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PURPOSE-DRIVEN EDUCATION:

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL

FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

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By

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A DISSERTATION IN PRACTICE

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Abstract

Across the United States, systems of education are failing, and this dysfunction is characterized by both academic underachievement and overachievement. This research was an investigation of whether a purpose-driven curriculum contributed to student success in school and in life. This dissertation was intended to inform school systems about methods for creating purpose-driven, social entrepreneurship programs for high school students. This qualitative study showed that the Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab at "the School" was effective in reorienting students' views of success to include service to others, resulting in an overall sense of purpose in school and in life. The findings suggested purpose-driven methods that educators, educational leaders, and policymakers could use to empower students to enact lasting changes in their communities and world.

SOLO GLORIA DEO

For my husband and sons

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The United States is facing an educational crisis wherein an estimated total of

7000 students drop out of school each day and an additional 12 million are predicted to

drop out in the coming decade (Freeman, 2012). Joel Klein, former head of the New

York City Department of Education, cautioned, "Educational failure puts the United

States' future economic prosperity, global position, and physical safety at risk" (Klein,

Rice, & Levy, 2012, p.58). Since education is vital to a country's future and necessary

for both human and economic flourishing, Klein argued that the continued failings of the

United States' educational system would put the country at ever-greater disadvantage.

Moreover, Klaus Schwab (2016), of the World Economic Forum, reported that 65% of

today's students will be employed in jobs that have not yet been created, resulting in even

greater challenges and social inequality in the future ("Chapter 1: The Future of Jobs and

Skills", para 1).

Additionally, as Abeles (2015) pointed out in her award-winning documentary

Beyond Measure, scholastic decline is not only a challenge in underserved, under-

resourced communities; well-resourced communities also experience other types of

academic dysfunction, characterized by an overemphasis on material achievement.

Consequently, the issue of underachievement, demonstrated by students dropping out of

school, coincides with one of overachievement (Wang, 2016). Callahan (2004) attributed

this narrowly-defined perception of success to the "yuppie phenomenon" and the

obsession with "material and professional advancement to the exclusion of other

concerns" (p. 112). As Abeles (2015) demonstrated, a negative view of academic

achievement on both spectra has resulted in increased rates of anti-social behavior. Many

young people learn to define themselves by test scores and the colleges to which they gain entrance, not by their contributions to the betterment of society. Thus, students are learning what to do to find monetary success, at the expense of holistic success. Whether students are struggling with underachievement or overachievement, in neither case are they taught to ask the simple, yet fundamental, questions:

- What am I here for?

- Who do I want to be?

- What do I want to accomplish with my life?

- How can I acquire the knowledge and experience to get there?

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate how *purpose-driven education* can contribute to holistic student success. For the sake of this research, purpose-driven education is defined as an education that equips students to live out their lives in a virtuous and meaningful way (Damon, 2011). Purpose-driven education encourages students to identify, develop, and leverage their unique talents and ideas to positively influence society, particularly its most vulnerable members. Specifically, the research study identified how social entrepreneurship-based curricula could be used as pedagogical tools to infuse purpose-driven learning into private high school education.

Definition of Terms

The following section presents operational definitions of major terms relating to this dissertation in practice.

Academic overachievement: Students' becoming focused primarily on material measures of success and personal advancement (Levine, 2008).

Academic underachievement: Deficits in the abilities of students to achieve specified educational goals, resulting from behavioral challenges, lack of motivation, psychological disorders, or heritable factors (Wingenfeld, 2002).

Calling: A theological term that describes a divine mission for an individual's specific work in the world. In a more secular context, it is centered upon one's "vocation" or professional activity (Guinness, 2000).

Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab (CSPSEL): An innovative, think-and-do curriculum that leverages students' unique skills, talents, and passions in projects, with the goal of making a positive difference in the lives of others. This program includes weekly leadership lessons, social entrepreneurship workshops, and field-based implementation. A course description appears in Chapter Four.

Case study: A qualitative approach wherein the researcher analyzes a program, process or event to obtain detailed information about a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014).

Civic engagement: Individual and collective actions to positively serve the community (McBride & Mlyn, 2016).

Cura Personalis: The development of the whole person, "body, soul, mind, and spirit," as part of the historical foundation for Jesuit moral education (Lowney, 2003).

*Design thinking***:** A five-step process—empathizing, defining, ideating, prototyping, and testing—that enables students to creatively solve challenges and scale solutions (Kelley, 2016).

History of ideas: An academic discipline that examines how major ideas about government, education, and the virtuous life have evolved and influenced human history (Guinness, 2000).

Process tracing: A method that uses multiple data points to develop and evaluate theories, identifying key issues and a sequence of events (Collier, 2011).

Purpose-driven education: Education that connects students' academic achievements with their future vocations and callings in life; education focused on helping students to live out their lives "in a narrative form which is structured regarding *telos* [purpose], of virtues and rules" (Bergman, 2011, p. 45). Taking as a given the existence of a universal moral code, purpose-driven education encourages each student to envision one's place in the ongoing unfolding of human history.

Servant leadership: A leadership philosophy that advocates leaders' focus on service to others, emphasizing the importance of traits such as empathy, authenticity, stewardship, and interpersonal acceptance (Greenleaf, 1970).

Service-learning: An educational paradigm that provides holistic opportunities for students to engage in community service and reflect on their civic leadership experiences (Bergman, 2011).

Social entrepreneurship: The process of identifying innovative and novel solutions to the world's most pressing social challenges (Dees, 1998).

Social innovation: Creating systemic disruption and lasting community change in positive and measurable ways (McBride & Mlyn, 2016).

Student Success: The holistic psychological, social, and academic well-being of the student. Social success means that a student belongs to a healthy community and contributes positively to that community (Bergman, 2011).

The School: A San Francisco Bay Area faith-based, private high school.

Research Question and Hypotheses

The central research question of the study was: To what extent, if at all, do purpose-driven social entrepreneurship-based curricula contribute to student success? The study evaluated extent by qualitatively assessing students' development of vocationally-oriented skills and service-oriented values. The primary hypothesis of this study was that purpose-driven education is beneficial to student success. Therefore, much of the observed educational dysfunction in the United States can be remedied by creating curricula that connect students' current academic activities with their ultimate purpose.

This study drew on Damon's (2008) formative work, *The Path To Purpose: Helping our Children Find Their Calling in Life.* Damon argued that instilling long-term purpose in young people was more important than short-term achievement. Therefore, this study specifically investigated some particular, pedagogical tools that can be utilized to instill sense of purpose—the objective of contributing to a more just and sustainable world—in students' education. The study investigated several methods by incorporating them into high-school curricula: social justice theory and praxis, the history of ideas, and social entrepreneurship leadership training. The research explored the viability of purpose-driven education by: (a) examining root causes of educational dysfunction; (b) proposing alternatives for school curricula that include social entrepreneurship, general leadership development, and social justice; and (c) using real-life case studies to demonstrate implementation. The research question hypothesized that perceptions of success may be reoriented from material gain to social influence, helping students experience overarching purpose for their educational achievements.

Relevance of the Dissertation in Practice Study

The study is relevant for two reasons. First, it can inform educators, educational leaders, and policy makers as they develop practical, scalable, and replicable strategies to address the challenges of student underachievement and overachievement. Second, the study can offer insight for educational leaders seeking to engage learning-challenged students who do not perform well within traditional pedagogical paradigms.

In addition to informing educators, educational leaders, and policy makers, the study can illuminate specific methods that support each student's individual life trajectory. Many thinkers have noted the centrality of purpose to a person's sense that life is meaningful. Damon (2008) described purpose as a, "stable and generalized intention to accomplish something that is at the same time meaningful to the self and consequential for the world beyond the self" (p. 33). Students need to connect their educations with a perspective to be successful in the holistic sense. Damon (2008) further elaborated that it is not enough to have general goals or achievements; an individual requires a "noble purpose" that moves one toward human "good" (p. 28). Thomas Carlyle, Scottish philosopher and historian observed, "A person without purpose is like a ship without a rudder" (Damon, 2008, p. 25). Students need meaningful goals in life in order to navigate the inevitable challenges that arise.

Additionally, this study can shed light on potential ways to create citizen-leaders who contribute solutions to major challenges, from modern slavery to the psychosocial issues facing teens, from maternal health to water sanitation. Organizational theorists McDonald & Gandz (1992) argued that values and purpose are vital components to building a better society. Kristjansson (2006) believed that educating students with

purpose is vital to global reformation. Founding Father Thomas Jefferson (1816) considered education to be an essential component of freedom (Monticello). Lastly, countries need virtuous citizens who vote for leaders of character (Guinness, 2000). Since educational failures lead to societal failures, students who form connections between their educations and purposeful lives are likely to pursue careers as virtuous citizens.

In sum, this study is important for several reasons. Findings from the research can help educators, educational leaders, and policy makers to construct more efficient and engaging curricula. The study can also help teachers to provide students with meaningful, individualized motivation and to inspire students to become purpose-driven citizen-leaders.

Aim of the Study

The overarching aim of the qualitative research was to identify how educators could use social entrepreneurship as a pedagogical tool for student success in private high school education. By focusing students outside of themselves and toward some substantial social challenge, educators could encourage students to simultaneously develop their self-awareness, motivation, individual talents, and moral compass. To achieve this aim, the study explored in what ways, if at all, CSPSEL changed students' overall educational experiences and contributed to their aspirations for holistic success.

Methodology Overview

While informed by secondary quantitative data sources and academic journals, the primary research for this study was multi-disciplinary and qualitative in nature. The researcher relied primarily on the case study methodology to inform conclusions. First,

the researcher used process tracing as a fundamental aspect of this research to advance an understanding of causal relationships. As Collier (2011) indicated, process tracing is a way of helping quantitative and qualitative researchers identify the key issues and sequence of events in the area of study, especially in case-based analysis. Second, the study relied on ethnographic research, drawing upon case studies in the form of intensive reviews of individual stories (Gerring, 2004). Investigating the influence of purpose-driven education on the lives of young people lent itself to qualitative analysis. Anthropologist Geertz (1973) concurred, noting that "thick description" is vital to assess the cultural interpretation of actions (pp. 6-7). Furthermore, by reporting multiple perspectives (Creswell, 2013) within a particular cultural setting using the method of participant observation—ethnography—the researcher was able to understand student culture and to better interpret the subtle nuances in student responses.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Personal Biases

Several limitations, delimitations, and biases affected the research. First, the study was not comparative. Matriculation rate records only existed from 2016 forward. Even if the data had been available, any comparison would be flawed, because the intervention influenced non-contemporaneous CSPSEL students, some of whom participated in the program in previous years, some of whom assisted contemporaneous CSPSEL students with their social entrepreneurship projects, some of whom joined the program's immersion experiences and specialized workshops, some of whom integrated CSPSEL leadership lessons into The School governance, and all of whom attended the integrated Speaker Series. At the time of this study, the researcher's investigation discovered no other programs of this sort in the country. While numerous high-school

programs focused on the element of leadership, and a few curricula centered primarily on

faith-based social-entrepreneurship, CSPSEL was unique in integrating the two arenas.

Therefore, there was no earlier research to inform this specific faith-based entrepreneurial

leadership experience for high-school students.

Second, even though the study was able to gather some feedback from

contemporaneous students and some from alumni, the study was not longitudinal. The

CSPSEL Annual Survey (CSPSELAS) collected the views of contemporaneous students,

while the Researcher's Questionnaire (RQ) queried alumni. Please see Appendix D. The

study data did show that replies from both sources were in agreement. However, the

CSPELAS received 51 responses, while the RQ received 14.

Furthermore, the results might have limited descriptive power for other groups

and sub-groups, since the study questionnaire focused on private school alumni over the

age of 18. The study did not account for all possible manifestations of purpose-driven

education. Rather, the investigation only centered on purpose-driven curricula developed

for private high school students at a faith-based institution.

Additionally, the study was subject to many possible biases. The conclusions of

the research relied upon the accuracy of student and alumni responses to the researcher, a

common limitation of any self-reporting process. Students might have self-selected, with

those who had positive CSPSEL experiences responding to the survey, and those who

had less positive experiences declining to respond, or vice versa. Lastly, the study was

subject to experimenter bias, because the same researcher who designed the program and

the questions for the study also analyzed the data and proposed recommendations based

on the findings. However, the researcher decided to investigate the program because of

the volume of positive feedback from faculty, parents, community leaders, and participants over the years.

Related to the concern of experimenter bias was the importance of adequately portraying unbiased comments when reporting outcomes and when presenting and interpreting the findings. In the process of conducting the study, the researcher also ensured careful review and objective presentation of outcomes that deviated from previous assumptions, presenting the data in their raw form. To further address this potential for bias, the researcher became familiar with the personal interests of the interviewees, while also reflecting critically on personal assumptions. For example, a student might overestimate one's prior expertise in an area of interest or underestimate how outside mentorship refined one's expertise.

Lastly, as the research proceeded, the researcher carefully maintained confidentiality. A password-protected computer safeguarded the identities of the participants. The researcher used pseudonyms when appropriate and adhered to all other research protocols.

The Role of Leadership in this Study

The process of formulating effective solutions that simultaneously serve the mutual well being of both students and society can be a challenging and humbling position for educational researchers. According to Martin (2009):

The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the capacity to function…[to] be able to see that things are hopeless yet be determined to make them otherwise (p. 1).

Lowney (2003) emphasized that a person can find holistic success pursuing positive societal influence, through an implementation of one's morality and individual talents in one's vocation. Since servant leaders understand that their purpose is to contribute to their organizations and communities in meaningful ways, adaptation is a part of successful leadership (Greenleaf, 1970).

An exploration of the organizational theory and behavior literature offered information and data regarding how human motivation, collaboration, and purpose can drive the development of educational curricula. Various purpose-driven leadership perspectives, including Johnson (2012), Greenleaf (1970), and Lowney (2003), inspired the researcher to partner with schools and colleges as they implement practical ways to serve their world. The researcher developed interdisciplinary opportunities (including CSPSEL) for learning communities to grow in competencies including compassionate leadership, creative thinking, innovative problem solving, and collaboration. Part of the researcher's background fieldwork for this study included curriculum development at both public and private primary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions.

Throughout the process, the researcher equipped students to engage in active collaboration with the community through application of major philosophical ideas. College and high school students learned to identify personal goals for self-evaluation and growth, create realistic plans to implement their ideas, organize complex processes, and make confident and informed decisions about their future vocational and academic interests. The researcher inaugurated this purpose-driven education model to engage students in social causes, with the goal of guiding the students toward holistic success.

The overarching aim of the qualitative research was to identify how educators, educational leaders, and policy makers can use social entrepreneurship as a pedagogical tool for student success in private high school education. By focusing students outside of themselves and toward some substantial social challenge, educators can encourage students to simultaneously develop their self-awareness, motivation, individual talents, and moral compasses. To achieve this aim, the study explored student perceptions regarding if and how CSPSEL changed their overall educational experiences and their aspirations of success.

As part of the flagship CSPSEL program launched at the School, the researcher introduced each student to an integrated Speaker Series featuring field experts and entrepreneurial exemplars, who spoke to the students on various topics relating to societal influence in their fields. Additionally, the students attended leadership classes and social entrepreneurship labs each week, as they designed their individual projects. Leadership classes followed a seminar format, in which students spent time reading and absorbing excerpts from great works or listening to lectures before participating in robust class discussions. During these discussions, the researcher used the Socratic Method to facilitate conversations.

Additionally, through group tutorials, the researcher worked with students to develop social entrepreneurship projects that integrated leadership theory. The specialized interactive immersion experiences—contextualized for the School—provided CSPSEL students with real world connections between their studies and missions in life. CSPSEL students launched over 17 data-driven social service projects, which promoted awareness and raised funds for a variety of causes including teen cancer, childhood

obesity, and adolescent psychosocial issues. CSPSEL participants also provided support

to orphans and foster children, mentored youth in an after-school program, and founded

projects to prevent modern slavery and promote literacy.

Through the process of helping students to initiate lasting change, the researcher

observed how leadership played a vital role in the analysis of the social structures in areas

where the CSPSEL pilot project was implemented. Participating in the development of

these purpose-driven curricula provided the researcher with new analytical and practical

tools for promoting and advancing a purpose-driven movement in education.

Summary

The central research question of the study was: To what extent, if at all, do

purpose-driven social entrepreneurship-based curricula contribute to student success?

The study evaluated extent by qualitatively assessing students' development of

vocationally-oriented skills and service-oriented values. The primary hypothesis of this

study was that purpose-driven education is beneficial to student success. Therefore,

much of the observed educational dysfunction in the United States can be remedied by

creating curricula that connect students' current academic activities with their ultimate

purpose.

Furthermore, this chapter defined key terms and concepts, the role of leadership,

and the relation between the researcher and the research. Chapter Two presents a review

of literature related to purpose-driven education. This literature included alternative

explanations for academic dysfunction related to psychological, economic, physical, and

social indicators.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In the United States, the 2008 global financial crisis exemplified how a shallow sense of purpose could send an entire nation into decline. The collapse of ethical leadership resulted in a mortgage crisis that affected millions across the United States (Bordo, 2008). Although rapid technological progress has been made in many areas of our economy, there remain many challenges facing our materialistic culture. Deresiewicz (2014) reported in *The New Republic*:

> Our system of elite education manufactures young people who are smart and
>
> talented and driven, yes, but also anxious, timid, and lost, with little intellectual
>
> curiosity and a stunted sense of purpose: trapped in a bubble of privilege, heading
>
> meekly in the same direction, great at what they're doing but with no idea why
>
> they're doing it. (para. 5)

Academic dysfunction can be a result of academic overachievement or academic underachievement. Due to a variety of factors, under-resourced communities are suffering from academic underachievement, as national high school drop-out rates exceed 30%, and a lack of college preparation keeps students from moving forward in their educations (Kraman et al., 2008).

However, academic dysfunction exists beyond impoverished communities. Wallace (2016) of CNN revealed that drug and alcohol abuse is higher among affluent teens. Wallace pointed out that, statistically, children in wealthier households are:

> more likely to be suffering from anxiety and depression compared with the
>
> national average. And, while crime is believed to be more of an issue for children

living in poverty, there are "comparable levels of delinquency" for children in

lower-income and upper-income households (para. 5).

In *The Price of Privilege*, psychologist Levine (2008) shed further light on the paradox

between affluence and delinquency. She wrote about the false sense of self many

privileged teens portray. Though communicating external confidence and success, as

defined by societal norms, teens experience an internal sense of despair and emptiness.

Talented, affluent young people who attend top schools are also challenged with

psychosocial issues and are lacking meaning in their educational pursuits. A

preoccupation with the accumulation of material wealth, power, and prestige, rather than

giving to one's community, has resulted in high rates of cheating, burnout, depression,

drug usage, and many other anti-social behaviors (Levine, 2008).

Wang (2016) of the *Washington Post* reported that last year in Palo Alto—a

global innovation hub known for its affluence and ingenuity—the suicide rate among

adolescents was five times that of the entire nation (para. 1). Wang (2016) went on to

describe a note left behind by one suicide victim: "he wrote that no one was to blame.

Not school, not family or friends. He said he felt simply that *he had no future in the*

world, despite his good grades and the people who loved him" (para. 12). Wang (2016)

further reported that, "on average, rich offspring experience severe levels of depression

and anxiety at twice the national rates," and pointed out, "the children of affluent parents

are expected to excel at school and in multiple extracurriculars and also in their social

lives.… It plays out in crippling anxiety and depression about anticipated or perceived

achievement 'failures'" (para. 19). Unfortunately, this trend has become the norm in

many highly resourced communities.

In addition to the pressure to overachieve, affluent children may experience a lack of parent engagement. Luthar's (2007) research showed that parents in upper-income households tended to put their children under tremendous pressure to maximize success, while simultaneously isolating them for extended periods of time due to the parent's career obligations. Bergman (2011) explained how this phenomenon could occur by describing a moral reversal in the post-Enlightenment world, in which "work is undertaken primarily to acquire external goods" rather than for its own reward (p. 47). Philosopher and best-selling novelist, Rand (1961), demonstrated this mindset: "man is an end in himself, he exists for his own sake, and the achievement of his own happiness is his highest moral purpose" (p. 123).

With society advocating self-gratification as the ultimate end, students often face conflict as to the purpose of their educational and life pursuits. Solzhenitsyn (1978) critiqued this philosophy by pointing out that, "if man were born only to be happy, he would not be born to die" (para. 59). He suggested that the temporary nature of life belies any idea that happiness is the ultimate goal of life. Rather than a "search for the best ways to obtain material goods," humanity is born for a transcendent purpose that is focused upon leaving "life a better human being than one started it." (Solzhenitsyn, 1978, para. 50).

Similarly, MacIntyre's (1998) analysis of Thomas Aquinas' education was, in essence, a support of a holistic model of education that prioritizes the common good. MacIntyre (1998) critiqued modern American methodologies, which prioritized advancement of personal gain and satisfaction, including "seeming virtuous," above genuine character development (p. 107). MacIntyre (1998) also warned of the dangers of

individualist-oriented education compared to education focused on universal human

good, as described by Aquinas. In the American educational model, MacIntyre (1998)

also pointed out that, "each individual must at some point choose…among a variety of

different and rival conceptions of the good," arguing that the purpose of education is to

prepare students for these choices (p. 107). An education not centered on character

development can result in attitudes that are detrimental to society as a whole.

      This pedagogical problem drives students from the pursuit of a noble purpose to

the lowest common denominator of personal advancement, defined merely by individual

preference. The single-minded pursuit of one's own desired results—by any means—is

the familiar philosophy that Machiavelli advocated in *The Prince* (1903). Unfortunately,

this view has created a society in which moral purpose is lacking (Guinness, 2000).

Ethicist Callahan (2004) found that "students who ranked professional aspirations at the

top of their list of college priorities tended to be more likely to cheat than students who

saw college as a training ground for moral and intellectual development" (p. 219).

      This moral deficit continues in the workplace. Callahan used the example of the

medical field, reporting that, "more doctors nowadays are breaking more rules and

putting Americans at risk in the process" (p. 56). On a related note, Wen (2013),

physician, public health leader, and patient advocate, recently wrote a controversial book

entitled *When Doctors Don't Listen,* demonstrating how lives are often lost when

physicians put their self-interests above their commitments to do no harm. Callahan

(2004) attributed these occurrences to serious social pressures toward attaining positions

of prestige and power, devoid of an emotional or moral interest in medicine.

As Damon (2012) noted, in current educational practices, "In place of asking the ultimate questions, we have been directing the attention of our young toward short-term concerns of competition, self-promotion, status, and material gain" (p. 109). Damon (2012) observed that a focus on temporal pursuits leads to the deficiency of holistic development in students and to "ambivalence, disengagement, and cynicism"; instead of encouraging our children "to pursue the interests that motivate and inspire them, we try to substitute our own concerns and goals for them" (p.110). Alternatively, when a student is guided to ultimately question one's life purpose, vocation, and the methods needed to achieve these, one learns to focus on the more transcendent values of compassion, empathy, and kindness.

David Brooks concurred that intrinsic values are more important in his recent book, the *New York Times* bestseller, *The Road to Character.* Brooks (2015) differentiated between, "résumé values," that focus on external measures of success and the deeper, "eulogy values," (i.e. kindness, gratitude, humility, faithfulness, bravery, and honesty) that determine how individuals holistically live their lives. Furthermore, Brooks (2015) urged that each member of society concern oneself more with becoming an active contributor to the world than with climbing the ladder of career success.

Other recent articles in the *New York Times* reported how the pressure to achieve creates a steady stream of counterproductive situations. For example, in New York's highly regarded Success Academy, a teacher allegedly humiliated a student for failing to answer a question (Taylor, 2016). Meanwhile, on the national stage, politicians disregard the expertise of early childhood education experts, advocating for a, "pressure cooker" approach to kindergarten that includes an emphasis on testing and test preparation

(Hartigan, 2009, para. 3). Yet, childhood and family advocates such as Abeles (2015) believe pressure is detrimental to children's holistic well-being. So, in our children's most formative years, educational institutions around the country are programming our youth for academic failure.

That academic dysfunction, at best, creates a conflict between children and their schools, and at worst, causes irreversible damage to the student, the family unit, and the circle of friends. Silicon Valley entrepreneur Sedmak commented on the lack of motivation and purpose in current educational paradigms: "Both the university system, and even more so, the K-12 education system, are anti-entrepreneurial. Our kids hate school" (Bozzo, 2012, para. 23). Even worse, the stress to succeed is creating a Silicon Valley mental health crisis, in which many students suffer panic attacks, eating disorders, cutting, and suicide. A survey taken at one of the schools in the area found 54% of the students experiencing depression and 80% suffering from anxiety (Noguchi, 2016, para. 7). From kindergarten to high school to college, the lack of purpose-driven education, including real-world connection, is devastating to children and society. The next section will provide an overview of determinants of academic underachievement, including the following social, environmental, and biological factors.

Literature Concerning Academic Achievement

While the national academic crisis, including both overachievement and underachievement, is linked to a myriad of causes, the absence of purpose is an important factor to consider both alongside and separately from these other causes. Walker and Plomin (2006) demonstrated that social context also plays an important role in the national academic crisis:

A person's perceptions shape attitudes about the environment as well as behaviors

within it. Some factors found to influence perceptions include prior social

experience and background, organizational socialization, the way in which people

believe they are perceived by others, and personality characteristics. (p. 542)

Other scholars have suggested that environmental and biological limitations are also a

dominant factor in academic performance. Furthermore, the aggregate of research

suggested that causal mechanisms behind student success are an interconnected web of

relationships, ranging from environmental, biological, and social factors that shape

ultimate academic performance (Zabaneh, 2012, p. 12).

Factors in Student Success

The lack of purpose is a critically overlooked cause of social and academic

decline, mainly because its consequences affect other areas of life. As aforementioned,

the lack of purpose is likely to affect the student, the family unit, and the circle of friends.

Meaninglessness also contributes to emotional health problems, stress in the home

environment, and issues with homework and standardized testing (Kohn, 2000). The

research pointed to the mechanism whereby purpose deficient paradigms adversely

affected student behaviors, ultimately resulting in holistic dysfunction.

Emotional well-being.

Emotional well-being is a vital part of student success. Uniquely emotional

challenges can stem from both biological and psychosocial causes. In a study outlining

mental health problems, Wingenfeld (2002) cites Mash and Dozois' (1996) study that

found 14-20% of youth experience substantial emotional distress (p. 85). According to

their findings, 8-10% of these cases were severe (p. 85). Wingenfeld (2002) also

emphasized the challenges in childhood and adolescent mental health and its potential

influence on student performance (p. 85). The *New York Times* article, "Stress and

Anxiety," (2009) identified additional reasons for the prevalence of emotional challenges

in youth and described how stress interferes with cognition: "Children are frequent

victims of stress because they are often unable to communicate their feelings accurately"

(n.p.). The article also pointed out that, "certain physical symptoms, notably repeated

abdominal pain without a known cause, may be indicators of stress in children" ("Stress

and Anxiety", 2009, n.p.). Stress can reduce children's cognition, including memory and

executive function, motor skills, immune response, and ability to sleep.

Beyond ordinary stress, some students struggle in school because of emotional

trauma. Brackney and Karabenick (1995) and Wingenfeld (2002) found that

psychological trauma had profound implications for both academic and life success of

high school students. Students who experienced extreme stress demonstrated lack of

resiliency and were often unable to complete the academic tasks required of them

(Wingenfeld, 2002). According to Wingenfeld's (2002) research, in an average

classroom, there were 3-5 students who had some mental health issue, 1-2 students with

more severe mental disorders, and 8-10 students at risk for developing a problem later (p.

86). Additionally, only 25% of youths with psychosocial disorders were obtaining

professional help (Wingenfeld, 2002, p. 86). Scholars continue to find evidence for an

increasing number of emotional challenges in 21st-century classrooms.

Due to growing evidence for mental health struggles in young adults, educational

researchers critically assessed the responsible causal relationships. The research

questioned, for example, whether more students became psychologically challenged over

time, or whether public health systems simply became better prepared to evaluate

psychological disorders than they were in the 1950's (Twenge, 2000). The research

suggested increased pressure on young people to succeed resulted in serious mental

health issues (Levine, 2008). As Jayson (2006) pointed out in a *USA Today* article, in a,

"globally competitive world…. 'overwhelming' is par for the course for today's young

people" (para. 6). The article shared the expert opinion of Luthar, professor of

psychology and education at Columbia University, that, "contemporary American culture

advertises achievement and accomplishment as the route to ultimate happiness" (para. 8).

This hyper-competitive reality and obsession with "résumé values" has resulted in an

entire generation of struggling young people (Brooks, 2015).

    Family issues.

    Although emotional health plays a central role in the lives of students who

succeed in school and beyond, many researchers concurred that mental stability begins at

home. Perkins and Milstead (2010) believed student success is linked to a caring family

or mentor: "The family is a child's primary context for socialization and significantly

affects a child's well-being" (p. 1). Students with supportive family structures reported

higher GPAs, higher college expectations, fewer incidences of deviant behavior, greater

financial resources, and received more supervision (Perkins & Milstead, 2010).

Therefore, a stable family structure is a key factor in student success.

    However, most children in our country do not grow up in this context. Patrick

Fagan (1995) noted that students in challenging family situations had difficulty grasping

ethical concepts, as well as a definite connection between scholastic adjustment issues

and later delinquency in life. Fagan reported that such students fail to fulfill their

potential in school or in life: "Typically, before they drop out of school, they already

have begun a serious apprenticeship in crime by having far higher rates of delinquency

than do those who graduate" (Fagan, 1995, para. 58). He concluded that at-risk students

often do not have good verbal memory, underachieve in reading and math, lack a moral

vision, and have low expectations for school and vocation (Fagan, 1995, para. 59).

Socioeconomic status.

Another factor that plays a key role in student success is socio-economic status.

The National Center for Fair and Open Testing reported that "students from low-income

and minority group backgrounds are more likely to be retained in grade, placed in a lower

track, or put in special or remedial education programs when it is not necessary"

(FairTest, 2007, para. 3). According to the findings, students from economically

challenged backgrounds often received dumbed-down curricula. On the other hand,

children from privileged backgrounds typically enrolled in gifted and talented programs

(FairTest, 2007). Among the causes of this discrepancy, negative cultural and societal

perceptions of success among families of lower-income students inhibited their potential

(Zabaneh, 2012, p. 16). Neihart (2006) documented the difficulties students in

economically-challenged environments faced as they try to achieve success. In these

settings, average students embarrassed or even victimized their academically gifted-peers

for trying to better themselves and end the cycle of poverty (Neihart, 2006).

Consequently, lower-income students experienced jealousy, isolation, and rejection by

their friends and family.

Standardized testing.

Modern educational paradigms too often define test scores as the best method of measuring student success. Although objective measures are important, Damon (2008) argued that many of the standardized tests schools use, ironically, have "little to do with advancing standards of excellence in learning, understanding, or gaining useful knowledge" (p. 111). Furthermore, Kohn (2000) discussed the adverse effects testing could have on student motivation and argued that test scores were a very poor measure of student intelligence and academic engagement.

As an alternative to test scores, much research suggested that providing students with meaning and direction through mentorship was the best way to motivate them to succeed. Additionally, Kohn (2000) warned of potential neglect in other areas of student development:

> Schools across the country are cutting back or even eliminating programs in the arts, recess for young children, electives for high schoolers, class meetings (and other activities intended to promote social and moral learning), discussions about current events (since that material will not appear on the test), the use of literature in the early grades (if the tests are focused narrowly on decoding skills), and entire subject areas such as science (if the tests cover only language arts and math). (n.p.)

To be sure, student engagement is a vital component in academic success. Kohn (2000) advocated for a more holistic philosophy of education that will help boost our nation's intellectual power. Renewing America's system of education is a vital component to its overall well-being.

Motivation and Goal Achievement.

Motivation is also a key player in helping students achieve their ultimate potential and find purpose. Robbins and Judge (2012) defined motivation as the "processes that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal" (p. 72). The researchers also pointed out that "motivated individuals stay with a task long enough to achieve their goals" (Robbins & Judge, 2012, p.72). Nohria, Groysberg and Lee (2008) also affirmed the connection between a specific goal and motivation and refer to Edwin Locke who suggested that "intentions to work toward a goal are a major source of motivation" (p. 79). These studies demonstrate the strong connection between goal setting and academic achievement.

Education and Purpose.

Thomas Jefferson (1816) famously said: "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be" (Monticello). Although our country was built on a strong educational foundation, according to the "Alliance for Excellent Education," an estimated 30% of high school students in the United States will drop out. Additionally, only about half of those who receive diplomas are prepared for college-level education (Kraman et al., 2008). Again, Damon (2012) contended that "too often the fundamental and intriguing questions that could awaken students' interest in learning to go unasked and unanswered" (p. 112). Schools need purpose-driven education to reverse the hopelessness and resulting deviance of many students. The effects of an educational paradigm void of purpose often lead to academic dysfunction, a lack of a social conscience, and disillusionment (Zabaneh, 2012, p. 18).

Other educational historians such as Jeynes (2009) affirmed that American education had paid a high price for removing religious ethics from modern American education and cited the substantial increase in many deviant behaviors over the past decades as a direct result of the secularization of education. Damon (2008) advanced the idea that religious purpose and the "notion that the closer we come to God's purpose for us the more satisfied we become in our daily lives" was a historically authoritative source for "finding purpose in life" (p. 45). He found a connection between the decline in the number of young people who feel a sense of purpose and the "slow leak" of "young people who are falling away from the faith" (p.45). The author also described the "generation gap" where many parents have either been "unwilling or unable to pass on their religious faith to their children" (p. 46). Additional research has shown the importance of intergenerational transmission of virtue (Vessels & Huitt, 2005). Bergman (2011) also concurred, asserting that "the typically modern self-has no 'home' (tradition) to obtain a sense of purpose or learn virtues" (p. 46). The CNN author again cited the lack of limits as a key component to the rise in deviance among affluent children. "What also helps lead to grounded children who grow up in affluence is setting boundaries. There's no limit setting," said Stratyner. "Children need and want to be told right from wrong and learn responsibility and the consequences of their actions" (Wallace, 2016, n.p.). Children who grow up without boundaries often neglect to see how the outcomes of their actions can adversely influence their future.

Another important issue related to religious instruction and purpose-driven educational paradigms is that students have not been introduced to the concept of a "vocation". "Vocation," in the Latin sense of the word, refers to one's "calling" (Damon,

2008). Students need to understand their distinct purpose in life and how their education

can help them to fulfill that unique purpose (Zabaneh, 2012, p. 36). As Damon (2008)

pointed out, "A sense of calling requires 1) a realistic awareness of one's abilities, 2) an

interest in how those abilities can serve some aspect of the world's needs, and 3) a feeling

of enjoyment in using one's abilities in this way" (p. 46). He also mentioned that these

"rules can be applied to any occupation" (p. 46). While many young people consider

different aspects of their career, they often look at the "surface features" of the vocation:

what's in it for them, whether or not the work seems like it will capture their interest, the

possibilities of fame and fortune." Rather, Damon believed students need to understand

"what they are trying to accomplish and how their particular aptitudes could be of use to

the world beyond the self" (p. 47).

The connection between a sense of purpose and pedagogical, biological, and

psychological factors is in need of serious evaluation. For example, rates of depression

are rising fast among young adults. As previously mentioned, improved assessment

techniques and greater awareness of mental illness may explain part of this rise. The

Journal of Adolescent Health contended that "the number of 7 to 17-year-olds who

visited the doctor for depression more than doubled from 1995 to 2002 when 3.22 million

children were treated" (Brent, 2005). Since the cause of depression often relates to the

lack of purpose in a person's life (Perera, 2010), the rising statistics reveal a blind spot in

our educational system. Motivation, an outcome of finding purpose, is itself a key factor

in helping students attain their ultimate potential and purpose in life. Larson (2000)

documented a lack of motivation, with teens reporting boredom (27%) and

disengagement (75%) from class activities. Also, according to Gottfried, Fleming, and

Gottfried (2001), pressure to perform can adversely affect student achievement.

Van Dyke and Elias (2007) stated that the idea of providing a sense of life

purpose is a vital component of student success. Researchers Davis, Kerr, and Kurpius

(2003) highlighted the connection between spirituality, resiliency, and emotional well-

being, and demonstrate how a spiritual void often results in depression, substance abuse,

suicide, and anxiety. The authors also cite other researchers who concurred, stating that

"spirituality or religious belief can cultivate a belief in adolescents that their life has

meaning, and that they have some control over their fate…." Furthermore, "spirituality

can also contribute to the adoption of a positive cognitive appraisal of negative life

events" (Davis et al., 2003, p. 356).

Davis et al. (2003) also concurred that spirituality could enable a "'overarching

interpretive scheme' … that allows an individual to perceive his or her individual

circumstances against a larger cohesive backdrop of order and normality" (p. 356). They

also argue a sense of purpose is key to resiliency in at-risk youth. Werner (1984)

documents that one of the four central characteristics of children is the "strong ability to

use faith to maintain a positive vision of a meaningful life" (p. 69). Damon agreed with

Davis as he described how a sense of purpose can help children face difficulties in a

positive way. He argued that of the four key character traits found in resilient children –

purpose, autonomy, social competence, and problem solving skills – purpose is most

important (Damon, 2008, pp. 29-30). On the other hand, as Davis (2003) indicated,

adolescents who lack a sense of meaning and purpose are more likely to be involved in

harmful behaviors such as substance abuse, suicide, and delinquency. In *Man's Search*

for Meaning, Frankl (1992) shared his story as a Holocaust survivor, as well as his search

for personal meaning. He observed that an existence devoid of purpose was the cause of

addictions, depression, and other detrimental behaviors (p.104).

Australian researcher Eckersley (2008) demonstrated the hopelessness in today's

youth and posited some additional reasons for the increase in deviant behaviors:

> Part of the problem goes back at least as far as the 16th century and the Scientific
>
> Revolution, which changed so radically the way we see ourselves and our place
>
> in the world. Science's rational, objective, reductionist, mechanistic worldview
>
> separated fact from value. (p. 12)

Eckersley also asserted that "the evolution of Western culture has been marked by the

erosion of religious and communal values and the elevation of individual, secular, and

material values," and faith in God has been replaced by faith in progress (p. 13).

Eckersley also included Hugh Mackay's research, which suggested that outside of a

religious context, young people find it difficult to identify a moral code; he therefore

concludes that ethics are declining in today's society (p. 13). Eckersley referred to the

UNICEF report, *The Progress of Nations*, which said that young people in modern

society are being devalued globally, and there is a rise in educational demoralization,

drop-out rates, underachievement, and disillusionment (Eckersley, 2008, p. 15).

Similarly Solzhenytsin (1978) argued that humanism eroded… "man's sense of

responsibility to God and society" resulting in a "spiritual crisis" and "political

impasse"…where man is "the measure of all things on earth—imperfect man, who is

never free of pride, self-interest, envy, vanity" … thus losing "the concept of a Supreme

Complete Entity which used to restrain our passions and our irresponsibility"

(Solzhenitsyn, 1978, para. 56). Although religious-inspired content is clearly an

important factor to consider in a private school setting, it cannot be taught in a public

school setting and therefore would need to be adapted to a broader, more secular view.

Literature about the Professional Practice Setting

To promote purpose-driven education requires a purpose-driven, learning

organization that can adapt and innovate. Eisenberg et al. (2010) noted Peter Senge's

(1990) observation that a learning organization promotes systems thinking, flexible

mental models, a shared vision and team learning. In a purpose-driven organizational

model, success is ultimately achieved, as the highest good of all stakeholders is

considered.

The setting for this study, the School, founded in the 1950's, is an example of a

purpose-driven learning organization. The School's system is dedicated to ethical

leadership and a holistic approach to education. In an interview, the head of the School,

mentioned that since ethical leadership is ultimately derived from a reformed heart, the

organization's public mission and documents reflect that goal. Some of the other

strengths of the team are the dedicated faculty and administrators who hold each other

accountable using faculty observations, self-evaluation rubrics, and training seminars that

encourage reflective and authentic dialogue. As a result, there is a definite emphasis on

faculty mentorship and coaching. One of the biggest concerns mentioned by the School

director is that the faculty and administration be able to efficiently transfer their values to

the students.

To ensure that this is happening, the School staff introduce students to both the

wisdom of the past and present to teach virtue-based lessons for future leaders. The

School's students are also trained to be concerned about the physical and spiritual healing of the community with the goal of making their education relevant to those around them. Additionally, all departments at the School train students to fulfill their full potential and to influence their world for the glory of God (Anonymous, 2013). Another positive aspect of the School is its commitment to staff sustainability. According to both the head of the School and other faculty members, funding for professional development, child-care provisions, housing, and other incentives provided to employees are a high priority.

An integral part of the School's vision and mission is its commitment to the holistic development of its students, including a focus on character development. According to official school documents, the institution is a Christian school ministry dedicated to nurturing and strengthening young people in the Christian faith.

> "Our goal is to help students experience the joy of walking with God while
> developing a personal faith in Christ as Savior. We desire to support the
> Christian home and reinforce its values, providing loving Christian training for
> the wholesome development of each student." (The School, 2013, p.5)

"Focusing on spiritual formation and character," "inspiring intellectual growth," "fostering creativity," "promoting physical fitness and sportsmanship," and "impacting the world" are just some of the ways students are encouraged to develop as a whole person (Anonymous, 2012, n.p.). The School administration and faculty believe that they are stewards of the next generation. Part of a good education includes modeling and encouraging the moral development of each student (Vessels & Huitt, 2005). Across the disciplines, teachers help students to identify, develop, and use their unique gifts for the good of others. This is confirmed by the School's documents which stated,

> Our teachers stress character traits such as honesty, diligence, initiative,
>
> dependability, and humility as building blocks for healthy relationships and a
>
> good work ethic in the workplace. We teach the importance of reading carefully
>
> and following directions." (The School, 2013, p. 208)

Regardless of the task, students at the School are instructed in ways to use their

individual gifts, talents, and educational opportunities to serve others. Whether a student

is doing an assignment at school or participating in an obligation at home or on the job,

the focus is on the journey rather than just completing the assignment. This holistic

approach contributes to the complete development of the students.

Institutional Factors

Johnson (2012) introduced four vital "components" to ensure organizational

ethical health including moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral focus, and moral

character (p. 236). He also affirmed the need for a code of values, ethics, and

commitment to ethical learning as part of the trio needed to evaluate organizational

ethical climates (p. 334). According to the School documents, the philosophy, vision,

mission, and core values statements of institution are "regularly and systematically"

reviewed (The School, 2013, p. 174). The School accreditation study includes

documentation that it complies with local, state, and federal laws, including specific ways

administrators, teachers, and students are held accountable, and the many ways virtue-

based leadership is encouraged through its programs (The School Accreditation Self

Study, 2013). For this reason, this researcher decided to create and implement a purpose-

driven, entrepreneurial leadership-training program at the School that would emphasize a

commitment to justice, character, and social responsibility. Measuring the ethical climate

of the organization, as evidenced by accreditation self-study document and the individual

survey responses, revealed a substantial commitment to virtue that was easily translated

into more specific programs designed to communicate these values to all the School's

constituents. Additionally, it appears that faculty and staff have been given the skills and

knowledge to make good ethical decisions (Johnson, 2012, p. 320). For example, the

administration provided space for the implementation of a purpose-driven educational

program that brings an intersection between faith, entrepreneurship, virtue, and vocation,

and continues to further the purpose-driven mission of the School.

Leadership Literature

Since our educational system is the foundation of our functioning democracy and

thriving economy as well as one of the first sources of instruction for leaders now and in

the future, development of the whole person (including moral development) is needed in

today's curricula. This raises the question: How can modern educators create a holistic

approach for our schools that curates purpose-driven curricula? To begin, twenty-first-

century educators can connect their students' concepts of achievement to the purpose of

living meaningful lives of service to others. Since service is at the heart of servant-

leadership (Greenleaf, 1991), this theory that advocated the leader as servant first,

provides a framework for educators to holistically train emerging servant leaders to meet

the needs of others, model humility and altruism, thus contributing to the healing and

wholeness of the world around them (Fackenheim, 1982). Consequently, the researcher

affirmed the importance in servant leadership paradigms of "*cura personalis*" or

"development of the whole person—body, soul, mind, and spirit," as taught by the Jesuits.

The researcher implemented this purpose-driven methodology by 1) examining the

historical context for Jesuit moral education (Lowney, 2005) and its connection to service learning and 2) proposing *cura personalis* alternatives (Bergman, 2011) that include incorporating social entrepreneurship opportunities into school curricula.

Historical Foundations for *Cura Personalis* and Service Learning

Education that is obtained through the traditional classroom model is not sufficient to meet the demands of a changing economy ("Chapter 1: The Future of Jobs and Skills", para 1). For students to handle the professional, economic, and social disruptions of innovation and ingenuity, they need, according to Traub (2008), some stabilizing, constant teleological and moral foundation for their careers. Students can learn by doing something to serve others in the real world and by experiencing social problems first hand. For centuries, Jesuits have been known for their dedication to the holistic development of students at their educational institutions through experiential learning practices. They looked "on their work of teaching or administration as sharing in God's work, as ministry to others" (p. 22) and have advised educational leaders "to form men for others; men who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ— for the God-man who lived and died for all the world" (Traub, p. 151). In this context, Mitchell (1988) noted that students in the Jesuit tradition are also introduced to the sciences and humanities, providing a well-rounded educational experience (pp. 111-112). The goal for these students is to translate their faith and knowledge into practical action or real-world experience while practicing servant leadership traits such as empathy, authenticity, and stewardship (Greenleaf, 1970).

Additionally, Brackley (2008) advocated an objective, hands-on approach to learning enabling students to ultimately "discover their vocation in life" (p. 192). Not

only did the Jesuits understand the importance of experiential learning to the development of the mind and heart, but they also firmly advocated that students put their knowledge into purposeful action. In 1959, Judge Tapine wrote a letter later featured in the *Huffington Post*, encouraging students to actively serve humankind:

> The world does not owe you a living; you owe the world something. You owe your time, talent, and energy so that no one will be at war, in sickness or lonely again. You are important, and you are needed. It's too late to wait for somebody to do something someday. Someday is now and that somebody is you. (Bindley, 2012)

Judge Tapine understood that service to others is the end-goal of life. As modeled by the Jesuits, each student can learn to live for a purpose greater than oneself, rather than to be merely focused on the individual and temporary gain. This next section will show the connection between *cura personalis*, community engagement and social entrepreneurship.

In the entrepreneurial spirit of the Jesuits, who constructed a worldwide education system based on the idea underpinning *cura personalis*, this research demonstrated that modern educators can encourage servant leadership. As students understand their own identity through service, they can begin to form ideas that include ways to help the world around them. According to Bergman (2011), "Paul VI appealed to educators in the *Populorum Progressio*, urging them 'to provide students with opportunities for contact with the poor and for service to them…to enable these students to learn to love all as brothers and sisters in the human community, and also in order to come to better understanding of the causes of poverty" (p. 27). The process of moral development

occurs as students learn to improve themselves through defining experiences that relate to servant leadership.

Geger (2014) identified specific definitions historically attributed to *cura personalis*. Firstly, this instruction in the values of morality, equality, and social justice relates to a holistic education that meets the moral, intellectual and spiritual needs of an individual. Secondly, it is described as an education that is "respectful of the unique needs and identity of each student" (Geger, 2014, p.1).

Bergman (2011) concurred with Kristjansson (2006), who believed service-learning is futile unless paired with opportunities for reflection. He thus advocated the importance of utilizing a combination of methods to activate virtue, including habituation, comparisons, and critical assessments, to complete the moral development of an individual who "has acquired practical wisdom (*phronesis*)" (p.278). MacIyntire (1984) described "*phronesis*" as an "intellectual virtue without which none of the virtues of character can be exercised (p. 144 -145). This theoretical and practical lens delivered through "systematic instruction" (p. 145) is the foundation of the actual service-learning experience that will allow even painful moments encountered in the real world to transition into positive character building experiences and actions. Kristjansson (2006) later posited that service-learning is "the modern method of moral education which comes closest to Aristotle's description" and argued that it is through this approach that "the child is exposed to real-world experiences and instructed in acting virtuously in the given circumstances" (p. 278). Although Kristjansson (2006) mentioned that, traditionally, service-learning has been a non-mainstream educational method due to the effort and substantial organization that goes into this type of program, he affirmed that

service-learning integration in school curricula positively influences academic achievement, classroom atmosphere, moral development, and self-esteem, as students experience the joy of helping others (p. 279). Additionally, Novak, Markey, and Allen (2007) demonstrated across nine studies how service-learning contributes to positive student learning outcomes.

With the goal of ingraining these purposeful actions into a child's character, Kristjansson (2006) further highlighted the importance of reflection on issues relevant in today's society, whether it be homelessness or poverty (p. 279). For this reason, students who are exposed to real-life, socially challenging situations that put students' compassion for others into action, are more successful. Additionally, Bergman (2011) cited Michael Schratz and Rob Walker's observations that although "service-learning may disrupt the lives of students. . . [it is in] service-learning that students learn most about themselves; that service-learning occasions the rebuilding of the participants' lives and senses of self" (p. 89). This introspective experience equips students with the tools to turn societal challenges into stepping-stones for their futures. The authors also suggest that in the process of developing these servant leaders (Greenleaf, 1970), 'critical incidents' such as those that occur in service-learning may have a deep influence on learning, and such incidents are often connected with loss" ... Also, these experiences help the student to see that they are in need of further transformation (Bergman, 2011, p. 89). Once students recognize the need for change, service-learning provides an ideal opportunity for learners to be immersed in experiences in which they can affect transformations. Bergman (2011) later pointed out the integral importance of fostering empathy through service-learning in the cultivation of a student's heart and mind. He suggested that educational curricula that

provide exposure to actual suffering and problems in the real world contribute to a

transformational experience to a student's moral perspective.

Bridging Social Entrepreneurship and Service Learning

Since service learning is a core aspect of social entrepreneurship, building bridges

of understanding between the two concepts is vital to the development of purpose-driven

curricula. Service learning is typically done based on the volunteering model, where

students spend a few hours each week helping a service organization. On the other hand,

social entrepreneurship offers students the ability to link service learning experiences and

servant leadership with the development of an entrepreneurial solution to a real world

problem (Dees, 1998). Ultimately, this purpose-driven social entrepreneurship model

that integrates servant leadership, service learning opportunities, social innovation, social

enterprise theory and practice, design thinking and civic engagement - empowers students

to come up with their own sustainable intervention to identified challenges (Dees, 1998,

p.4). Dees (1998) further explained how social entrepreneurship creates lasting change in

the social sector by:

- adopting a mission to create and sustain social value (not just private value);

- recognizing and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission;

- engaging in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation, and learning;

- acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand; and

- exhibiting heightened accountability to the constituencies served and for the

  outcomes created. (pg.4)

In a constantly changing society, servant leaders need the skills to apply entrepreneurial,

purpose-driven tools and mindsets to benefit others in whatever vocation they enter

(Tracey and Phillips, 2007).

Summary

A combination of environmental and personal factors relate to the lifelong success

of a student, including emotional and family stability, socioeconomic status, and

academic motivation. However, while all these issues may be factors in student

achievement, the review of literature indicates that giving students a sense of purpose in

their education through service is an important component of life and academic success.

Whether a student comes from a disadvantaged or affluent background, a sense of

purpose can be the deciding factor as to whether one will reach one's full potential. For

these reasons, research, informed by experiential learning, is necessary to provide insight

into the design of purpose-driven curricula.

CHAPTER THREE: PROJECT METHODOLOGY

This study utilized qualitative research methods to gather data regarding the following research question: To what extent, if at all, do purpose-driven social entrepreneurship-based curricula contribute to student success? The study evaluated extent by qualitatively assessing students' development of vocationally-oriented skills and service-oriented values. The primary hypothesis of this study was that purpose-driven education is beneficial to student success. Therefore, much of the observed educational dysfunction in the United States can be remedied by creating curricula that connect students' current academic activities with their ultimate purpose.

It drew on case studies as described by Gerring (2004). Creswell (2014) noted that "qualitative researchers tend to collect information in the field at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study" (p. 185). For this reason, the CSPSEL pilot project, which addresses the lack of purpose in high school students, provided an excellent site to perform this research.

Overview of Data Collection Process

Through an investigation of the concept of purpose in the lives of high school students across models of private and public institutions, the researcher observed a substantial deficiency in today's educational curricula. To respond to this challenge, a unique Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab (CSPSEL) for high school students was created and launched at the San Francisco Bay Area faith-based, private high school. Based on the researcher's knowledge and a review of the literature, CSPSEL is the first faith-based, social entrepreneurship program, designed to equip high school students to respond to social problems. Through this program, students are

encouraged to find a passion that drives their concern for others as they identify specific

social issues and implement workable solutions. Because of their participation in the

pilot program, students who completed CSPSEL were the study participants for the

Dissertation in Practice. The CSPSEL pilot program involved providing education with a

purpose by connecting student's current academic endeavors with their future vocation(s)

or "calling(s)." CSPSEL alumni who have completed the pilot program were interviewed

as part of this research. For the interview, the study included electronic and paper

interview questionnaires. Emails that included a survey link were sent to all alumni (age

18 and over). Participants received initial contact through email. Questions sought to

elucidate how students are currently implementing the purpose-driven, leadership lessons

they received as part of CSPSEL in their current occupation, school, and community.

These data provided valuable information about the program influence, sustainability,

and scalability. Additionally, the researcher did a review of preexisting datasets. The

results of student survey questionnaires that have been collected and classified at the

School since CSPSEL's inception were reviewed to inform organization's internal

evaluation of the program. This dataset, known as the Caritas Scholars Program and

Social Entrepreneurship Lab Assessment Survey (CSPSELAS), contained information

about how, if at all, the CSPSEL purpose-driven curriculum altered students' educational

journey during the program.

Instruments for Data Collection

This study used an in-depth paper and online interview questionnaire to evaluate

the changing perceptions and attitudes of study participants. According to Creswell

(2014), qualitative data collection is completed in stages and ultimately allows the design

to emerge (p.186). Qualitative data collection was an effective method because most of the alumni of CSPSEL are currently studying at different schools across the country. Please see Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire document.

Gaining Participants for the Study

Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab (CSPSEL) alumni were the participants in this study. To obtain their contact information, the researcher contacted the School administration for permission and contact data. The researcher reached out via email with an online questionnaire to approximately 35 students (Creswell, 2014, p. 188). Many of the alumni email addresses were not current. Please see Appendix B for a copy of the email. These adult study subjects were previous participants in CSPSEL at the School. All study participants were required to give electronic informed consent. The data was collected through an online survey instrument and https protected email account. De-identifying information and attaching pseudonyms to names provided protected the confidentiality of the participants. The researcher intended to have a minimum of 10 case studies included in the research project (14 responded). Inductive and deductive data analysis was used to analyze and categorize the survey responses (Creswell, 2014, p. 186). Through this method, the researcher was able to "build…patterns, categories, and themes from the bottom up by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information…and then look backward…to see what more is needed" (Creswell, 2014, p. 186).

Planned Procedures

First, the researcher created an online survey for distribution to CSPSEL alumni. The survey covered the themes of vocational interests, empathy toward others,

community service, college plans, the transition from high school to college, and primary

aims in life. Please see Appendix A. The survey took approximately 30 minutes to

complete and was comprised of 12 questions. Secondly, the School's administrators

were contacted to obtain CSPSEL alumni information. This included names, phone

numbers, and email contact information. Thirdly, the researcher collected and coded the

data, initially by bracketing segments and systematically dividing the information into

categories (Creswell, 2014). The researcher looked for highly refined themes as the

theories emerged. Rich, thick description was used to add validity and describe the

findings in sufficient detail so that the conclusions could be transferrable to other settings

(Creswell, 2014). Rather than using a computer program, the researcher hand coded the

interviews as they were being received. Once completed, the researcher organized the

results according to themes, using tables to record the findings.

        During data collection, the researcher protected the identities of all research

participants. A secure, password-protected computer stored the data. All prospective

participants were given a consent form prior to engaging in the study that indicated the

intended anonymity of their replies.

Financial and Budgetary Issues Influencing Data Collection

        The researcher did not encounter any financial budgeting issues related to the data

collection. The clear intention was to make the process of obtaining data efficient and

convenient without being too time-consuming for participants. To do so, paper and/or

online questionnaire options were offered to the study participants.

Legal Issues Influencing Evidence Collection

Since there are several legal issues that affect institutions about minor rights, the researcher limited the collection of new data to participants over the age of 18. The IRB approval process ensured that all study protocols were approved. The researcher made every effort to respect the confidentiality of participants. Additionally, the research followed all guidelines related to organizational, employee, and client/student legal protection and rights. The study population was restricted to post-high school participants over 18. A password-protected personal computer and transmission through https-protected email addresses secured all data.

Data Analysis Plan

After receiving IRB approval, the researcher collected data from CSPSEL graduates during the summer of 2016, subsequently analyzing them. After students' names were identified, the researcher asked the administration's permission to contact Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab alumni with the survey. The researcher used open-ended surveys to implement the qualitative research study. Students were invited to complete the questionnaire after being informed that their interview responses would be included in the study. According to Creswell (2014), data analysis proceeds "hand-in-hand with other parts of developing the qualitative study." The researcher analyzed the data by hand (rather than using a computer program) as the interviews were completed. Although there was a preconceived idea of themes that needed to be explored for the interview, the researcher took measures to avoid the bias of using data to fit preconceptions, to ensure the validity and reliability of the research (Creswell, 2014). The researcher then used the basic classifications to guide the data

production and analysis and to incorporate thematic connections. Tables were also

created based on the resulting themes and the general agreement in the findings. The

validity of the results was supported by establishing themes based on "converging several

perspectives from participants" or triangulation (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). Lastly, the

researcher provided "rich, thick description[s] to convey findings" to add additional

validity to the findings (Creswell, 2014, p. 202).

Leadership Roles/Implications as They Relate to Data Collection

As this qualitative research concerned the changing status quo in education, the

researcher needed to be cognizant and strategic regarding the obstacles. Although this

Dissertation in Practice revealed some challenges in the current view of success in

education, the national educational crisis is also a moment of opportunity. As a leader in

the field of education, the researcher has a responsibility to pursue and enact change to

help solve this challenge. A reversal in these devastating trends will require new types of

transformational leaders and educators (Eagly & Carly, 2007, p. 48), who will bring a

revival of purpose-driven education in our society.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, the investigator stored all information, including

interview notes, on a password-protected computer. In addition, anonymity of the

subjects was ensured by using pseudonyms. To further maintain anonymity, paper

questionnaires were kept in a secure storage area and destroyed upon the completion of

the research. Since the researcher of this qualitative study is the director of the Caritas

Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab, caution was taken to avoid

researcher bias. To curtail personal bias, the researcher documented any assumptions and

biases in a reflective journal. In addition to reflexivity, (Creswell, 2013) the research

utilized peer debriefings to review findings. Lastly, the researcher recorded all data

exactly as presented by participants whether in agreement or disagreement with the

research hypothesis.

Reflective Practices

As part of the process of identifying and narrowing a proposed dissertation topic,

the researcher was prepared to integrate leadership theories with the necessary research

tools to complete the dissertation. Lowney (2003) described the Jesuit philosophy of

transformational education as being motivated by loving service to others. Inspired, by

the model of sacrificial and purpose-driven leadership, to reform the educational system,

this researcher pursued purpose, regardless of the obstacles. Although CSPSEL students

come from all walks of life, the researcher helps them discover their dreams and provides

them with the leadership tools and entrepreneurial training to bring their visions to

reality.

Summary

With teaching, mentoring, and coaching experience at both public and private

educational institutions, the researcher has observed anecdotally how an education with a

purpose can play an important part in student success. Lowney (2003) cautioned that

modern society could "no longer succeed—or even survive—simply by following

orders…[with] the accelerated pace of change, roles and tasks evolve constantly,

requiring continuous judgment" (p.107). Through systematic analysis of the mechanisms

that can be replicated, this research will demonstrate how these results can help to

identify a purpose-driven model that can be used in various types of educational settings.

Although much has been written on academic achievement and underachievement, meaningful education has become a central theme in the public debate. The researcher investigated some of the causes for a lack of purpose through conducting a qualitative, case-study research process and CSPSEL Record Review. Moreover, the researcher examined how an education with a purpose can be applied in practice by using social entrepreneurial-oriented curricula. In this time of national transition, purpose-driven leaders can help transform the way educators view education.

Through the investigation of many current educational paradigms as described by Abeles (2015), Damon (2012), Bergman (2011), and Wang (2016), the researcher identified a need for purpose-driven curriculum models. Through the Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab (CSPSEL) launched at the School, the researcher gathered data from students attending the program as well as from program alumni, who became the study participants for the Dissertation in Practice. Interview questionnaires collected the data, and the questions shed light on the influence, future sustainability, and scalability of the program, providing educators, educational leaders and policy makers with a blueprint for effective purpose-driven intervention. Chapter Four will analyze these data.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

In light of major current failures in American education, many educators, policy-makers, and educational leaders have been asking, "What is the purpose of an education?" (Damon, 2008). Academic, technological, scientific, and financial achievements are only part of overall societal advancement. The data collected in this study provided insight into the research question: To what extent, if at all, do purpose-driven, social entrepreneurship-based curricula contribute to student success? The study evaluated extent by qualitatively assessing students' development of vocationally-oriented skills and service-oriented values. The primary hypothesis of this study was that purpose-driven education is beneficial to student success. Therefore, much of the observed educational dysfunction in the United States can be remedied by creating curricula that connect students' current academic activities with their ultimate purpose. Although secondary quantitative data sources and academic journals informed the study, the primary research for this investigation was multi-disciplinary and qualitative in nature. The researcher relied on a case study methodology, process tracing, and ethnography to inform conclusions (Creswell, 2014, p. 186).

The advantages of the case study approach included richer description of the setting, inclusion of a variety of subjects' perspectives, and general holistic understanding. However, the case study methodology offered less accuracy due to the biases inherent in research observation. This process included identifying common elements and hand-coding data. Following the coding process, the researcher organized results according to the major themes. The findings presented below elucidate some of

the ways purpose-driven education can help create more engaged and challenged students who demonstrate citizen-leadership in their communities.

CSPSEL Program Intervention Methodology

Students who participated in Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab (CSPSEL) engaged in a holistic program that lasts at least one academic year (some students stayed in the program for four years). Please see Appendix E for the official course description. The curriculum included the following components:

- History of Ideas: Students spent time analyzing valuable insights from great works or documentaries. The content covered philosophy, theology, cultural studies, socio-economic analyses, and the history of ideas. Primary instruction included lessons from C.S. Lewis, Abraham Lincoln, Plato, William Wilberforce, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther, Winston Churchill, Machiavelli, the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, and George Washington.

- Socratic Seminars: To accompany readings and lessons, the class facilitator initiated a robust class discussion. During these discussions, the facilitator used the Socratic method to activate debate. Students expressed their worldviews, as well as opinions on different current issues, and related the readings to the cultural, theological and social themes of the day.

- Design-Thinking, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Tutorials: Through group tutorials, students learned about social and economic problems, for which they indicated concern at the start of the semester. They then used business, entrepreneurial leadership theory and design-thinking to develop their own

innovations that solve social challenges. In this way, leadership theory linked

with practice.

- Mentorship and Speaker Series: Mentors from a wide range of fields (sports, law,

  medicine, ministry, education, technology, etc.) offered feedback to student

  groups and guest lectures on topics related to the development of students'

  projects. CSPSEL speakers from all fields emphasized how they apply their faith

  and vocation in the service of others. Mentors also helped students to analyze and

  make adjustments to their plans in order to maximize influence.

- Immersion Experiences: Through field trips to impoverished neighborhoods,

  current community enrichment programs, and institutions of higher education,

  students made deeper connections between their research and real world

  applications.

- Public Presentations: Students present their work at a final awards ceremony. For

  this presentation, they submitted their overall plans and the effects they want their

  projects to have on peoples' lives. For the analysis, they are invited to use

  quantitative and qualitative methods.

Results

Previous research combined with the tenets of social entrepreneurship informed

the researcher's approach. For an in-depth discussion of program development, please see

Chapter Five. The research involved a student population of 51 Caritas Scholars from the

School. Although no baseline survey exists, pre-existing school records (CSPSEL

Annual Survey) that were collected at between 2013 and 2016, along with an exit survey,

given to every participant in the program, showed purpose-driven entrepreneurial

leadership development for those students who had gone through the course. This pre-existing CSPSEL Annual Survey (CSPSELAS), collected through the School, asked 12 qualitative questions. Please see Appendix D. Additionally, the researcher's questionnaire (RQ), designed specifically for this study asked 12 different questions to CSPEL alumni (14 responded). Please see Appendix D. After analyzing the responses to all the instruments discussed above, the researcher coded the students' responses into several major themes: character; moral exemplars; entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial work ethic; servant leadership and civic engagement; future purpose and vocation; college success and life skills.

        A thematic analysis of the data follows, with direct excerpts from the responses of CSPSEL students and alumni. First-name pseudonyms as in-text citations protect student privacy.

Theme One: Character and Leadership

The inclusion of character development into academic curricula benefits education. To prevent ethical leadership failures, Damon (2008) explained how character education might provide students with a moral compass and noble purpose. First and foremost, character education starts with exploration and understanding of personal identity (Guinness, 2000). Because leading scholars and historic figures emphasize the centrality of character to education, CSPSEL teaches students to investigate and value character. In CSPSEL, students explore 1) why character is necessary for leadership, 2) what virtuous character is, 3) how to reform character, 4) what pitfalls can erode character and/or corrupt leadership, and 5) how to overcome those obstacles and live a life of goodness, truth, and beauty (Guinness, 2000). As the data below demonstrated, the CSPSEL

program appears to have helped students understand the importance of character in

leadership. The researcher analyzed the data and, after grouping responses into the

general theme of "character and leadership," decided to organize them further into the

following sub-themes:

General Morality

　　　After completing CSPSEL, [Angela] (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) indicated that she

was able to connect good leadership with virtuous or good character and virtuous

character with moral integrity. She stated:

> Personally, I believe there is no leadership without character. Building good
>
> character is the foundation of not only being a strong leader but a strong human
>
> being. It is important to make sure that you are a virtuously and morally good
>
> person when no one sees but God. (Angela)

Since CSPSEL emphasized the connection between inner character and outward actions,

Guinness, (2000), students were coached as they translated their own character lessons

into public actions. Furthermore, students were taught that character requires consistency

and commitment. For example, Drew and Marcos (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) were able to

internalize the importance of consistency of character in leadership, through their

participation in the program:

> Character should be a commitment and it should show in one's private and
>
> public life. (Drew)
>
> I learned in class … to never give up doing the right thing even when everyone
>
> else is against you. (Marcos)

Meanwhile, Natasha (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) learned to focus on the contribution of character to leadership in service of other people:

> I feel like the most important lesson I learned is to not forget who I am serving. (Natasha)

Hannah, (RQ) noted CSPSEL lessons helped her to develop a holistic sense of character that is based on virtue:

> Lessons on being a Christian [virtuous] leader have helped me to grow in confidence and thus be able to pursue academics that I truly care about with my whole heart and soul. (Hannah)

Since many of the character lessons involved practical examples, Marianna (RQ) discussed how CSPSEL inspired her to put virtuous character into action:

> In the Caritas Scholars Program/Social Entrepreneurship Lab, I learned how to take on leadership roles. At [my university], I ran for a leadership position (Media Chair) in my school's Filipino club. (Marianna)

Furthermore, in CSPSEL, students studied how to break down the process of character development into new decisions regarding their reflections, decisions, routines (Covey, 1998). After CSPSEL, Sophia (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was able to identify the importance of each step of good character growth:

> Your character is developed by your thoughts, actions and habits, which in turn affect your personal leadership. (Sophia)

Once CSPSEL students investigated qualities associated with virtuous character, the instructor, through the Socratic method, gave the students the opportunity to brainstorm their own list of corrosive forces that erode character. The students identified

drugs, violence, and negative media as some of the key damaging elements to virtuous

character in the 21st Century. Jason (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) shared his awareness of

the dangers of drugs and violence: "I think the most corrosive to character is drugs and

violence." (Jason)

Like Jason, Ethan's (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) discussion of the unconscious

effects of media as a negative influence on character are particularly relevant:

Media, such as television and music. They spread ideas and beliefs in seemingly

harmless ways but slowly change character. Having awareness of this fact, and

moral guidelines to help discern good media from harmful media will help

overcome. (Ethan)

Meanwhile, Thomas reflected on the desensitization to violence that media can cause:

Cultural forces like television and social media seem to destroy the fibers of

character in our world today. We see people doing terrible things and believe that

they are alright because we see them on television or the internet. (Thomas)

These data showed that student insights match with the design of the CSPSEL

curriculum, indicating that students internalized and carefully considered the course

material. Students also studied the pitfalls of leadership without virtuous character. The

philosophy which Machiavelli (1903) first popularized in *The Prince,* that the ends justify

the means, is popular in society today. It influences politics, business, entertainment, and

personal interactions. In CSPSEL, students studied Machiavelli's argument that teaches

leaders to focus exclusively on the final result of their aims. Machiavelli further

encouraged leaders to pretend to be moral and religious, and to prefer to be feared rather

than loved: "Therefore it is necessary for a prince, who wishes to maintain himself [in

power], to learn how not to be good, and to use [his knowledge] and not use it according to the necessity of the case" (Machiavelli, 1903, pg. 60). Responding to such expedient philosophies of leadership, renowned writer and theologian Lewis (2001) cautioned in the *Abolition of Man* that an education devoid of absolute values would empower students to be more clever rather than good. After participating in the program, Andrew (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) and Erwin chose to contradict Machiavelli's a-moral philosophy of leadership that is often associated with success:

> The most important lesson I learned was probably the one about Machiavelli (the end DOES NOT justify the means). (Andrew)
>
> …without character, [leadership] is ineffective. It would be dangerous and manipulative. (Erwin)

Avoiding Pride

Another pitfall of power is the development of pride that often is associated with external measures of success. In contrast to this philosophy, Brooks (2015) discussed the importance of valuing virtuous character over superficial indicators of success. After CSPSEL, Sophia (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was able to define pride and its destructive effect:

> One of the most corrosive forces in society is pride. Sometimes we get so blessed and make it so far that we tend to forget why we started this and who it is for. Based off of the lessons I learned, I know that when there is pride, there will be a fall as well. (Sophia)

Meanwhile, Andrew (CSPSELAS 2014-2016) gained understanding of dangers of pride and its remedies.

I learned that sometimes a leader's character (could) be hurt if his pride, ego,

accomplishments, and situation get ahead of him. To prevent this, I learned that I

need God's help, a good circle of supportive friends, and a strong will to battle

what comes before me. (Andrew)

Additionally, Mario (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) reflected that real self-worth comes from

within:

The importance society gives to superficiality is what I think is the most

corrosive to character in today's society. I learned that the inner self is more

important since we can't do good without character. (Mario)

Avoiding Peer Pressure

Other pitfalls that corrupt leaders come from social pressures. Another corrosive

force, closely related to pride and arrogance, is peer pressure. Thomas Aquinas wrote,

"There are two reasons why men especially deviate from justice. The first is because they

defer to important persons. The second is because they defer to the majority… (Thomas

Aquinas, 2016, 34.2). Martin Luther King Jr. pointed out that discrimination is another

detrimental force in society closely related to peer pressure (Kroll, 2012). After

participating in the program, Natasha understood the need to notice and oppose

discrimination:

Any form of cultural opposition seems to both build and harm character. It simply

depends on how one reacts. One can take cultural oppression (discrimination,

inequality, etc.) and build oneself or one can take the same oppression and remain

in a dismal state. (Natasha)

Furthermore, after CSPSEL, Alexa (CSPSELAS, 2014-2015) was able to identify the

destructive consequences at the nexus of the peer pressure that Aquinas introduced,

combined with the discrimination that Martin Luther King Jr. discussed:

> Peer pressure—going with what's cool can break someone's character. Mass
>
> genocide has been a resultant [sic] of peer pressure. (Alexa)

Another issue closely related to peer pressure and discrimination is bullying.

From her participation in the program, Angela (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was able to

discern the adverse effects of bullying and the importance of fighting it with one's own

virtuous character:

> Bullying and shutting down people can make a huge negative impact on both
>
> lives in the situation. It causes people to forget the things that they loved, and
>
> their passions fade into a dark hopelessness. Through showing people love and
>
> the light of God their light inside can be revived. (Angela)

Behavior Change Strategies

Once CSPSEL students gained awareness of the dangers of a lack of character,

they learned strategies to change behaviors through reliance on God. After CSPSEL,

Annie (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) observed the value of her belief in being able to

transcend her own flaws through faith:

> I thought that the lesson about knowing [my limitations] is important…With
>
> limitations, I am able to recognize that I need God so I can live a life that honors
>
> Him (Annie).

This class is not teaching us just to rely on ourselves but to rely on God. To

spread God's wisdom which is the foundation of effective solutions for all the

problems. (Timothy [International Student])

Although popular culture encourages behavior that contradicts the pursuit of

moral development, if an individual can conceive of the moral attributes of God, that

individual can begin to believe in one's own ability to possess those traits and translate

them into virtuous actions. After experiencing the program, Cindy internalized and

reflected these ideas:

…we can overcome peer pressure by reminding ourselves that character is who

we are when no one sees but God. We don't need to look in our friends for

approval; we should be looking to God for approval because He's the only one

that matters. (Cindy)

Other students identified specific divine attributes that CSPSEL enabled them to utilize.

After participating, Charlie felt CSPSEL equipped them with an understanding of the

theological foundations for justice: "Justice stems and begins only with God... I learned I

can make a huge difference and speak the truth about injustice to get it changed..."

(Charlie). After CSPSEL, Lila and Jessica (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) commented on the

importance of giving dignity and respect to everyone:

If I see someone being unfairly treated I should stand up for them. (Lila)

I have learned that someone can be a lot more than you estimated before talking

to them. Just because society says one thing about you does not mean you have to

live up to their standards. (Jessica)

After CSPSEL, Lisa (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was able to take the conception of human

dignity even further, emphasizing how the divine characteristic of love can translate faith

into meaningful action:

> In this class, I've grown not only in my leadership skills but also spiritually with
>
> God. As we become leaders, we must display the presence of God to others by
>
> our actions. As Christians, it is important for us to set godly examples to show
>
> others the love of God. (Lisa)

Following the program, Gianna (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was also more enthusiastic

about her own abilities to reflect certain virtuous character traits: "A lot of the lessons

reminded us to have mercy, be forgiving, gracious, and kind. All these things are forces

that will always overcome the evil…That [sic] it's okay to agree to disagree". (Gianna)

Finally, Thomas (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) reflected that through CSPSEL, he learned to

"seek God for [the] power to overcome, and I hope that you continue to teach this to

young people for a very long time here." (Thomas)

Since CSPSEL provides a purpose-driven foundation for character and leadership

development, these findings indicate that purpose-driven curricula that include character

and leadership training may be beneficial to students' overall success in school and in

life. Counter to what many corporate leaders describe as the increasingly self-absorbed

culture of millennials (Moon, 2014, p. 26), the CSPSEL curriculum helps students to put

a high value on ethical behavior in the context of leadership. The findings support the

benefit of integrating character development and leadership training as an element of

purpose-driven curricula for high-school students.

In summary, CSPSELAS and RQ data showed that, overwhelmingly, students value leaders with virtuous character and disagree with the Machiavellian philosophy of leadership. When asked about the importance of character in leadership, the data revealed that, after completion of the course, 100% (50 out of 50) of students who took the CSPSELAS believed that character was an essential component to leadership and 100% (14 out of 14) of students in the RQ said that, given the opportunity, they would use their gifts, talents, and resources in the service of others. Of the students who responded (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016), 97.96% (48 out of 49) believed that there are corrosive forces in the popular culture that are detrimental to good leadership. These findings showed that character and virtuous leadership are important to CSPSEL students.

Theme Two: Moral Exemplars

The next major theme of the CSPSEL purpose-driven curriculum that stood out to students was the influence of moral exemplars (or role models) on future leaders. Mentorship is crucial to academic achievement. Bergman (2011) noted that students require good examples of character to follow, as they "look to the best among us to understand what it means to be fully human: to achieve our *telos*, our end or purpose, according to our tradition. We want for ourselves those qualities we admire in exemplary others" (pp. 97-98). Additionally, Colby and Damon (1992) suggested that transformative moral exemplars be an integral part of curricula. As previously outlined in the methodology section, the CSPSEL Speaker Series is designed to provide students with examples of moral leaders who are transforming society and serving others.

Bergman (2011) described the specific importance of exemplars in shaping emerging young leaders:

> charisma is especially and obviously relevant to the Aristotelian theme of emulation and therefore to moral education centered on these exemplars. The young, at least those who may be said to be on the path to excellence of character, because of their lofty dispositions, are especially prone to emulation, to the influence of admirable (and charismatic) persons. (p. 99)

After the CSPSEL Speaker Series, Laneisha (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) expressed this sort of Aristotelian admiration:

> One of my favorite speakers was the mom who did missionary work. She emphasized understanding your calling and having faith in God. She was an amazing example of someone who had confidence in God and His plan. (Laneisha)

Laneisha's brief mention of calling connects to Bergman's (2011) idea, previously discussed, that exemplars connect with achieving one's life purpose (pp.97-98). From the Speaker Series, Arianna (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was able to gain specific inspiration for her particular path:

> One of my favorite Caritas speakers was Ms. Bim from Zynga. It was wonderful being able to hear her journey working in the designing industry while remaining faithful to God. Designing has always been a passion of mine and being able to listen to someone working in that field interests me. I could see the joy that God has brought into her life. Even though it may be challenging, she has inspired me to follow my passion for designing. (Arianna)

Vessels and Huit (2005) further noted how the transmission of moral norms and expectations is intergenerational, passing from role models to young people. After experiencing the Speaker Series, Arianna (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) realized her responsibilities as a mentor in her current leadership position: "As President of our school, I realized how important it was to lead as an example to my fellow classmates. (Arianna)" This responsibility carried long after the program for Alicia, a CSPSEL alumnus, who returned to serve as a role model for the program's most recent class, as described by Sharon (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016): "My favorite speaker is Alicia... She spoke about how important being our self is, and that character is very important. (Sharon)"

Similarly, sociologist Max Weber (1968) underscored the importance of charismatic leadership. He believed that charismatic authority rests on "devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him" (Weber, Giddens, and Parsons, 1992). Henry (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) shared how CSPSEL speakers helped them to learn about perseverance:

> My favorite speaker was Mr. Maynez mainly because of his lessons on staying true to ourselves as well as maintaining composure in the midst of adversity. His background story on how he was able to attend Princeton [as an immigrant] was also very inspirational. God will always provide/make a way. (Henry)

Colby and Damon (1992) also contended that moral exemplars are vital to the development of moral imaginations and twenty-first-century curricula could benefit from

them. Shane (RQ) appreciated the transformation journeys that CSPSEL speakers shared

throughout the year:

> I liked Bill Dallas because he was frank and straightforward with his message. He
>
> did not hide anything but rather told us everything he dealt with and how we can
>
> avoid that in order to become successful people who also follow Christ. (Shane)

In our modern culture, students need to see and be introduced to examples of

heroic, purposeful leaders who are in every aspect of popular culture, yet who are truly

doing something to make a difference in the world (Bergman, 2011). Otherwise, youth

can become obsessed with a celebrity culture devoid of meaning (Turriago, 2015). The

exponential growth of visual media over the last half century has created a shift in the

national cultural focus from admiring heroes of character to celebrity worship (Guinness,

2000).

Notably, the results of this study suggest CSPSEL participants value heroes of

character over pop culture. For example, the life and vocational journey of speaker

Kandice Love-Arceneaux, a former pop song writer and singer who recognized the

emptiness of her pursuit of fame and fortune and transitioned into singing gospel music,

inspired Charlie (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016): "I was blessed with hearing her wonderful

voice at the Caritas Awards as well as her message [of the meaning found in faith] for

young entrepreneurs" (Charlie).

Since CSPSEL provides a teleological worldview to students as part of a purpose-

driven curriculum, these findings indicate that moral exemplars provide strong examples

of individuals who demonstrate meaning in their lives. After participating in the

program, 98% (49 out of 50) of the respondents indicated that they admired individuals

engaged in public service (CSPSELAS Record Review). RQ results concurred with the

findings obtained from student records. In their current academic and vocational

pursuits, 83% (10 out of 12) of CSPSEL participants were able to apply the CSPSEL

Speaker Series' leadership and character building themes. Additionally, 83% (10 out of

12) said moral exemplars influenced them in their long-term vocational, educational, and

life pursuits.

With the current trend toward temporal fame and success, these results are

notable. CSPSEL lends itself to a focus on purposeful leadership, as students are

encouraged to follow the examples of exceptional leaders who have influenced the world,

past and present. Since CSPSEL students hear from transformational leaders, including

ministers, engineers, musicians, technologists, entrepreneurs, CEOs and company

presidents who present on a variety of topics relating to their current projects, the data

revealed how the model can have a positive effect on students.

Theme Three: Servant Leadership and Civic Engagement

In the ancient world where greatness was always associated with power and

control, and humility with "failure and shame," the Judeo-Christian concept of humility

and servant leadership provided a strikingly different interpretation of success (Dickson,

2011). Presently, many ideas of education center around an understanding of power that

includes moving up the ladder of success through image, money, or intellect

(Deresiewicz, 2014). Servant leadership offers a very different approach that focuses on

the concept of greatness as humility (Dickson, 2011). Jesus reoriented the ancient

notions of "greatness and servitude" and taught that one becomes greatest by serving

all—ultimately making the cross a universal symbol of greatness (Dickson, 2011).

Similarly, in modern-day, anthropocentric culture, leaders can foster empathy and authenticity within themselves by practicing servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1970).

After CSPSEL, Cindy (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) shared this understanding of using authority to aid others: "Truly, I want to give back to my community…. Well as a leader, I learned that doesn't mean you boss people around, but you serve and get the goal accomplished together." (Cindy) Additionally, Shane (RQ) learned from CSPSEL that service is a powerful compensation for work: "Whether it be children in isolated villages in third world countries, to the kids here in the states…this as [sic] has impacted me to join a profession, not for fame or money but rather to help." (Shane) Similarly, Andrea (RQ) emphasized how her primary goal is to lead the way for more women to enter careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), rather than to earn money:

> My aim is not merely to make a name for myself, per se, nor to be deemed
>
> successful in a monetary sense…. I would like to utilize my skills set and
>
> knowledge to expand not only personal gain but as a female in a STEM field.
>
> (Andrea)

Meanwhile, CSPSEL influenced Ronnie (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) to directly reflect Christ's example: "In order for one to develop good character, we must acknowledge that we are vessels of Christ; sent to imitate His work" (Ronnie). John (RQ) internalized the inheritance of CSPSEL mentorship a step further when he discussed passing on these lessons to his colleagues: "I would describe my primary aim in life to…do everything for the glory of God as well as impact others in a positive way so that they can do the same to their peers" (John).

According to Watkins and Braun (2005), service-learning opportunities are an effective method of student engagement and character development, giving students the confidence to make a difference in their communities. Jessica (CSPSELAS 2014-2016) highlighted the ways CSPSEL helped her to gain assurance in her ability to make a difference in the world:

> Before I took this class, I always wanted to help the animal community, but always felt like my help wouldn't benefit them because animal cruelty is such a big problem. After taking this course, I feel like I've grown and now feel confident in knowing I made a difference in an animal's life. (Jessica)

In one pathway, service-learning allows students to direct empathy they previously developed in their personal lives toward meaningful ends. Bergman (2011) affirmed the importance of empathy, obtained through real world immersion, in helping students see and act on the needs for change (p.89). After participating in CSPSEL, Andrea (RQ) was able to transform a family member's health challenge, which had impaired his ability to walk, into a career goal:

> I made my decision to pursue a STEM degree during high school, in the midst of participating in the program. Through family circumstances, I developed interest in the design and engineering aspect of prosthetics. As I now continue my college education in studying engineering, I have changed my focus to utilize my interest in science and engineering with my concern for the betterment of society.
> (Andrea)

Like Andrea, Shane gained inspiration through CSPSEL to turn his own experiences into a future professional path:

This class helped me realize that I like to help people and make them feel

better….since I enjoy sports and I'm used to the pain….it helped me realize that I

want to be some sort of trainer or physical therapist. (Shane)

In a second pathway, servant leadership integrated with civic engagement teaches

students how to gain motivation from the problems of the world. As Bergman (2011)

observed, guiding students who have either experienced injustice in their daily lives or

face it through an immersion experience, what he calls, "vital contact with the reality of

injustice," can be beneficial. Bergman described how a process of analysis, reflection,

and discernment enables the student to move from compassion to action (p. 37).

Additional research suggested that programs that include service-learning opportunities

provide students with "transformation of moral perspective" and help them to commit "to

a more just world" (Bergman, 2011, p. 75).

After CSPSEL, John (RQ) was able to build on the challenging experiences of his

own family as veterans:

In our country today, I see how these vets aren't treated properly and are thrown

under the bus. Being from a military family and aspiring to be in the Army, I

created a group aimed to support our veterans by visiting the VA and creating

care packages for those who still serve. (John)

Meanwhile, CSPSEL paired Andrea (RQ) with other students who had experienced the

foster care and/or adoption system, and the experiences they shared with her continue to

influence her community service years later:

Since the Caritas program, I have supported…the student-led organizations [for

foster children] that I was a part of…. I have also volunteered for youth STEM

events…. It was inspiring for me to see such young minds having an interest in

science and engineering... (Andrea)

Additionally, since students are provided with immersive opportunities in the community

through the School and CSPSEL, incorporating direct contact with those experiencing

poverty and other societal injustices, all benefit from service-learning, even if their

families or peers lacked serious challenges. After Marianna (RQ) assisted impoverished

local and global communities, her interest in aiding the less-fortunate influenced her

future service in CSPEL and beyond:

I went on missionary trips to homeless shelters in San Francisco and to

orphanages in Mexico. I also volunteered at Relay for Life Cancer Society. All

these experiences made me realize the calling God has for my life to help others.

One to three years after the program, 92% (12 out of 13) of CSPSEL alumni (RQ)

remained actively involved with a variety of social issues in the community and

described their professional aims in life as helping others. Stacy, Sue, Marianna, and

Suzanna (RQ) described their specific, CSPSEL-inspired ongoing service:

I care about the anti-human trafficking movement. Project Release is my way of

involving myself in the fight against human trafficking. (Stacy)

I do 16 community service hours each year at college for a program that uplifts

girls in the community who don't have all the resources we have. (Sue)

I am very involved with…volunteering at the SF Zoo. I'm really passionate about

helping and saving the [lives] of animals, especially dogs, so I volunteered at an

animal shelter in Oakland. (Suzanna)

Additionally, Hannah and Marianna (RQ) discussed ways they will use their CSPSEL educations in their future vocations to improve the world:

> I want to be a lawyer or work in international diplomacy at the United Nations. (Hannah)
>
> As a [future] nurse, I aim to use my knowledge of the human body and my passion for helping others to serve patients and families, and assess patient health problems and needs. (Marianna)
>
> Since a large part of the CSPSEL experience provided students with

transformational education through a purpose-driven curriculum, the student responses indicated that servant leadership and civic engagement were an integral part of their discovery of meaning. CSPSEL might have also had positive effects on student perceptions of the importance of community service. This research suggested that, because CSPSEL combines servant leadership with civic engagement, the CSPSEL students use their education for the well being of their world.

Theme 4: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Work Ethic and Life Skills

Max Weber, in the *Spirit of Capitalism and the Protestant Work Ethic,* outlined the connection between religious ideas and the development of capitalism (Weber, Giddens, and Parsons, 1992). According to Weber, in Protestant belief, hard work, thrift, and the efficiency of production were the means of proving one's faith, and worldly success, attained morally, was evidence of divine approval. Therefore, these Protestant religious principals, when implemented in society, resulted in ingenuity and prosperity (ibid). Apart from specific religious contexts, these principles of entrepreneurship had value in education. Snyder et al. (1991) argued that entrepreneurial skills were essential

to goal achievement by instilling in students, "a positive motivational state that is based

on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy), and (b)

pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991, p. 287). Tracey

and Phillips (2007) concurred that entrepreneurship education was vital to creating

sustainable economic solutions.

   Therefore, CSPSEL integrated entrepreneurial training as part of its purpose-

driven curriculum. Particularly in an era of rapid technological advancement, students

need to "adapt to an ever-changing workforce", and enterprise skills could smooth that

ongoing transition ("Chapter 1: The Future of Jobs and Skills", para 1). As previously

discussed in the methodology section, CSPSEL students use a unique, purpose-driven,

design-thinking process to reflect on defining moments of empathy, research and define

problems that matter to them, create innovative solutions, implement them in real-world

entrepreneurial settings, and revise their implementations according to their results

(Kelley, 2016).

   Since CSPSEL encouraged students to begin their transformational enterprises

with introspection, they often selected goals with social and moral relevance.

Organizational psychologist Adam Grant affirms the benefit of combining service with

innovation: "when you take concern for helping others and add that to intrinsic

motivation, people become more creative" (Shellnut, 2016). Martin Luther King Jr. also

encouraged individuals experiencing injustice to take the lead in ingenuity and

excellence, asking a rising generation to "set out to do a good job and do that job so

well that the living, the dead, or the unborn couldn't do it any better" (Kroll, 2012).

After participating in CSPSEL, Gianna (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was able to reflect this

social entrepreneurship mindset: "I learned to make a difference by focusing on the

benefit my product would bring to the community rather than focus on monetary gains"

(Gianna).

Therefore, CSPSEL taught students to view challenges from their own lives and

their communities as opportunities. This integration of social entrepreneurship into the

educational curriculum helped students to "play the role of change agents" (Dees, 1998,

p.4). After CSPSEL, Deborah (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) understood that human

struggles could become pathways for innovation: "As creative thinkers, it is also crucial

for entrepreneurs to recognize opportunities where other people see only problems. We

must be able to think outside of the box…not only [to] benefit ourselves, but also the

people around us." (Deborah)

From CSPSEL, Anastasia (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) also internalized a lesson

related to community renewal: "I learned the power storytelling is capable of having

when trying to make a change" (Anastasia). Importantly, after the program, Marianna

understood the role of prayer in providing resilience and managing overwhelming

experiences: "I motivate myself to overcome obstacles through prayer. After talking to

God about my problems, I am determined to get through it and not let that obstacle bother

me" (Marianna).

With this motivation and resilience, students began, with the guidance of

CSPSEL, to define the scope of their chosen problems, research current solutions, and

understand the market of needs and resources. Through this step, students were able to

identify data from qualitative and quantitative sources, including ethnographic research,

which provided them with deeper awareness of the root causes of societal dilemmas.

After participating in the program, Ethan (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) learned to assess the

requirements of the target population, as well as to define measurable outcomes: "it's

about understanding the need and addressing it rather than just implementing plans I

believe are beneficial" (Ethan).

Building upon this information, CSPSEL taught students how to brainstorm new

solutions or to innovate on already existing interventions. For successful ideation,

students were encouraged to act courageously without being restricted by limited

resources (Dees, 1998, p.4). After the program, Lila reported she was more open to

transformational thinking: "This course…has increased my leadership abilities along with

a fresh mind of ideas of how to make a greater impact in the world" (Lila). From

CSPSEL, Deborah (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) also internalized a lesson related to

brainstorming: "Entrepreneurs often challenge the norm and think backwards in order to

establish an idea. Thinking backwards is a great strategy to be able to analyze different

ways to accomplish our goals" (Deborah). Furthermore, CSPSEL emphasized the

importance of teamwork as part of the innovation process. Following the course, Alexa

(CSPSELAS, 2014-2016), "as an entrepreneurial leader…learned that the importance of

friendship and teams was the most important lesson because a leader needs a team to

raise awareness and have a big…impact in society" (Alexa). Similarly, after CSPSEL,

Angie (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) appreciated the collaboration of peers and guidance of

mentors: "This course…has [shown] me how much support I have at school with all the

teachers behind me" (Angie). Brainstorming and developing substantial ideas for social

improvement provided CSPSEL students with opportunities to begin contributing to real-

world entrepreneurial settings.

With these innovative ideas in place, students could begin, with the instruction of CSPSEL, prototyping distinctive products and services. While the immediately previous ideation phase encouraged students to imagine goals of magnitude, the CSPSEL prototyping phase advised participants to create tangible models through a series of small initial steps. After CSPSEL, Julia and Henry (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) described the importance of improving the lives of others through incremental changes:

> Start small and do things local. From there branch out…. (Julia)

> As an entrepreneurial leader, I learned that everything I do can make a difference, even something as small as a smile or saying hello. I learned this [action really raised people's spirits] through our trips to the VA, and is something I would do over and over again. (Henry)

With so many tiny details to track, students had to become more structured and CSPSEL also provided them with those tools. Through the program, John (RQ) learned the importance of a schedule in overcoming disorganization:

> This summer, one challenge that became difficult was getting ready for college. With the long "to-do" lists waiting to be accomplished, it proved to be rather frustrating. However, a skill that I learned from Caritas, which came in handy was constructing a timeline. I made a simple timeline with due dates to ensure that I progressed to my satisfaction. (John)

Using CSPSEL project management lessons, Rosa (RQ) was also able to become better organized:

> Time management prove(s) to be key in my studies these past years, and Caritas taught me how to be efficient…. Whether it was completing a thesis or doing pre-

> calculus, a plan was always needed…. Caritas showed me how to plan and
>
> execute an objective correctly, which I'm thankful for, and could continue
>
> throughout my life. (Rosa)

Andrea (RQ) was able to take the skills she learned in CSPSEL a step further, by

managing both logistics and people:

> I was working with a team on filming a video that was more serious and difficult
>
> than I had done before…. I had to use the organizational skills that I similarly
>
> used in CSP[SEL], to delegate tasks and keep schedule. It was also a test of my
>
> strengths…I had encountered during CSP[SEL], such as my patience and
>
> communication skills. (Andrea)

Therefore, creating tangible models of imagined solutions to their chosen problems

benefitted CSPSEL students by teaching skills to both divide goals into their basic steps

and organize those steps into coherent action plans.

Finally, CSPSEL mentored students to continue testing and iterating upon their

designed prototypes. To ensure that any potential social entrepreneurship project was

sustainable, replicable, and scalable required participants to continuously iterate, test and

reflect on their model (Dees, 1998, p.4). After the program, Sonia (CSPSELAS, 2014-

2016) reflected many of these hallmarks of successful solutions to societal challenges:

> I've learned how to create a business while thinking about many aspects—
>
> whether it's sustainable, cost-effective, replicable, and scalable. It's helped me
>
> realize that I have the ability to make a difference in the world. I would like to
>
> work with people in developing countries in the future. (Sonia)

To discover these long-term solutions inevitably required students to fail and persevere. Through CSPSEL, Deborah (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) learned not only how to tolerate failure but also how to grow from it:

> Failure is an inevitable part of entrepreneurship…. Although we may be discouraged at times, we should not allow failures to steer us away from pursuing entrepreneurship. Instead, we should mitigate them and treat them as an opportunity to grow. (Deborah)

After a year in college, one CSPSEL alumna, Andrea, demonstrated sustainability in practice, continuing to develop an anti-human trafficking initiative she had launched during the program: "I have continued the non-profit that Caritas inspired me to create… it is something I hope to continue throughout my life" (Andrea).

Overall, the CSPSEL students identified how the program equipped them with the necessary tools to enact lasting change in communities. The data revealed that the CSPSEL students acquired skills from the design process that enabled them to find entrepreneurial opportunities in both societal and life challenges. This analysis suggested that the CSPSEL was beneficial in providing students with purpose-driven entrepreneurial toolkits that ultimately contributed to students having more resilient and hopeful outlooks on their future aspirations.

Theme 5: College Success and Future Career Goals

As discussed above, current educational systems often push students toward underachievement with students dropping out of school (Freeman, 2012) or toward overachievement with self-destructive behavior (Wang, 2016). Both of these systemic failures seem to derive from a disconnect between educational achievements and

vocational goals. Damon (2008) observed that a well-rounded education provides

students with practical applications and future opportunities. Therefore, CSPSEL

motivated students to progress toward future visions of career success, by connecting

their academic pursuits with action. The program encouraged students to form short-

term, medium-term, and long-term goals, united by common strategic trajectories.

The chronologically first objective that CSPSEL fostered in students was college

attendance. With the support of the program, Moses (RQ) was able to gather financing to

enable his dream of a higher education: "Having not enough money for college. I used

CSPSEL ….to find resources and other people around me to help with my need".

Furthermore, Maria (RQ) explained how CSPSEL elevated her college trajectory:

Before the program I thought would go into Psychology from community college

into SF State. After program [sic] realized that I would change my trajectory. [I]

applied and got into UC Berkeley from high school, applied to Haas School of

Business and got in, became the Vice President of Student Body, and will start a

company out of college. (Maria)

Table 1 lists some of the institutions of higher education that accepted CSPSEL students.

Table 1: Selected Institutions of Higher Education that Accepted CSPSEL Students

Academy of Art University
Azusa Pacific University
California Baptist University
California Polytechnic State University
The Citadel
Dominican University
Norwich University
Pomona College
Princeton University
Santa Clara University
San Jose State University

St. John's University
St. Mary's College
University of California - Davis
University of California - Merced
University of California - San Diego
University of California - Santa Barbara
University of California - Santa Cruz
University of California – Berkeley
University of California - Los Angeles
University of San Francisco
Westmont College

Across the United States in 2015, 86% of private high school students enrolled in either two- or four-year institutions of higher education in the first fall after high school graduation (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2017). Meanwhile, after the researcher's efforts, 100% (20 out of 20) of seniors who participated in CSPSEL at the School planned to enroll in college for the fall following their graduation (CSPSEL Record Review, 2014-2016). RQ data confirmed that 100% (14 out of 14) of CSPSEL alumni surveyed were entering or still attending college. CSPSEL alumni also earned merit awards, including the Presidential Scholarship at Colorado State University, Azusa Pacific University Dean's Scholarship, Dominican University Trustee Scholarship, National ROTC Scholarships, and the University of California, Berkeley Leadership Award. Therefore, students in CSPSEL benefited by taking the first steps of their future careers in strategic ways.

Additionally, CSPSEL inspired some students who already had ideas about their futures to strive for even higher goals. Shane (RQ) described how CSPSEL transformed his ideas about future college and vocational goals:

I did not have any high goals before the program. I just wanted to do well for the sake of the grade. After my exposure to the program, I still wanted high scores,

but this time I wanted it to enrich my knowledge and help me better myself so that

I can be a useful individual who succeeds and excels in all that I do. (Shane)

Meanwhile, using skills she learned through CSPSEL, Andrea (RQ) was better prepared

to persevere through the undergraduate curriculum:

I remember the lesson "begin with the end in mind" from CSP[SEL], and…it has

proven to be helpful in college. As I have encountered various challenging

courses, beginning with the end…has caused me to be more focused in my

studies, be driven to excel, and continue moving forward. (Andrea)

Additionally, the program emphasized the importance of contributing to society

while simultaneously making progress toward ultimate life achievements through

medium-term, college-oriented goals. After participating in CSPSEL, Maria (RQ) sought

out ways to build community and assist her peers in college: "I started a mentorship

program at Haas School of Business. Brought farmers market to school. Continued

bringing counseling fee waivers to low-income students" (Maria). Meanwhile, Suzanna

(RQ), using the toolkit she developed in the program, explored the first steps of building

her résumé:

The Caritas Program aided in my transition [into] my first retail job. It provided

me with experience that I could report on my resume. I have often utilized the

skills I learned…in the program, such as web designing…. The communication

skills I obtained…have given me practice and ease as I interviewed for various

jobs and internships in college. (Suzanna)

Therefore, CSPSEL alumni remained connected to their future goals even as they made

incremental progress in college.

Lastly, the program enabled students to envision long-term goals for themselves, which also had value to the larger community. CSPSEL inspired Moses to select a specific career path, in part because of its potential benefits for others: "When I started I did not know what I wanted to do…[Now I want to become] a civil engineer, because civil engineers are needed to plan and design. Society needs advancements in infrastructure" (Moses). Additional data (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) and (RQ) suggested that the CSPSEL program influenced the career trajectories of program alumni in various ways. Table 2 shows the reported degree pursuits of selected participants.

Table 2: Selected Academic Pursuits of CSPSEL Students

Animal science
Biology
Biomedical engineering
Business administration/economics
Criminology
Diplomacy
International relations
Law
Nursing
Nutrition
Pre-medicine
User experience design

Theme Six: Purpose and Vocation

Many contemporary philosophies of education present man as "the result of a purposeless and materialistic process that did not have him in mind" (Gaylord, 1967, p.345). Every day, young people are constantly being inundated with messages that contradict a purpose-driven worldview. For example, the prevalent ideologies in popular shows and media focus on a shallow view of one's existence with superficial success being defined by beauty, brains, and bucks (Turriago, 2015). This worldview has left

many millions searching for some purpose and meaning in their lives. In acknowledgement of the importance of finding purpose, Frankl (1992) noted that, "Striving to find meaning in one's life is the primary motivational force in man" (p.104). Every person, when asked to reflect deeply on reality, can recognize the truth that one's own personal existence is valuable and meaningful (Guinness, 2000). Similarly, Martin Luther King, Jr. advocated the notion of "somebodiness," encouraging individuals to have an elevated view of their own unique identities as their Creator intended for them to have (Kroll, 2012).

Again, Damon (2008) described how education can give each student an understanding of the concept of calling. He explained that identifying one's capabilities, passions and future goals can help one to find transcendent meaning in one's work. As students envision themselves as being instruments of God in the world, they are able to persevere, because that view provides them with the courage to overcome any obstacles they may encounter (Lowney, 2003). Of specific relevance, educational researcher Theresa Moon (2014) described how "millennials show a strong need to connect their work to a higher purpose" (p. 28).

Therefore, CSPSEL first taught students their inherent value as God's creations. For example, Arthur (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) internalized this important message from the program, writing, "I have learned something that I can do is to realize that God has put me on this Earth for a reason." Secondly, CSPSEL encouraged students, using prayer, self-reflection, and mentor relationships, to seek the expression of that inherent self-worth through their calling. Through this process of the program, Alexa

(CSPSELAS, 2014-2016), Suzannah, and Hannah (RQ) were able to identify their

lifelong passions and their abilities to act upon those vocations:

> After every class, I walk out knowing that I [can] make a difference…. Thanks to
>
> this class, I have now realized my passion for helping youth not only in America
>
> but also youth all around the world. (Alexa)
>
> I have loved animals my entire life and I am very passionate about learning more
>
> about as well as helping heal them. (Suzanna)
>
> CSP[EL] helped me to realize that my true passion is to help and lead other
>
> people. (Hannah)

Furthermore, after participating in CSPSEL, Charlie (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) was able

not only to connect his personal value to a larger mission, but also to recognize the need

to live independently from the influences of prevailing cultural views that undermine that

connection: "[CSPSEL] also helped me realize the [negative] impact contemporary

culture has on our…views of the world. I do have a better sense of purpose in life

because it gave me the inspiration to begin my charity later in life" (Charlie).

CSPSEL students also began to demonstrate the courage and ongoing motivation

provided by pursuing their God-given callings. After participating in the program, Shane

(RQ) understood what he could accomplish beyond his current abilities: "I learned that I

need to create a big vision, a goal to set before myself and strive to achieve" (Shane).

Similarly, CSPSEL helped Anna (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) realize not only her purpose,

but also her faith as foundations for service to others, which extends beyond her current

circumstances: "I always had an interest in the medical field/nursing, and this course

showed me how I can glorify God (by) becoming a nurse…. I can do all things through

Christ!" Thomas and Ronnie (CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) found CSPSEL's teachings

concerning humanity being crafted in the image of God encouraging:

> This course has been such an inspiration to me throughout the [four] years. I've
>
> been given so many opportunities and continuously motivated to put my passions
>
> and talents to good use. After completing this course and learning about
>
> character, I know God has a plan for me to take care of others. (Thomas)
>
> This course has helped mold my perspective of the world and my place in it.
>
> From Mrs. Zabaneh's uplifting lessons on how we are capable of accomplishing
>
> anything…I have thoroughly enjoyed the two years I've been a part of this class,
>
> and I am beyond thankful. (Ronnie)

The program made a similar impression on Hannah (RQ): "Lessons on being a Christian

leader have helped me to grow in confidence and thus be able to pursue academics that I

truly care about with my whole heart and soul" (Hannah). Therefore, CSPSEL seemed to

offer the students the unique internal resources of faith and self-worth to sustain lifelong

perseverance toward their callings.

Throughout the year, students are encouraged to discover their vocational identity

and respond to a divine calling on their lives as they mature ethically and translate their

faith into action. 100% (50 out of 50) of the CSPSEL alumni indicated in the

(CSPSELAS, 2014-2016) responses that the program had instilled in them a sense of

purpose and life calling. Again, these findings demonstrated positive outcomes for

CSPSEL students who learned to connect their academic curricula with a higher calling.

Overall, this contributed to their vocational direction and life success.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher's analysis of data from both the RQ and CSPSELAS revealed that purpose-driven education does contribute to student success. The positive outcomes among students who completed CSPSEL, including greater appreciation of the importance of character to leadership, the potential helpful influence of entrepreneurship, increased self-awareness of education goals and career trajectories, growing interest in service to others, and more confidence regarding the transition from high school to college/career pointed to the benefits of purpose-driven education. Considering the conversation surrounding approaches to effective education among educators, educational leaders and policy makers, this research, informed by personal experience and pre-existing records, provides insight into the development of strategies to help students succeed in school and life. To that end, Chapter Five will discuss the conclusions that emerged from the study and will provide suggestions for future research and implications related to the results.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSIONS

The study investigated the following research question: To what extent, if at all, does purpose-driven, social entrepreneurship-based curricula contribute to student success? The study evaluated extent by qualitatively assessing students' development of vocationally-oriented skills and service-oriented values. The primary hypothesis of this study was that purpose-driven education is beneficial to student success. Therefore, much of the observed educational dysfunction in the United States can be remedied by creating curricula that connect students' current academic activities with their ultimate purpose. This chapter presents an overview of the discussion and conclusions that emerged from the study, including recommendations for future research on purpose-driven education.

The Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force Report on U.S. Education Reform and National Security (2012) indicated that to ensure future "economic prosperity, global position, and physical safety" U.S. educational paradigms need reform (Klein et al., 2012, p.58). Educational challenges in our nation involve both underachievement and overachievement. On the one hand, elite institutions present their students as "special" and "gifted." Moreover, these students are placed under intense pressure to succeed academically, achieve high-standardized test scores, earn top spots at prestigious institutions, and proceed to a financially lucrative career (Wang, 2016). As aforementioned in the literature review, affluent areas like the Silicon Valley are experiencing high suicide rates and other mental health disorders (Wang, 2016). On the other hand, students from underprivileged backgrounds struggle to connect their education with a future goal (Kraman et al., 2008). While a review of the literature

showed that there are social, economic, and physical factors relating to academic underachievement, this research contributes to the literature by showing how curricular innovation is beneficial to student success. Educational experiences that connect students to a greater purpose are beneficial to creating a healthy generation of young people who are successful in school and in life (Damon, 2008).

Through an exploration of student perceptions regarding if and how purpose-driven, entrepreneurial-based curricular innovations changed their overall educational experiences and aspirations of success, the data showed that CSPSEL was beneficial to student success. These findings suggested some of the ways purpose-driven education can help create more engaged and challenged students who find solutions to pressing challenges in their own communities. Furthermore, this research showed how purpose-driven students, who are concerned about the physical and spiritual healing of those around them, thrive socially and academically.

Again, these findings are compared with the problems associated with American education presented in the literature review. Please see Chapter Three. In contrast to the picture of demotivated, ill-prepared, and burned out students (Noguchi, 2016), CSPSEL students—representing a spectrum of disadvantaged and affluent backgrounds—thrive by engaging in purpose-driven curricula that enable them to use their gifts, passions, and education to serve others. Therefore, this research corroborates the conclusions of Colby and Damon (1992), who believed that moral education should be an integral part of curricula.

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate how "purpose-driven" social entrepreneurship education, centered upon equipping students to live out their lives in a virtuous and meaningful way, can contribute to holistic student success. Purpose-driven education encourages students to identify, develop, and leverage their unique talents and ideas to positively influence society, particularly its most vulnerable members. Specifically, the research study identified that social entrepreneurship-based curricula can be used as a pedagogical tool to infuse purpose-driven learning into private high school education.

Aim of the Study

The overarching aim of the qualitative research was to identify how social entrepreneurship can be used as a pedagogical tool for student success in private high school education. By encouraging students to focus on a goal outside of themselves and direct their studies toward solving some substantial social challenge, educators can encourage students to simultaneously develop their self-awareness, motivation, individual talents, and moral compass. To achieve this aim, the study explored student perceptions regarding if and how the Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab changed their overall educational experiences and aspirations of success.

Solution

Policy Recommendations

In light of the findings that the CSPSEL program was beneficial, educators, education leaders and policymakers could consider including elements of that program into their

academic curricula, using the recommendations that follow. Much of the faith-based
content may be adapted for a secular context.

1. **<u>Introduce History of Ideas</u>:** Teach about worldview, so students understand the
   history of ideas and its importance in a constantly changing world. Through a
   series of seminars, workshops, and guest lectures, students benefit by exploring
   theological and philosophical themes that relate to purpose and calling. They
   learn about local and global issues and how they can make a difference through
   social entrepreneurship.

2. **<u>Debate Ideas</u>:** Allow students to engage in the discussion of ideas, so that they
   can develop their own ideas and develop critical thinking skills. Students learn
   leadership lessons from great minds in history while acquiring tools needed to
   develop data-driven solutions to issues that concern them.

3. **<u>Provide Mentorship</u>:** Provide opportunities for students to interact with modern
   day servant leader exemplars. Students benefit greatly from the knowledge and
   wisdom that transformational practitioners and mentors bring to the course.
   Students learn how to connect their educational achievements to their future
   vocations in life.

4. **<u>Provide Design Thinking, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training</u>:** Equip
   students to develop and implement novel solutions. Social entrepreneurship
   integrates service-learning by providing students with an entrepreneurial-
   leadership toolkit to use business principles for the good of society. Enable
   students to learn about the theory and practice of social enterprise as they utilize
   design-thinking strategies to create innovative business models.

5. **<u>Identify Student Talents:</u>** Empower students to discover who they can be, not just what to do, to be successful. Each student has a unique set of gifts and talents. Therefore, effective student education adapts, through customization, to each student's capabilities.

6. **<u>Teach Analysis Methods:</u>** Engage students in quantitative and qualitative data analysis as they design effective solutions to meet societal needs. With training in research methods and analyses, students are enabled to make informed decisions about real-world situations.

Support for the Solution

Data suggested that CSPSEL had a positive effect on participants. All senior graduates of CSPSEL planned to attend either a two- or four-year college or university in the semester following their matriculation (CSPSEL Record Review, 2014-2016). RQ data suggested that graduates followed through with their plans, since 100% (14 out of 14) of CSPSEL alumni reported they were entering or attending an institution of higher education. By comparison, the national rate for private high school seniors enrolled in college was 86% in 2014 (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2017). Accounting for the remarkable rate of student post-secondary success, the researcher analyzed student responses to a survey and school records. Six valuable insights are summarized as follows:

1. **Character and Leadership:** In contrast with the Machiavellian idea that the character of a leader does not matter, students argued for the importance of character in leadership. An important sub-theme that emerged within the context of character and good leadership was the cognition of the corrosive forces of

pride, vice, and amoral behavior that negatively effects leadership and methods to

overcome them.

2. **Moral Exemplars:** CSPSEL participants value heroic leadership over celebrity

   culture. 98% (49 out of 50) of CSPSEL students reported admiration for

   individuals who are positively influencing culture and society (CSPSEL Record

   Review, 2014-2016).

3. **Servant Leadership and Civic Engagement:** The findings demonstrated that

   CSPSEL participants are committed to the spiritual and physical healing of the

   communities around them. They reported that the program empowered them to

   change the status quo while developing a moral vision.

4. **Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Work Ethic, and Life Skills:** CSPSEL

   students were empowered with an "entrepreneurial-leadership toolkit" that helped

   them to take their dreams to reality through the integration of business principles

   with social impact theory.

5. **College Success and Future Career Goals:** CSPSEL students reported that the

   program helped them make the vital connection between their education and

   future vocations in life. The findings (RQ) also showed a 100% (14 out of 14) of

   alumni were entering or still attending college or university.

6. **Purpose, Vocation and Calling:** In contradiction to contemporary worldviews

   that view life as meaningless, CSPSEL respondents discussed how a sense of

   purpose equipped them to discover their unique callings and identities.

   The themes above provided information as to how the Caritas Scholars Program

and Social Entrepreneurship Program encouraged students to connect their education

with service to others. These findings can be used to equip educators, educational leaders

and policy makers with purpose-driven tools to encourage students to be successful

contributors to society.

Factors and Stakeholders Related to the Solution

Identifying the key players involved in the correlation between values and

education is essential to providing effective solutions to the identified issue. As a result,

this researcher has identified three potential stakeholders including external—political

leaders; internal- the faculty and school administrators; and vulnerable—current students

and future generations.

External stakeholders

The state and national political leaders have the greatest power from a resource

dependence perspective and have much to lose by not encouraging a focus on purpose-

driven education. Although Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) mention a variety of conditions

and trends that may influence any enterprise including "cultural, legal, political,

economic, technological and physical" (p. 68), this researcher contended the institution of

education in America also has great potential to influence all these aforementioned areas.

Internal stakeholders

As demonstrated by Jesuits and other faith-based educators around the world, the

institution of education has power to influence culture. Conversely, societal trends can

and will also influence education. In the 21st century, technological advances have

influenced education by providing educators with more efficient tools to present

information, track progress measurements, and analyze data. Even so, in a thriving

society, moral values drive innovations. Taxpayers, parents, students, faculty, donors,

and staff can hold presidents and members of school boards accountable for the

integration of purpose into curricula. Introducing a "purpose audit" could be another tool

for educational leaders. Because of the rapid changes taking place in our society, schools

and educators can prepare to meet these transitions, yet remain unmoved in the area of

purpose-driven education as they prepare their current students to lead well.

Vulnerable stakeholders

      If purpose-driven education is not integrated into curricula for the students who

will be the future leaders in our nation, new generations will see an even greater decline

in all these areas. National and state political stakeholders, internal and vulnerable

stakeholders can engage together in conversation to improve the state of education in the

United States. This partnership has the potential to reverse the dysfunction that is

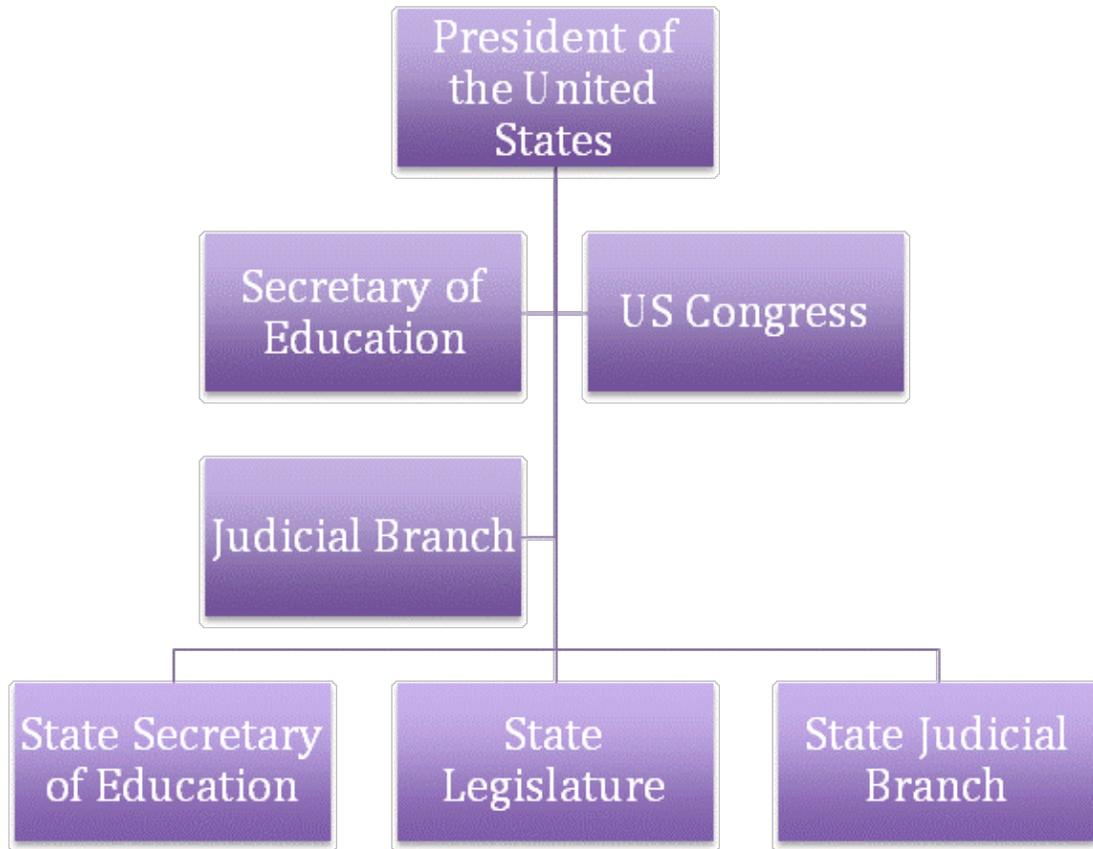holding back young people across the country from fulfilling their full potential.

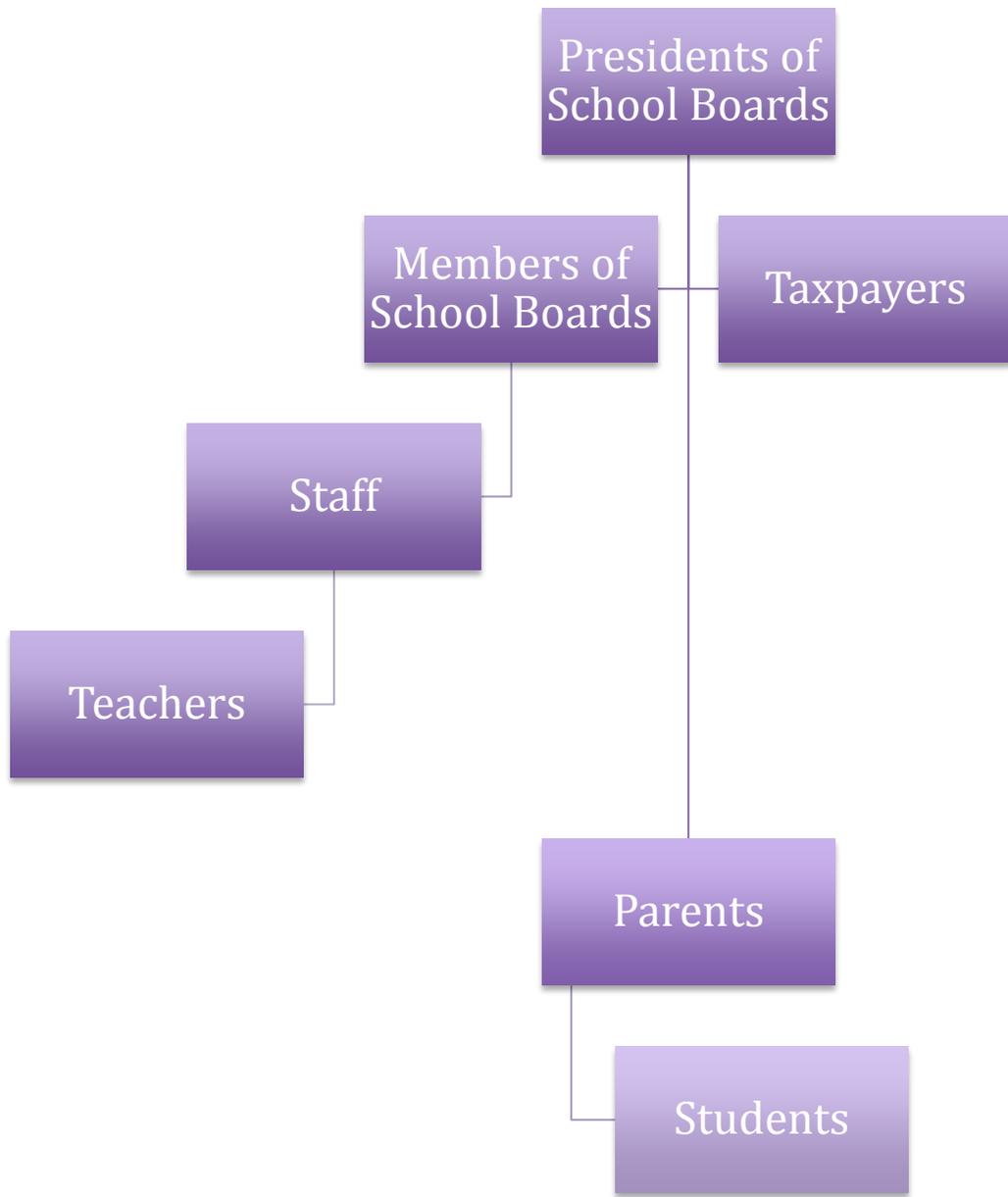*Figure 1*. National and State Political Stakeholders.

Figure 2. Internal and Vulnerable Stakeholders.

Since this study identified that social entrepreneurship can be used as a purpose-driven pedagogical tool for student success in private high school education, this research has several public policy implications. Following are recommendations for incorporating social entrepreneurship into private high school curricula:

- **Policies Influencing the Proposed Solution -** Understanding organizational identity is the first step to creating revolutionary change. Before implementation, the change agent needs to identify the school structure, vision, and mission. School leaders can then evaluate the school mission while developing a distinctive brand, which includes preparation of future leaders. As administrators develop a strategic plan, including a program similar to CSPSEL can support the school's market differentiation. Once school leaders complete the strategic plan, all organizational constituents can understand the need for inclusion of a purpose-driven, entrepreneurial leadership curriculum.

- **Potential Barriers and Obstacles to Proposed Solution –** Prior to the recent economic downturn, many faith-based schools (including the School presented in this study) thrived on word-of-mouth referrals. Over the last few years, many local families were unable to afford the costs of private education and instead chose more affordable options. CSPSEL can possibly help to overcome this financial hurdle by helping faith-based education to be differentiated and to engage entrepreneurs in reimagining new approaches to financial sustainability for faith-based institutions.

- **Financial/Budget Issues Related to Proposed Solution –** Financial and budgetary issues will vary from school to school depending on the type of

implementation. For some schools, it may be an integral part of the curricula.

For other organizations, it may be delivered as an after-school or summer

program or as an online offering.

- **Legal Issues Related to Proposed Solution –** Depending on the method of

  delivery, HR may need to create a contract as part of the negotiation process.

  Guidelines related to organizational, employee, and client/student legal protection

  and rights will apply.

- **Other Issues or Stakeholders Related to Proposed Solution –** According to

  Burke (2014), change happens on three levels including individual, group, and

  system wide as leaders effectively communicate, educate and find support for

  important change. Since a solidified mission and vision is the first step to

  creating sustainable system-wide change, purpose-driven social entrepreneurial

  curricula will vary from school to school.

- **Change Theory –** Change, whether evolutionary or revolutionary, is an

  unavoidable part of life and consequently of organizational structure. According

  to Burke (2014), revolutionary change involves "internal disruptions that pull

  subsystems and activities out of alignment… [and] threaten its ability to obtain

  resources." (p. 76). Although CSPSEL was implemented at the S.F. Bay Area

  faith-based private high school - which has traditionally experienced change in a

  more evolutionary way - because of the economic recession - revolutionary

  change has become necessary to the survival of the faith-based school. Since the

  need for change has already been accepted by the organization, successful

implementation of CSPSEL may play a part in the School reaching its full market

potential by helping students to achieve theirs.

Implementation of the Proposed Solution

CSPSEL was launched in 2012 as an interdisciplinary, purpose-driven educational

model that empowered high-school students to discover their missions in the world. To

the researcher's best knowledge, it is the nation's first faith-based social entrepreneurship

leadership program for high school students. Previous investigation into San Francisco

Bay Area educational paradigms revealed an absence of purpose-driven education

(Zabaneh, 2012).

To meet this challenge, the researcher launched an educational consultancy in

2009, the Veritas Institute for Leadership and Innovation, and created CSPSEL. The

educators interviewed in the researcher's previous research consistently mentioned the

value of incorporating individual awareness of unique identity and giftedness, belonging,

character education, service learning, and understanding of the connection between

academics and future vocation into scholastic paradigms (Zabaneh, 2012). To ensure that

students had an ethical foundation for leadership, the researcher incorporated character

lessons from the history of ideas into CSPSEL curriculum (Guinness et.al, 2000).

Additionally, the researcher investigated local social entrepreneurship organizations such

as Mulago, a foundation that provides funds to early-stage entrepreneurs and IDEO, a

global design-thinking firm. Insights gathered from their publications led the researcher

to integrate the concepts of design-thinking and social entrepreneurship into CSPSEL's

purpose-driven methodology. As an additional benefit, social entrepreneurship also

provided an excellent paradigm for service learning, equipping the servant leader with new skills that may be useful in helping underserved communities.

As indicated, CSPSEL was delivered through a series of workshops, mentorship experiences, and student-led projects. The goal of the program was to reorient the student-participants perceptions of success from external measures to living lives of meaning through social entrepreneurial leadership theory and innovative praxis. Over the past five years, students have designed strategic and creative interventions that range from orphan care to childhood obesity and from support for United States veterans to abolishing modern slavery. The most important milestones thus far have been:

- launching, in 2012, the CSPSEL flagship program in partnership with the School;

- graduating over 100 students (students can take the program during any of the years, so not all graduates were seniors);

- initiating over 17 social service projects; and

- offering the CSPSEL course (certified by the University of California) for dual college credit.

Because the program was developed and directed by the researcher, as aforementioned in Chapter Three, specific measures were utilized to avoid bias in interpreting the data (Creswell, 2014). The study was based at a faith-based secondary school in Pacifica, California and the findings are limited to that context. However, the results suggest that the program may be successful in a wider context. Future research could investigate the success of the program at non-faith based institutions, higher or lower grade levels, underprivileged schools, and international educational institutions. Additionally, further studies may be needed to refine and customize the curriculum. Thus far, over 100

students have completed the program, yet future studies, with larger sample sizes and

perhaps quantitative pairwise evaluations could generate deeper or more extensive

insights. Moving forward, this researcher plans to adapt CSPSEL, incorporating the

insights generated by this research, and introduce the revised program into some of the

alternative learning contexts mentioned above, including different elementary, middle

school, college, foreign exchange, international, and socioeconomic contexts.

Factors and Stakeholders Related to the Implementation of the Solution

There were key stakeholders who supported the success of CSPSEL

implementation. In recent years, the School has undergone some major leadership

changes, including a merger with another local high-school that had an influence on the

direction of the organization. As both schools worked together to figure out the best way

to blend different strategic plans, cultures, conditions and trends of both schools, there

needed to be an agreement regarding the value of the program to the future of students

representing both schools. As the merger unfolded, organizational unity played a

prominent role in both organizations. They synergized to "match the complexity and rate

of change" in the external environment by "internal differentiation" with the ultimate goal

of reaching their full market potential together (Hatch and Cuncliffe, 2006, p.68). As

Rogers (2003) pointed out, there are always challenges with the diffusion of any

innovation. Although the two schools have important commonalities and differences, the

leadership, faculty, and staff of both organizations are dedicated stewards of the next

generation. Across all disciplines, they mentor and encourage students to use their gifts

to benefit others in the community. The following is an analysis of the factors shaping

organizational change and the CSPSEL implementation:

- **Leader's Role in Implementing Proposed Solution**

A leader plays a central role in the successful implementation of a solution. David Gergen mentioned a "new leader" who "persuades, empowers, collaborates, and partners" (as cited in Eagly & Carly, 2007, p. 48). As leaders in organizations partner together to help students find meaning, this researcher believes we will see a reversal in our national education challenges. Leaders can reimagine the future of education, by launching programs (like CSPSEL) that equip students to use their education to serve others. A transformative leader may encounter numerous challenges in education.

Financial problems

- o Faith-based educational institutions sometimes struggle for funding.
- o Education has high costs.
- o Specialized programs lack funding.

Strategic problems

- o Programs do not exist.
- o Educators lack understanding of how entrepreneurial leadership can contribute to purpose-driven curricula.
- o Traditional educational paradigms may lack innovation.

Technical problems

- o Educational institutions lack human resources.
- o Schools lack technological resources.

- **Building Support for The Proposed Solution**

   Strategy is an essential foundation to implementation of any program that will

   contribute to the overall growth and well-being of an institution. To help an

   institution understand the importance of purpose-driven curricula, the program

   founder or facilitator can explain to the school the benefits of the program and

   how launching CSPSEL can help to prepare itself for future growth, using the

   following strategic steps (Bryson, 1993).

   1. **The Plan for Planning**: To start, organizational leaders could make a

      formal initial 'plan for planning" agreement.

   2. **Stakeholder Analysis**: The facilitator can then hold a meeting with the

      stakeholders from the school to clarify the mission, values and mandates

      of the partnership.

   3. **Assessment/Analyses**: The institution can commission external and

      internal assessments to demonstrate how the program could add value to

      the organization.

   4. **Vision of Success**: As the next step, the program facilitator could present

      a launch plan, sharing an idea of success.

   5. **Implementation and Evaluation**: The program facilitator assesses and

      evaluates the program and then reports on student progress.

- **Additional Considerations for CSPSEL Implementation and Assessment**

   Interestingly, Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) mention a variety of conditions and

   trends that may influence program implementation in an organizational

   environment including "cultural, legal, political, economic, technological and

physical" (p.68). Depending on the school and the scale of the application, the

resources required to implement a CSPSEL program may vary. For a single

launch, funds are needed for a facilitator, curriculum, and a final event to

showcase the students' work. Partnerships with local non-profits and business

leaders are also essential to the implementation of the program.

- **Global / External Implications for the Organization**

    In an ever-changing global society, implementation of CSPSEL plays a critical

    role in the advancement of educational institutions by preparing future

    entrepreneurial leaders with competencies that can help to redefine global and

    national economic solutions. These students of tomorrow will be enabled to find

    solutions to societal issues as part of a deeper exploration of "calling" or vocation

    and practical application in the world. Implementation of CSPSEL also

    encourages communities, schools, students and their families to build community

    around purposeful activities and conversations. This research demonstrated that

    CSPSEL can also promote good citizenship, real world problem solving, civic

    justice, and democracy amongst the next generation of citizens and leaders.

Timeline for Implementation

To maximize potential and influence, CSPSEL developed a three-stage

implementation and assessment plan that includes a possible schedule to implement and

scale the solution. This implementation has and will occur in phases over the next

decade. As part of the assessment, students and organizations will be given periodic

surveys to determine the influence of the intervention.

Stage #1 (2009-2012): Implementation

Develop a unique social entrepreneurship/leadership training curriculum as a way to integrate purpose into high school leadership curricula. Partner with faith-based organizations.

Pedagogical. Develop and implement curriculum.

Strategic. Identify partner organizations. Collaborate with field experts for speaker series and mentorship workshops.

Technical. Create partner relationship with organization to launch flagship program.

Key metrics. Measure changes in behavior, awareness, knowledge and skills.

Stage #2 (2017): Scaling, Sustaining, and Replicating

Establish additional partnerships with like-minded organizations and create an online platform to deliver programs and purpose-driven curricula/tools.

Pedagogical. Develop an online platform to deliver purpose-driven curriculum.

Strategic. Research and create a unique online platform delivery model for distribution.

Technical. Identify partner organizations and online platforms to scale program.

Key metrics. Measure increases in the number of individuals reached/users and increases in the number of partner organizations.

Stage #3 (anticipated start in 2018): Policy Reform

Build a network of schools and organizations interested in reimagining innovative approaches to education.

Pedagogical. Develop delivery methods for roundtable discussions and professional development opportunities.

Strategic. Identify market and create an outreach strategy.

Technical. Implement fully researched marketing strategy and plan.

Key metric. Measure increases in the number of schools implementing purpose-driven curricula.

The following precise timeline reviews the completion of CSPSEL implementation milestones to date.

- June 2009: Founded purpose-driven educational consultancy and began curriculum research and development.

- August 2012: Launched inaugural program in partnership with the School.

- August 2015: Initiated curriculum for dual-enrollment college credit through Crown College.

- May 2017: Commenced doctoral program for founder, providing research opportunities for project launch evaluation and future scale.

Practical Implementation

Since the U.S. education system is at a national impasse (Freeman, 2012), reforming our schools begins with understanding how our leaders view the purpose of an education. Following this step, a vision of the future can be established and a strategy mapped out. Although the purpose of education has been debated by educators, politicians, scholars and philosophers throughout the centuries, the conclusion of this study is that educational pursuits need connections to each student's *raison d'etre,* reason for being.

As Traub (2008) notes, helping students to understand the purpose of vocation "can free students from oppressive cultural currents…(and) will relate to themselves, others, and God in ways that make for a world of peace and justice for all" (p.112). Bergman (2011) suggested that experience is a fundamental element of the transformation of an individual's worldview and noted Aristotle's belief that it was only through immersion and reflection that a person could understand the world and take action to bring a solution to observed injustices. CSPSEL provided such immersion and reflection.

Implications for Future Research

There are several implications for future research and implementation of the study results by both the researcher and other practitioners in the field. Although there is substantial socio-economic diversity represented within the CSPSEL due to its location in the San Francisco Bay Area, future studies in other sites may be required. Because this was a study that relied primarily on qualitative data and was limited to a private, faith-based, post-secondary school setting, additional purpose-driven experiences and curricula may be contextualized for other settings. Furthermore, purpose-driven curricula on a college and university level may be explored further. Future research could also include consideration of an online delivery platform that would be effective in global and multi-cultural contexts.

This researcher has already integrated lessons learned from this study into activities at the School and in the CSPSEL scalability plan:

- Firstly, in the course of conducting this study, the researcher utilized a variety of software platforms to collect student feedback. Potentially, the

researcher will utilize advanced digital survey platforms to further

measure the impact of the program.

- In the future, further integration of technology will enable students to

come together in the classroom and virtually through the utilization of

digital platforms. This also enables better feedback loops for further

adaptation, and expansion of the program and to assess measurable

outcomes.

- Additionally, technology can be used to replicate and scale the CSPSEL

model using a digital delivery model. The researcher is currently in the

development of a digital distribution plan.

- Finally, the researcher has already initiated a process of adapting the

CSPSEL curricula to different socio-economic contexts, grade levels, and

post-secondary courses.

Ultimately, "Only those with a deeply ingrained capacity for continuous learning

and self-reflection stand a chance of surfing the waves of change successfully"

(Lowney, 2005, p. 97). The researcher's integration of the study findings along

with future learning opportunities will ensure that the program continues to be

scaled, sustained, and replicated.

Implications for Leadership Theory and Practice

The Ignatian pedagogy of experience, reflection, and action (Bergman, 2011)

provides educators with the tools to effectively help their students use their knowledge to

solve real-world situations and better the world around them. This holistic

development of the child is contrary to current educational paradigms where the individual is exalted, and the goal of education and vocation is to meet as many material wants as possible. To reverse this materialistic paradigm, leadership theory and practice can evolve to include the following:

- **Purpose-Focused Research**

  Investigators can investigate the role of life purpose in both underserved and highly resourced communities, a subject of inquiry currently lacking substantial scholarly literature.

- **Metrics for Success**

  Educational systems can incorporate metrics that measure students' development of purpose (purpose-audits) into their self-assessments. School leaders can create and utilize psychosocial developmental evaluations, which include qualitative growth measurements, in addition to the standard proficiency measurements in math, science, and other subjects.

- **Community Service and Entrepreneurship**

  Educators can emphasize entrepreneurship based, social assistance learning activities as larger parts of core curricula and interdisciplinary collaboration.

- **Personalized Education**

  School administrators can create systems of education that are flexible, enabling curricular customization of topics relevant to students' skills and interests, as well as to local communities' greatest needs.

  Since the concept of human rights emerged from the idea of *imago Dei*—the belief that every individual reflects the image of God—it is surprising that, despite all the

technological advancements and wealth created, the current state of moral and physical

poverty in our nation and world continues to be widespread. Rabbi Joshua Berman (2008)

pointed out that egalitarian notions and values—including the concept of *b'tzelem Elohim*

(in the image of God)—originated in the Pentateuch and articulated a "new social,

political, and religious order" where equality, righteousness and justice were the

foundations of a good society (p. 67). However as Solzhenitsyn (1978) noted, "despite

the celebrated technological achievements of progress, including the conquest of outer

space they could not redeem the twentieth century's moral poverty" (para. 51). He argued

that the root cause was deviation from its spiritual and moral compass. By including

purpose-driven, moral education in their curricula, educators, educational leaders, and

policy makers can begin to address this destructive abandonment of values.

Final Summary

In Jewish thought, the phrase *tikkun olam* is often understood as the mending of

the world; it literally means to "make straight" (Fackenheim, 1982). In a world where

education is often lacking purpose, humankind is presented as "the result of a purposeless

and materialistic process that did not have [humankind] in mind. [The existence of

humankind] was not planned" (Simpson, 1967, p. 345). The next generation, if it is

educated with moral purpose, can use that sense of meaning to reverse these materialistic

trends and to better address the serious problems of the world.

Most modern educational paradigms are teaching students what to do to be

successful concerning test scores, grades and monetary benefits, and yet are neglecting to

teach students how to discover meaning and purpose. Although in the Bay Area and in

many parts of the United States, there are thriving hubs of technology, innovation, and

creativity, these elite centers are also places of social, economic psychological, and educational challenges that affect both underserved and affluent communities.

George Washington concurred with James Madison that educating future citizens and leaders in virtue is essential to a just and thriving democracy. He stated, "A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government…And what duty more pressing than communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?" (The Avalon Project, [1796] 2017). Washington understood the importance of equipping the next generation of purpose-driven leaders—with a duty to serve the public good.

Despite the negative trends, however, increasingly, the centrality of purpose can be observed in the public sphere, well beyond the realm of academic discourse. A recent story in *People* described how Prince Harry is finding a sense of purpose through service to others. The article described how the young prince, inspired by his own military experience, created the "Invictus Games" as a way to support wounded warriors (Perry, 2016). In a description of the restorative influence the initiative had in his own personal life, he said it was "almost like a cure for that pain I had back then" (Perry, 2016). Prince Harry is not unique. The results of this research study have shown that each person needs a noble purpose at the center of one's life. In the words of Dr. Rev. Bryant Kirkland, "That which goes deepest to the heart goes widest to the world" (Kirkland, 1981).

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Appendix A

Email Sample

Dear Caritas Scholar Alumnus/Alumna,

I hope this note finds you well.

I am now conducting doctoral research at Creighton University on the relationship between social entrepreneurship and student success. The purpose of the study is to determine whether the Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab (CSPSEL) has helped foster a sense of purpose in alumni, and, if so, how the Caritas Scholars Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab has helped to do so. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and includes 12 questions. Please contact me as soon as possible via email (XXXXX@creighton.edu) to let me know if you will be available to participate. Additionally, I will be available to conduct open-ended phone interviews.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Rachel Zabaneh
Doctoral Candidate
Creighton University
415.XXX.XXXX

Appendix B

Creighton University Study Information Sheet for

Education with a Purpose: Social Entrepreneurship as a Pedagogical Tool for Student

Success in a Private High School Setting

You are invited to participate in a research study about how unconventional pedagogical

tools can be utilized to instill a sense of purpose in a student's education. You were

selected as a possible subject because you have been identified as a Caritas Scholars

Program and Social Entrepreneurship Lab alumni. Please take a moment to read this form

and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be interviewed for the study.

The study is being conducted by Rachel M. Zabaneh.

STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of this qualitative study is to identify how social entrepreneurship can be

used as a pedagogical tool for student success in private high school education.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

If you agree to participate, you will be one of twenty subjects participating in this study.

PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY:

If you agree to be in the study, you will do the following:

• Participate in an in-depth interview where you will be asked questions about your life

and career goals

CONFIDENTIALITY

Efforts will be made to keep your personal information confidential. We cannot

guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your personal information may be disclosed if

required by law. Your identity will be held in confidence in reports in which the study

may be published and databases in which results may be stored. All material related to

this study will be destroyed in seven (7) years from the date of data collection.

Organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance

and data analysis include groups such as the study investigator and her research

associates, Institutional Review Boards or their designees and (as allowed by law) state or

federal agencies, specifically the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP).

PAYMENT

There is no monetary payment for participation.

RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY:

While participating in the study, there are minimal risks. These risks could be associated

with a breach of confidentiality. Please contact the Principal Investigator if you feel your

confidentiality has been violated.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

For questions about the study, contact the researcher Rachel Zabaneh,

XXXXXX@creighton.edu, 415-XXX-XXXX. For questions about your rights as a

research participant or to discuss problems, complaints, or concerns about a research

study, or to obtain information or offer input, contact the Creighton University Human

Subjects Office at irb@creighton.edu or call 402-280-2126. Give contact information

here.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part or may leave the

study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to

which you are entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not

affect your current or future relations with Creighton University.

Appendix C

Table 3

Questions Asked by Researcher's Questionnaire

1. Are you attending college? If so, where and what is your major?
2. What, if any, educational goals and/or career trajectories did you envision for yourself before you began the program?
3. What are your current educational goals and career trajectory?
4. How did you decide upon your current or future vocation?
5. How actively involved in community service are you?
6. How would you detail your primary professional aim in life?
7. What role, if any, did CSPSEL play in your transition from high school to college/your current job?
8. What is a challenge you have recently encountered?
9. Did you use any skills you learned during CSPSEL to tackle it? Elaborate.
10. What are some social issues you care about and why?
11. Have you been able to apply any of the CSPSEL lessons in your current academic or vocational pursuit? Elaborate.
12. What speaker most influenced you?

Table 4

Questions asked by CSPSEL

1. How important is character to your personal leadership?
2. What was the most important lesson you learned during this class?
3. As an entrepreneurial leader what are some practical ways you have learned to make a difference?
4. What would you do now if you had unlimited time, resources and guaranteed success?
5. What cultural forces in society seem the most corrosive to character? How can you use the lessons learned to overcome them? What topics would you like to see covered in future years?
6. Who was your favorite speaker(s) in the Caritas Speaker Series, Caritas Chapel Forum or at the Caritas Awards and why?
7. How has this course has impacted your personal and community leadership and future life/career/leadership goals?
8. After completing this course, do you have a better sense of your purpose in life or what you would like to do in the future?
9. Remember creating lasting societal change requires that your project has measurable impact that is sustainable, cost- effective, replicable and scalable. Do you feel your project covered these areas? How could you improve your project for next year?
10. Pick one of the leadership lessons most impactful to you and write about what you learned.
11. If you are a senior, what colleges/universities did you gain acceptance to this year? What scholarships were you awarded? How did this course help you in your scholarship application process? Which college do you plan on attending?
12. If you are a freshman-junior, what colleges or universities are you planning to apply to in the coming years? Are you looking for scholarships?
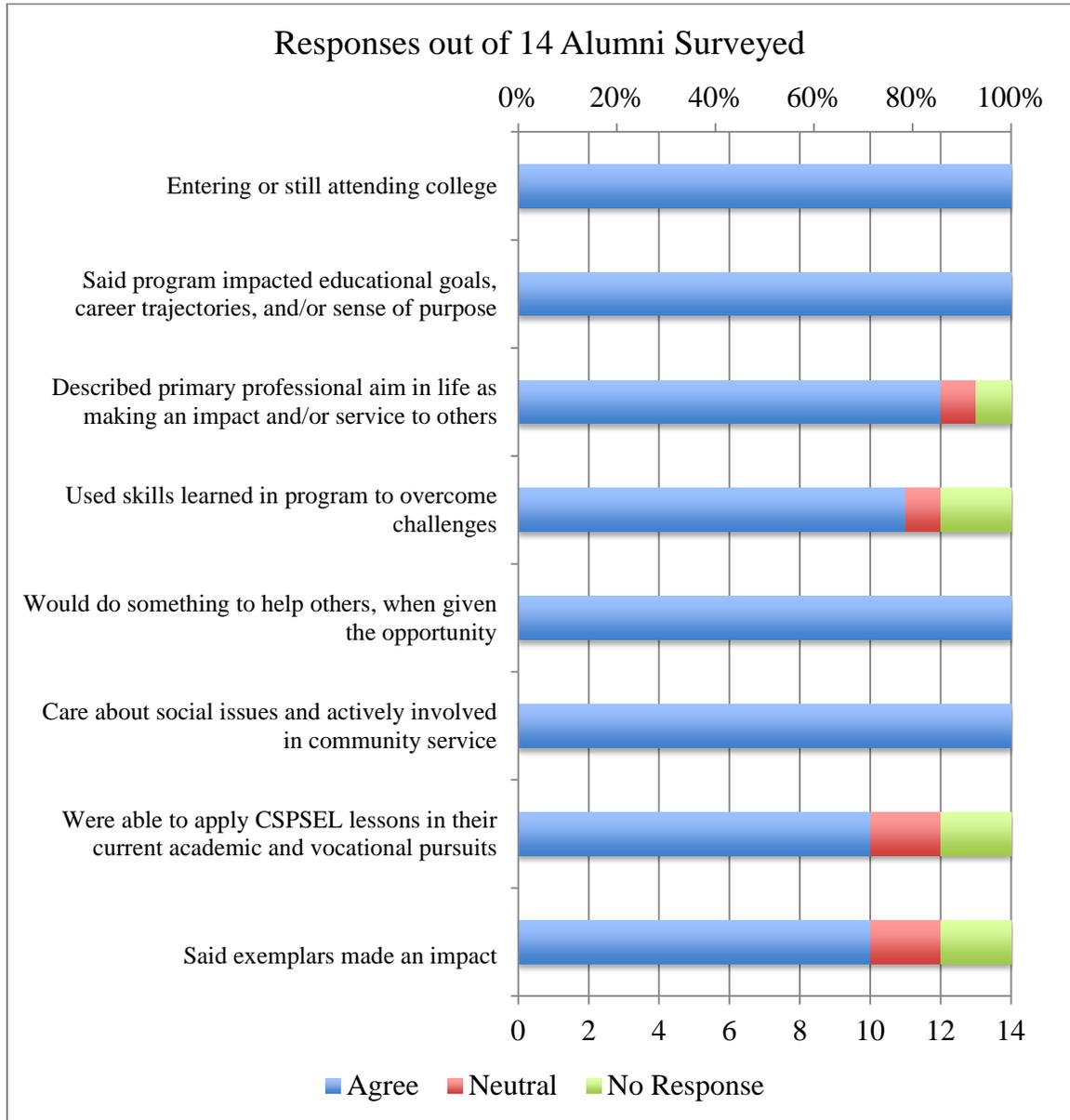
Appendix D

Responses out of 14 Alumni Surveyed

	Agree	Neutral	No Response
Entering or still attending college	14		
Said program impacted educational goals, career trajectories, and/or sense of purpose	14		
Described primary professional aim in life as making an impact and/or service to others	12	1	1
Used skills learned in program to overcome challenges	11	1	2
Would do something to help others, when given the opportunity	14		
Care about social issues and actively involved in community service	14		
Were able to apply CSPSEL lessons in their current academic and vocational pursuits	10	2	2
Said exemplars made an impact	10	2	2

■ Agree   ■ Neutral   ■ No Response

Figure 3. Findings from Researcher's Questionnaire.
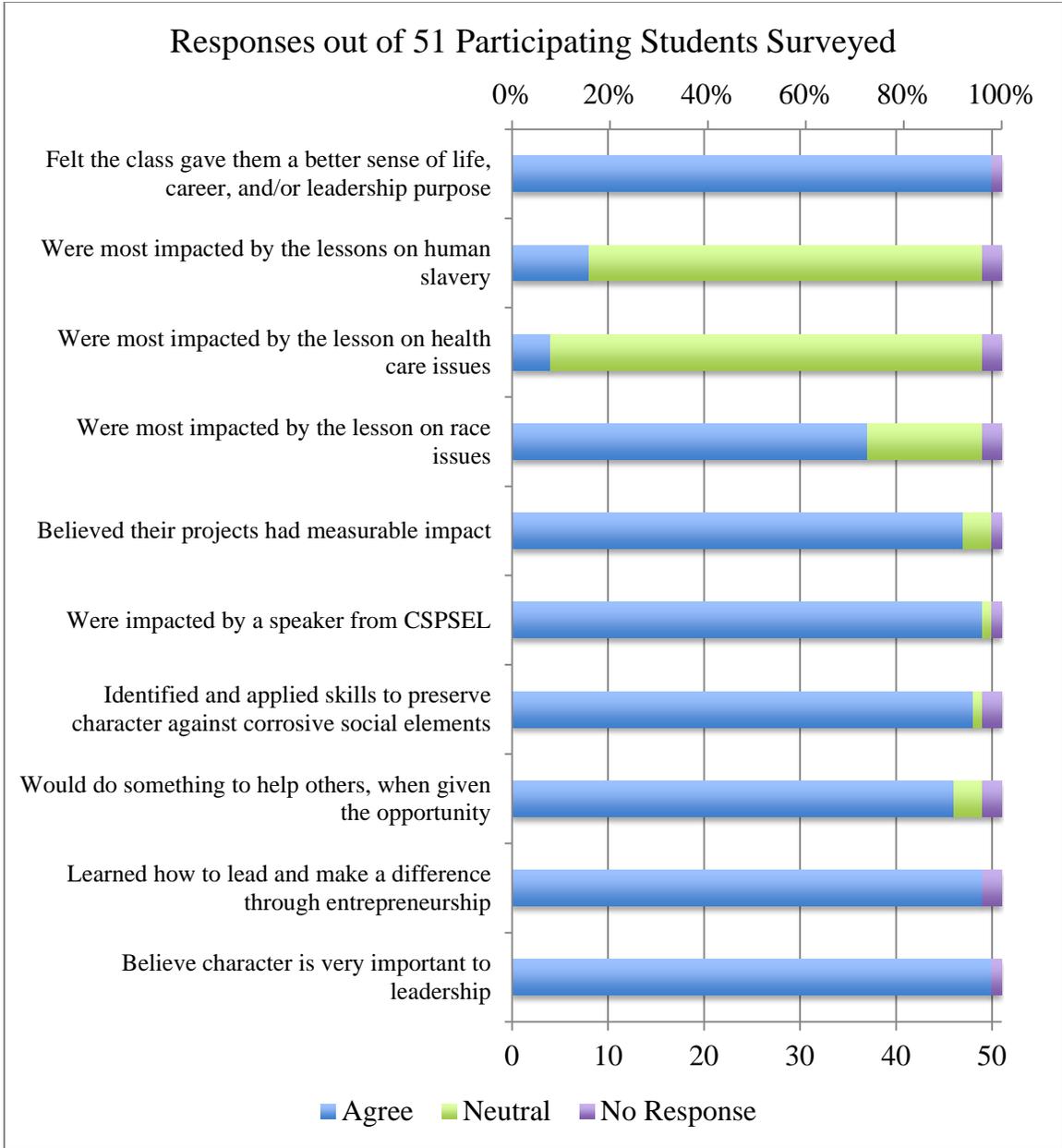
Figure 4. Findings from CSPSEL Annual Survey of All Participating Students.

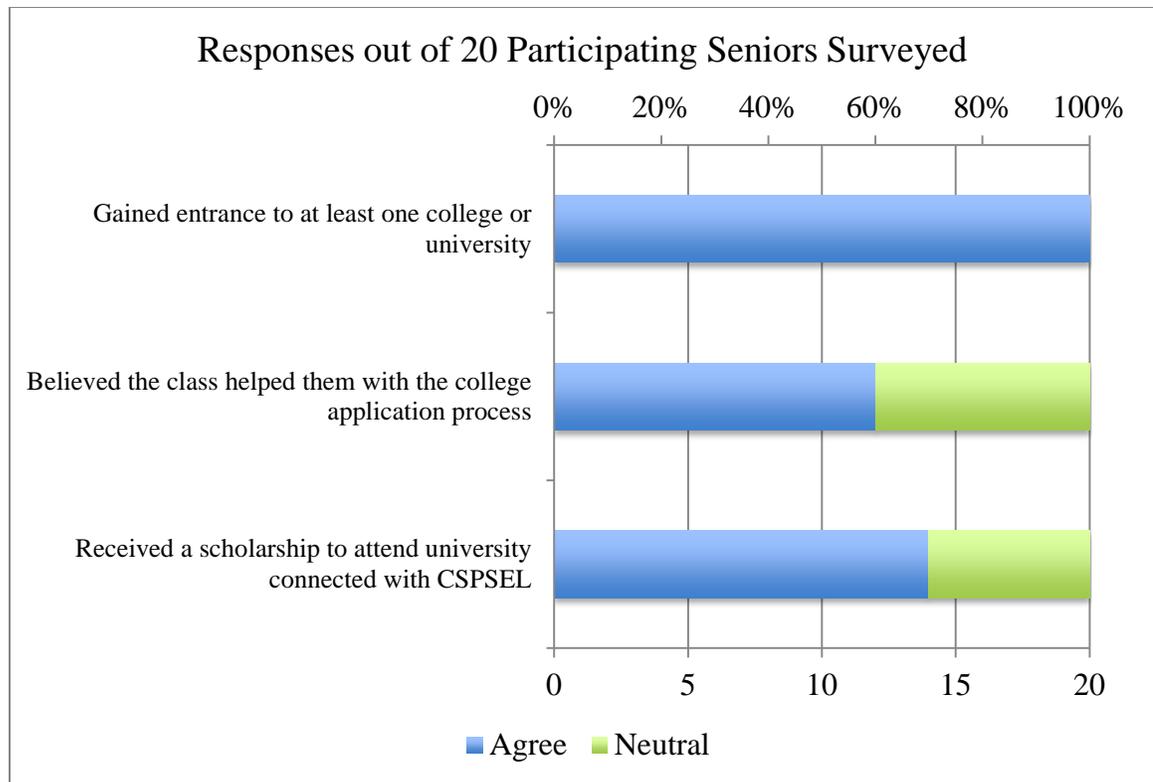## Responses out of 20 Participating Seniors Surveyed

Figure 5. Findings from CSPSEL Annual Survey of Seniors.

Appendix E

CSPSEL Course Description

Introduction

The Caritas Scholars Program for Social Entrepreneurs is a year long innovative, "think and do" curriculum that connects a student's values, skills, talents and passions with the goal of creating a unique project that will help make a difference in the lives of others. Students will develop critical thinking and problem solving abilities, while learning communication, team-building, and leadership skills as they design their own social entrepreneurship projects. By fostering active collaboration between our students and the community, they will relate major theological and philosophical ideas with real world application. They will also learn to identify and set personal goals through self-evaluation and research, create a business plan to execute their ideas, organize a complex process, and make confident and informed decisions about their future vocational and academic interests.

Pre-requisites: None but is a senior level course

Instructional Goals:

Worldview: Students will learn about what the Gospel teaches about social issues like health, poverty, hunger, disability, etc.

Analysis: Students will learn how to identify specific problems they care about and to quantify them using qualitative and quantitative data.

Problem solving: Students will learn how to develop data-driven solutions for their problems.

Speech and communications: Students will learn how to communicate their cause to larger audiences, using PowerPoint and other media.

Fundraising and networking: Students will learn how to recruit volunteers and funders for their cause.

College/Scholarship planning: All high school students (9-12) will be trained to convey their work and passion to scholarships and admissions committees as they plan for college.