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- TITLE** A Quasi-Experimental Study Examining the Potential Contribution of Service-Learning to Business Leadership Curriculum
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- OBJECTIVE** The purpose of the current quantitative, quasi-experimental study was to determine if three leadership outcomes were influenced by the addition of a service-learning component to business leadership curriculum.
- METHODOLOGY** The population of the current study was senior business students at a private, Christian, liberal arts institution located in the Midwest and the sample consisted of all senior business students enrolled in the capstone leadership course who agreed to participate in the research (N = 70). These outcomes were measured during a pretest and posttest using the Student Leadership Practices Inventory, the New General Self-Efficacy Scale (Chen et al., 2001), and the Balanced Emotional Empathy Scale (Mehrabian 2000). Each of the two leadership courses (TL and SLL) covered identical leadership curriculum and was taught by the same professor. Students self-selected into one of the two courses prior to being aware that there were slightly different requirements in each. The only difference between the two classes was the different approach to applying course learning through a 30-hour course requirement (traditional or service learning).
- KEY FINDINGS** Students in both leadership classes were not significantly different at the start of the term on the SLPI but both showed significant gains in perceived leadership skills as measured by the SLPI.

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Those in the SLL class, however, did not show significantly more gain than those in the TL class. Gains in self-efficacy from pre and post-test surveys did not reveal statistically significant differences. Significant increases in empathy were reported by those in the SLL class but not the TL classroom. The increases from pre and post test results in the SLL class over the TL class approached statistical significance ($p < .07$).

The author concludes that the “current study findings indicate that through the experiential learning that accompanied a service-learning program, university students demonstrated significant gains in both self-perception of leadership and empathy. These gains were somewhat greater for those students in the service-learning section (SLL) than in the traditional section (TL) of the business leadership course against which they were contrasted” (p. 91).