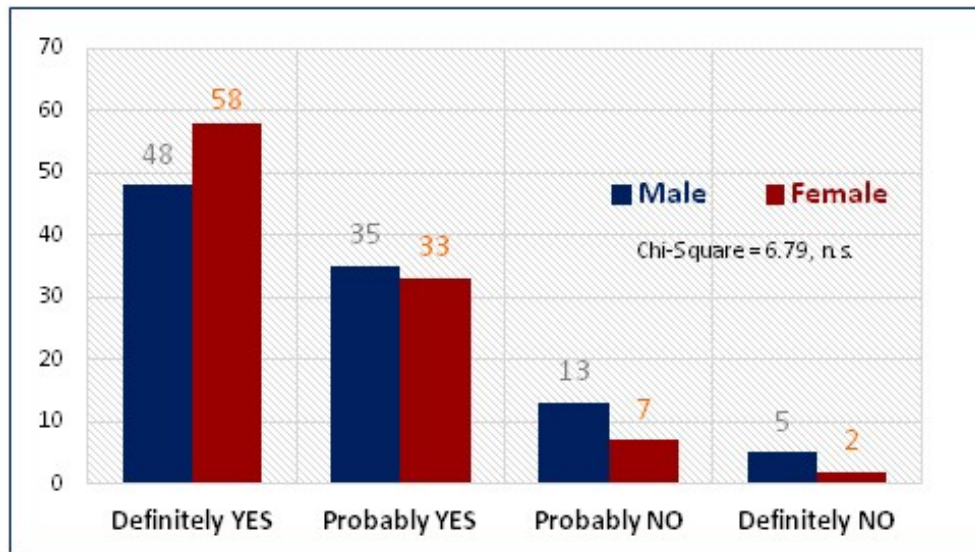**Source: TLEF, 2013, All Community-based Students (N=388)**

An additional analysis of male and female subsamples regarding their perceptions of CSL and other courses finds almost identical results (Table 4).

Gender/ Courses Type	Female Students			Male Students		
	CSL	Other	Dependent t-test	CSL	Other	Dependent t-test
Exciting - Boring	2.18	2.44	-3.562***	2.51	2.32	1.189
Easy - Difficult	3.00	3.52	-7.657***	3.25	3.45	-1.473

Valuable - Worthless	1.79	2.12	-4.604***	2.16	2.05	.678
Relevant - Irrelevant	1.92	2.13	-2.80.	2.13	2.14	-.079
Empowering - Discouraging	2.12	2.61	-6.847***	2.37	2.43	-.380
Reflective - Unreflective	2.03	2.42	-5.040***	2.31	2.40	-.504
	N=304			N=84		

Table 4: Gender and Attitudes toward CSL and Other Courses

Despite the different attitudes toward CSL and other courses, Figure 3 suggests that both female (91%) and male (83%) CSL students overall share positive attitudes toward CSL. Further, although male students participate less often in a community project off campus, the vast majority sees a benefit to participating in a CSL course. This finding suggests also that in most CSL courses, community-based learning is being effectively integrated into classes (e.g., through CSL students sharing their learning with classmates informally or formally).

Figure 3: Would you recommend participation in CSL to other students?
Source: CSL Survey 2013

As well, in addition to the identified positive attitudes towards community-based service learning among community-based students, classroom-based male and female students also had mostly positive comments. For example:

It brought me into contact with other students I wouldn't have otherwise interacted with, especially since it was necessary we worked productively and communicated openly with each other. Some of the students are still friends to this day. It also encouraged me to take class material from other classes and apply it to the real world situations in our community. (Female student)

Overall it had a considerable impact on the positive experience I had at the U of A. It helped me refine the skill set I needed to have in my career. It also improves peer to peer communication when CSL is focused around group work for our community partner. (Female student)

The study of community helped me to choose a direction in law that has resulted in my commitment to access to justice in my rural community. (Male student)

Even though I was not able to participate in the placement due to time commitment, I really appreciated the class and think the programme is fantastic. I learned a lot from the other students, as well as from my independent project. (Male student)

In addition to the very positive perceptions of their involvement in a CSL class, a large number, more than two-thirds (70%) of female students and almost two-thirds (62%) of

male CSL students believe that their CSL experience has influenced their further education decisions. This difference is statistically significant since a much smaller number of females (5%) than males (13%) indicated that CSL was not influential for them (Chi-square=8.39*).

Similarly, two-thirds (66%) of females consider their CSL experience to have influenced their career decisions compared to a smaller number of male students (53%). This difference is statistically significant (Chi-square=8.46*) and shows that female students much more frequently perceive CSL important for their future career. In addition to the perceived benefits of CSL for their educational and career choices, a significant number of both male and female students perceive this form of learning as significant for the improvement of their job performances (61%) and an additional 42% reported that CSL contributed to their job security.

Almost two-thirds of former CSL students who participated in a community placement (64%) believe it contributed significantly to their increased interest in community engagement. There is a noticeable tendency among female students toward a more favourable evaluation of SL impact on community engagement but this difference is not statistically significant (Chi-square=5.16, n.s.).

More than half (54%) of former CSL students reported that participation in this form of learning influenced their thoughts about their university programme. Similar to other responses, a slightly greater number of female students perceive the impact of SL as important but this difference is not statistically significant. The most commonly reported influence was that SL encouraged them to take more CSL or similar courses. For a smaller group of former CSL students, the change was more dramatic, influencing them to change degree programme or pursue graduate studies.

In addition to the positive attitudes toward participation, almost a quarter of community-based male and female respondents (23%) continued to volunteer with their CSL partner organisations after their courses ended (with no significant gender differences). In addition, despite the short duration of CSL placements, some former community-based students—5 % of female and 4% of male students—obtained some form of paid work with

CSL partner organisations after their courses were completed. While employment is not the primary goal of CSL, this finding suggests that it might be useful to think about how a CSL experience might connect to a paid internship for students. Statistical differences between male and female students regarding their continued volunteering and paid work with community organisations are not statistically significant.

Additionally, open-ended responses confirm the identified positive perceptions of student involvement in CSL courses and exemplify the influence of community placemen on their education decisions. Many female CSL students specifically talked about the impact of CSL experiences on their education or career plans:

I found out about CSL through the U of A website while I was attending high school in Ottawa. The certificate option was a determining factor for my application to U of A rather than Queens U. (Female student)

I loved it, it gave me a chance to build on what I love which is working with children. It also opened doors for summer employment and I still volunteer with them now. (Female student)

I secured a job because of CSL … and it helped secure my interest in the subject leading me to change my degree programme. (Female student)

I found it extremely beneficial. It guided me to my future career, something I may not have realised had I not taken that particular CSL course. I just wish there were more opportunities to take CSL courses ... (Female student)

The study also provided strong indications that male students also significantly benefit from CSL regarding their education or career plans:

The study of community helped me to choose a direction in law that has resulted in my commitment to access to justice in my rural community. (Male student)

After doing my CSL, I continued to volunteer weekly at the women's shelter. It inspired me in my art courses. (Male student)

In the course I took, it added an applied dimension to my in-class learning which was useful in seeing first-hand the struggles of the particular population I worked with. It was a real eye-opener. (Male student)

Table 5 shows that most former CSL students perceive positive outcomes of community service-learning on their knowledge, skills, and personal development. Some differences between female and male respondents exist regarding the perceived impact of SL on their ability to take an active role in their learning (8.566**) and their self-reported interest in community engagement (Chi-square = 4.88*). Female participants more frequently perceive that SL contributes to the development of their abilities to learn independently -- skills highly desirable in the modern learning society. In contrast, male participants more frequently perceive that SL contributes to the development of their research skills, but this difference represents only a tendency, which is not statistically significant. For both females and males, the lack of contribution of CSL to research skills is an area that warrants closer examination. While developing research skills is not the primary focus of CSL, more CSL projects could be oriented toward community-based research and the development of this set of essential academic skills.

CSL contribute to ...	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chi-square
… interest in community engagement	65	55	68	4.88*
... motivation to learn	65	60	66	0.868
... ability to communicate clearly and effectively	61	60	61	0.074
... ability to think critically	56	53	57	0.332
... research skills	39	47	37	2.658
... ability to respond to complex social issues	61	52	63	2.937
... leadership skills	59	56	60	0.394
... ability to work effectively with others	69	65	70	0.839
... understanding of vulnerable populations	64	56	66	3.144
... personal code of values and ethics	53	44	56	3.613
... ability to take an active role in your learning	68	55	72	8.566**

Table 5: Gender and Perceived Outcomes of Community-Service Learning on student knowledge, skills, and personal development
Source: CSL Survey 2013

Overall, most participants consider their participation as significant for the development of their academic abilities, skills and attitudes. As Table 5 shows, gender differences on most items were relatively small and demonstrate the value of community-based experiences for all students, regardless of their gender.

Responses of female and male students to the open-ended questions from this survey are consistent with responses to other questions and were highly positive in tone overall. Our content analysis of respondents from students involved in community-based service learning shows that 81% of open-ended responses were positive, 7% were mixed, and 12% were negative. For classroom-based respondents, 73% of open-ended responses were positive, 9% were mixed, and 18% were negative.

Both male and female former CSL students who participated in this study were eager to share how their CSL experiences have been significant in their academic and/or career development. A dominant theme is their perception of community service-learning as a highly valuable academic experience. A considerable number of respondents spoke about the impact of CSL on their experiences as learners:

I was almost ready to leave my degree and take a year trying to find out what I wanted to do, and my CSL course helped me make up my mind without having to leave my studies. (Female student)

I personally loved my CSL experience, I really enjoyed being able to do work volunteering and outside of class. It helped me become more interested in the course because I was looking at the information learned in class in a real world environment. I enjoyed being able to do assignments more related to CSL and the connections to the class rather than just class work. (Male student)

I loved being able to work with other students, professors, and community members to be able to create a project and an experience. I tried things I had never thought of doing, met new people, and was able to work on leadership

and communication skills during these projects as well as make more meaningful connections to the course material and find an enthusiasm for school in general. (Male student)

A significant number of both, male and female students indicate that applicability of knowledge is a valuable characteristic of community service-learning:

CSL made what I learned in the classroom more applicable, therefore making the course much more interesting. I felt as though my work, through CSL work, made my degree experience that much more valuable. (Female student)

It got me thinking about the applicability of my knowledge outside the classroom. It made me aware of the fact that the classroom is a vacuum, and that knowledge means very little unless it can be applied to life. (Male student)

CSL made learning more interesting as it provided an opportunity to get out of the classroom and into the real world. It made courses more interesting because the student was allowed to make choices in where and how to learn and actually apply it. (Male student)

While the majority of survey data and open-ended responses of both community-based and classroom-based respondents were positive, some voiced concerns, which are helpful in thinking about improving the CSL program. Negative comments about CSL were most frequently focused on the burden of too much coursework exacerbated by the time commitment required of community placements. This was especially so if the placements

were not meaningfully connected to coursework or personal goals, or if students were unsupported by their professor or community partner. For example:

CSL was a fun component, but the community placement I was with only used us for volunteer work. I did not learn anything about our topic while volunteering. All we did in our placement was crowd control, setting up chairs, directing people, etc. I wish my placement would have taught me more about elder abuse, etc. (Female student)

… I found it to be a giant time issue, balancing classes with another type of class that has large time implications is rather difficult for me anyways. I find it can be a useful idea. I just believe it isn't quite communicated well and doesn't offer that much to my programme to be honest. It isn't very flexible for different types of programmes and doesn't provide much knowledge in general. (Female student)

Honestly, although it was a really cool experience there was not an equal balance of work for students who did and students who did not do CSL. Also, as much as I loved volunteering I ended up doing a lot of hours at one placement because the expectations of the volunteer were not made clear. (Male student)

Some female and male students also expressed concern if they felt they were being used as unpaid labour for the community partner or if the instructor shifted some responsibility for grading to the CSL partner. For example:

I feel that it did not affect it my ... experiences at all, I feel that it was a way the professor got out of having to mark a paper. (Female student)

The CSL programme is basically "internship-lite" for people financially able to do unpaid labour. I now avoid classes with a CSL component. (Male student)

Clearly, managing expectations and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the different participants are important parts of doing CSL well. These comments also point to the importance of thinking about improving the quality of CSL projects in addition to attempts to expand the number of students involved.

Regarding the evident gender differences and lower participation of male students in community service learning, our study provides the evidence that can contribute to the explanation of the frequently identified differences (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda & Yee, 2000; Cruce & Moore, 2007; Hall et al., 2009; Taylor & Raykov, 2014; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014) and contradictory findings (Allen, 1982; Bordelon &Phillips, 2006; Taylor & Pancer, 2007) related to the gender gap in CSL. The current study, as well as regular institutional evaluations of CSL programme, indicates that many students have strong interest in CSL programme and wish more choices or a more diverse content to engage in CSL courses. Most frequently, both, male and female students suggested that much more or all university courses should have a CSL option:

All of them, all faculties should have some element of CSL. (Male student)

Every course. Everyone should get to experience it. It is beneficial for their future. (Female student)

Every single course, especially at the graduate level. It is really beneficial especially for international students (Female student)

There is also evidence that a significant number of male students propose courses related to the traditionally male-dominated professions. For example:

Programming or other courses in human computing. Generally, courses that can bridge learning academic content with practical application. (Male student)

*Intermediate Economic courses, accounting courses, and of course, management courses. (Male student)*

More in kinesiology or physical education classes. (Male student)

Practical programmes (plant, wildlife, aquatic ecology, forestry and so on), where students could apply their classroom knowledge, research or analytical skills that are thought in classrooms. (Male student)

Further analysis of the CSL survey and open-ended responses shows that, male students express interest in CSL courses significantly different from those suggested by their female counterparts. Female students most frequently suggested courses related to female-dominated occupations including education-, psychology-, sociology-, or nursing-related

courses while male students more frequently suggested math-, science-, politics-, economics-, research methods-, kinesiology- or physical education-related courses.
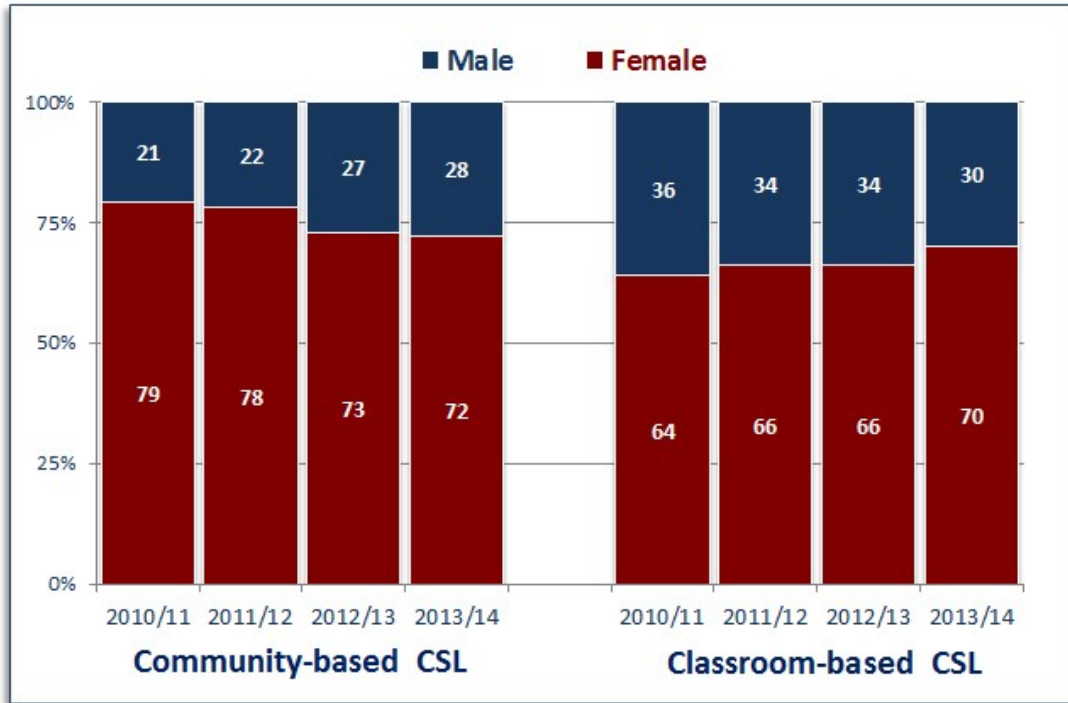
Figure 4: Gender and Enrollment in Community- and Classroom-based CSL
Sources: University of Alberta Evaluation Surveys, 2010/2011-213 / 2014

It should be noted that, at the same time, the proportion of male participants in CSL form of CSL courses has slightly increased. Between 2010/11 and 2013/2014 school year, the proportion of male participants has increased from 21% to 28% of all students enrolled in community-based CSL courses (Figure 4). As well, during the same period, the proportion of male classroom-based CSL courses (students not involved in community) has decreased from 36% to 30% reaching the level similar to their level of enrolment in community-based CSL courses.

Conclusions and directions for further study

This paper provides an overview of findings from the comprehensive study of long-term outcomes of community service-learning with a focus on gender differences, and

provides information about CSL programme outcomes that can inform the conceptualization and delivery of CSL programs. For example, more attention to the gendering associated with the kind of placements CSL students select would be beneficial. In addition, information about differences in the motivations of female and male CSL student participants is likely to be helpful for instructors and community partners. More in depth analysis of focus group interviews with female and male students is expected to contribute further to the development of insights about why they were involved in CSL, their community-based learning, and their experiences in the programme more generally. This mixed-methods approach is expected to extend our understanding about CSL as an innovative pedagogy that attempts to meet diverse instructor and student interests.

References

Adamuti-Trache, M., Hawkey, C., Schuetze, H., & Glickman, V. (2006). The labour market value of liberal arts and applied education programs: Evidence from British Columbia. Canadian Review of Higher Education, 36(2), 49-74.

Allen, K. (1982). Americans volunteer, 1981: A Gallup survey on volunteering. Voluntary Action Leadership, (Winter), 21-33.

Arum, R. & Roksa, J. (2011). Academically adrift: Limited learning on college campuses. University of Chicago Press.

Astin, A., Vogelgesang, L., Ikeda, E., & Yee, J. (2000). How service learning affects students. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, University of California-los Angeles.

Bringle, R. & Hatcher, J. (1996). Implementing service-learning in higher education. Journal of Higher Education, 67(2), 221-239.

Bell, M. & Ocampo, E. (2011, January). Educational, personal and vocational impacts of community service learning. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta.

Bordelon, T. D., & Phillips, I. (2006). Service-learning: What students have to say. Active learning in higher education, 7(2), 143-153.

Butin, D. (2006). The limits of service-learning in higher education. Review of Higher Education, 29(4), 473-498.

Butin, D. (2010). Service-learning in theory and practice: The future of community engagement in higher education. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Charbonneau, L. (2009, September 8). Community connections. Accessed May 2014 online at: University Affairs. www.universityaffairs.ca.

Chesler, M., & Vasques Scalera, C. (2000). Race and gender issues related to service-learning research. Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, Special Issue, 18-27.

Creswell, J., & Plano-Clark, V. (2007). Designing and conducting mixed methods research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cruce, T. M., & Moore, J. V. (2007). First-year students' plans to volunteer: An examination of the predictors of community service participation. Journal of College Student Development, 48(6), 655-673.

Davies, S. and Guppy, N. (3rd ed) (2014). The schooled society: An introduction to the sociology of education. Don Mills: Oxford.

Dorow, S., Stack-Cutler, H., & Varnhagen, S. (2011). Community perspectives on partnering with the University of Alberta survey of Edmonton organizations. Edmonton: University of Alberta.

Dubinsky, J. (2006). The role of reflection in service learning. Business Communication Quarterly, 69(3), 306-311.

Ender, M. G., Martin, L., Cotter, D. A., Kowalewski, B. M., & Defiore, J. (2000). Given an opportunity to reach out: Heterogeneous participation in optional service-learning projects. Teaching sociology, 206-219.

Finnie, R., & Frenette, M. (2003). Earning differences by major field of study: evidence from three cohorts of recent Canadian graduates. Economics of Education Review, 22, 179-192.

Itin, C. M. (1997). The orientation of social work faculty to the philosophy of experiential education in the classroom. Unpublished Dissertation, Denver: University of Denver.

Kuh, G. (2009). The national survey of Student engagement: Conceptual and empirical foundations. New Directions for Institutional Research, 141, 5-20.

Hall, M., Lasby, D., Ayer, S., & Gibbons, W.D. (2009). Caring Canadians, involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2007 Canada survey of giving, volunteering and participating. http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/71-542-x/71-542-x2009001-eng.pdf.

Lin, C., Schmidt, C., Tryon, E., & Stoecker, R. (2009). Service learning in context: The challenge of diversity. In R. Stoecker & E.A. Tryon (Eds.). The unheard voices: Community organizations and service-learning. (pp. 116-135). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Lin, Z., Sweet, R., Anisef, P. & Schuetze, R. (2000). Consequences and policy implications for university students who have chosen liberal or vocational education: Labour market outcomes and employability skills. Hull: Human Resources Development Canada, Applied Research Branch.

Mohammed, F. (2013). Community service-learning 2012-13 evaluation report. University of Alberta, Edmonton. Accessed online June 6, 2014 at: www.csl.ualberta.ca/Resources/~/media/Community%20Service%20Learning/Docum ents/Reports/EvalReport1213.pdf.

Mohammed, F. & Hayward, K. (2012). Community service-learning 2011-12 evaluation report. University of Alberta, Edmonton. Accessed June 6, 2014 at: www.csl.ualberta.ca/Resources/~/media/Community%20Service%20Learning/Docum ents/Reports/EvalReport11-12.pdf.

Raykov, M., Taylor, A. & Dorow, S. (2012). Evaluating outcomes of community service learning at the University of Alberta. Presentation at the Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning Conference. University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK. May 10-12, 2012.

Rukavina, A., & Richards, M. (2012). Who's in and who's out? Barriers to participation in service-learning at the University of Alberta. Presentation at the Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning Conference. University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK. May 10-12, 2012.

Simpson, J. (2012). Turning CSL on its head: A proposal for a truly anti-foundational placement. Presentation at the Canadian Alliance for Community Service-learning Conference. University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK. May 10-12, 2012.

Statistics Canada. (2009). Census of population. Accessed online at: www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/educ43a-eng.htm

Taylor, A. (2012, May). Community service-learning as a critical and reflexive pedagogy. First International Professional Practice, Education and Learning (ProPel) Conference. University of Stirling, Stirling, Scotland.

Taylor, A. (2013, June). Experiential learning in Canadian universities. 8th Annual Researching Work and Learning Conference, Stirling Scotland.

Taylor, A. (2014). Community service-learning and cultural-historical activity theory. Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 44(1), 95-107.

Taylor, A. & Raykov, M. (2014). The long-term outcomes of community service learning. Edmonton: University of Alberta.

Taylor, T. P., & Pancer, M. S. (2007). Community service experiences and commitment to volunteering. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 37(2), 320-345.

University of Alberta. (2011). Dare to deliver 2011-2015: The academic plan for the University of Alberta. Accessed online at: www.president.ualberta.ca/en/ DaretoDiscover.aspx.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014). Volunteering in the United States -- 2013. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Labor Force Statistics. Retrieved May 15, 2014: www.bls.gov/news.release/volun.nr0.htm

Verjee, B. (2012). Critical race feminism: A transformative vision for service-learning engagement. Journal of Community Engagement & Scholarship, 5(1), 57-69.