

Global citizens: Who are they?

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## **Abstract**

A growing desire to instigate global citizenship programmes in Higher Education (HE) has led to the development of optional structured opportunities for students to engage in prosocial activities. One of the challenges facing such programmes is to demonstrate and plan for the personal growth of those students. This paper reports the dispositional, prosocial and attitudinal characteristics; knowledge and skills; and perceptions of social justice that students who undertake these activities bring to their initial participation. The findings indicate, that in comparison to a control group, the students differ significantly in a number of important ways (e.g. conscientiousness, extraversion, openness; Machiavellianism, prosocial behaviour; self-esteem; skills relating to social action and tolerance and understanding and their concern regarding social problems). However, consideration should be given to the ways in which those students can be developed within a framework for social justice. Further, recruitment procedures for citizenship programmes in general should encourage the participation of a more diverse group of students than currently appears to be the case.

## **Key words**

Global citizenship, service-learning, attitudes, social justice, Higher Education

## **Introduction**

The UK Government has advocated the development of an ethos of volunteering that would enable structured opportunities for prosocial activities to be provided across all phases of formal education in the UK. Participation in community activities is known to confer economic and social benefits to both the individual and society (Penner, 2004). Thus far, there has been a substantial increase in the number of students in HE accessing opportunities to assist within their local community and abroad. Although there has been a substantial amount of research into personality characteristics and volunteering (see Borman & Penner, 2001), there has been rather less investigation into the personality traits of students who participate in formalised citizenship programmes. Therefore, the main aim of the current study is to systematically investigate the nature and extent of the personal characteristics (e.g. disposition, self-esteem, prosocial behaviour, attitudes, skills & perceptions of social justice) that differentiate between those students who choose to participate in formalised experiential citizenship actions and non-participatory students studying at the same university. An understanding of this will better inform programme leaders of appropriate pedagogic approaches that fit both with the overall aims of education for global citizenship and take into account the personal characteristics the students bring to the experience.

Personal growth in dispositional factors is assumed from the literature examining the effects of involvement in service-learning activities. Cemalcilar (2009) proposed that this becomes apparent as the volunteer role becomes an essential part of their identity.

However, student engagement in political issues is considered to be much more fragmented. Sax (2000) suggested that this is to some degree counter intuitive since a sustained involvement in community projects should be significantly correlated with a greater political awareness. According to Sax (2000), a possible explanation is that students engage in experiences that they are more personally connected to and feel that they can make more of a direct difference (e.g. schools, youth schemes, environment, homelessness). Therefore, one of the main challenges for HE is to take account of the personal characteristics and attitudes that students are bringing to the experience in order to determine effective programmes of learning. One of the overall aims of citizenship education is to encourage students in HE to take on adult roles and responsibilities that are reflected not just through an increase in awareness of social justice but also community and political activism. Measurement of the impact of programmes on this aspect appears to be less well-documented and even omitted from previous research. Addressing this would ensure that the opportunities institutions are providing are directed towards students understanding the process through which sustained social action can lead to political change. The current study reports the initial stages of this process of investigation. It aims to provide a starting point from which to devise programmes whose more meaningful impact can be assessed over the longer term.

The criticisms levelled at the impact of citizenship programmes have led to the development of models of learning that extend the notion of volunteerism. Crucially, in undertaking service-learning students are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences, knowledge and understanding of community issues within a structured framework of

learning. Eyler and Giles (1999) proposed that, within HE, such programmes should consist of the development of values, knowledge, skills, efficacy and commitment, facilitating the broad themes associated with citizenship activity: social and moral responsibility, political literacy and community involvement. Byron (2000) suggested that faith-based HE institutions are more likely to build upon the grounding that students have engaged in the compulsory education for citizenship within the secondary school curriculum. In the UK, this is a model that has included a global dimension and emphasis on social responsibility and community participation. However, concern has been expressed that counter to the original aims of reciprocity and the development of students' social and political literacy, a significant number of service-learning initiatives in the US have been compromised by their emphasis on volunteerism and the reinforcement of traditional charitable perspectives of dependency. Subsequently, research has prioritised concepts of citizenship that privilege individual acts of compassion and kindness over social action and the pursuit of social justice (Kahne & Westheimer, 2001). Annette (2008) argues that service-learning should be instrumental to challenging students to think and act politically in a way that volunteering alone does not necessarily do. To date initiatives to this end within HE have not been investigated in any detail either in the US or UK.

Recognition that separating models of citizenship education from global education may perpetuate a less relevant understanding of citizenship and a deficient view of global education has motivated calls for an alignment of these forms of education under the banner of global citizenship education (Davies & Reid, 2005). The suggestion that citizenship education can be placed on a continuum, from minimal to maximal, can be

extrapolated to global citizenship education (Osler & Starkey, 2004). Education *about* global citizenship provides students with knowledge of global issues, cultures, international institutions and systems and is indicative of a minimalist approach that could take place exclusively in the classroom. This involves passive elements of global citizenship education involving a sense of global identity and solidarity with others around the world. Education *for* global citizenship reflects a maximal approach that aims to ensure students are ready to take on the role of adult global citizens and associated responsibilities. Service-learning is one pedagogical approach that is congruent with this maximal approach. This requires the development of relevant skills, values and attitudes as opposed to simply the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. It is this view of education *for* global citizenship that is aligned with frameworks for embedding global citizenship in Higher Education (Bourn, McKenzie & Shiel, 2006). The associated dispositional, prosocial and attitudinal characteristics are the focus of this study.

### **Context of this study**

We do not believe that education is just about equipping people for the world of work; we also educate students for the work of the world (LHU, 2011a).

Liverpool Hope University recently introduced the Service and Leadership Award (SALA), an extracurricular service-learning programme that rewards local and international community involvement. There are no exclusion barriers placed by the University as to which students can or cannot be involved. All students are encouraged to participate. The students are assigned mentors with whom they meet with periodically

and are required to complete a reflective portfolio detailing their progress during the three years of the programme. They are also required to attend a number of training sessions (e.g. health & safety, cultural awareness, leadership). As part of the SALA students complete a structured period of volunteering that includes preparation and reflective components. Although this is not formally linked to any academic discipline, the structure of the award is consistent with definitions of service-learning (Jacoby, 1996). Embedding international volunteering within the SALA exemplifies one response to calls for citizenship education to adapt in response to globalisation in relation to its curriculum, resources and pedagogy (Merryfield & Duty, 2008). In this case, SALA publicity material makes explicit reference to global citizenship:

The Service and Leadership Award promotes global citizenship and is a way of engaging students with issues of social justice. It is a direct enhancement to a degree and is suitable for students who want to make a difference to society (LHU, 2011b).

The programme which is the focus of this study facilitates experiences which accord well with aspects of education for citizenship, global citizenship and service-learning as outlined in the previous section.

## **Theoretical background**

There is indicative evidence that there are specific dispositional (e.g. personality) and attitudinal characteristics associated with students who opt to become part of service-learning programmes. Important personal characteristics appear to include gender, socio-economic status, educational level and age. In order to ascertain the dispositional

qualities of citizenship performance behaviours, Borman and Penner (2001) employed one of the most established personality inventories known as the Big Five which encompasses five broad domains including extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness. Generally, it has been found that students who score high in agreeableness and conscientiousness characteristics are more likely to engage in voluntary activities (Borman & Penner, 2001; Kamdar & Van Dyne, 2007).

Those students who are high in conscientiousness are likely to be dependable, careful, thorough, responsible, organised, achievement orientated and planful. Further to this, those who are high in agreeableness are generally thought to be good natured, flexible, cooperative, caring, courteous, trusting and tolerant. Therefore, the findings are not entirely unexpected as they are the personality characteristics that are highly likely to be associated with altruism and a prosocial personality (Penner, 2004). There is evidence to suggest that extraversion is also positively associated with volunteerism (Carlo, Okun, Knight & de Guzman, 2005). Individuals described as extraverts are often thought to be gregarious, enthusiastic, talkative, assertive and interested in seeking out excitement. Global citizenship experiences can provide such students with opportunities to fulfill this side of their personality. Of interest to the current study is the strong correlation that has been found between extraversion and a Machiavellian personality (personality disposition characterised by distrustfulness and exploitive inter-personal orientation; see Christie & Geis, 1970).



There is a theoretical rationale that would lead to the importance of considering attitudes that individuals hold towards interpersonal relationships and human nature in predicting citizenship participation. Yet the Machiavellian personality trait has received little attention in the literature. One of the defining characteristics of Machiavellian individuals (or high-Machs) is how people relate to others. Christie and Geis (1970) found that those scoring high on the Machiavellian scale are more distant in their relationships and have few emotional commitments which could limit their prosocial behaviours albeit that they can appear to be superficially charming. Effective community involvement should require a high degree of cooperation, rather than exploitation. It is assumed that Machiavellian personality types will find it difficult to maintain conflict-free relationships which are generally dependent on high positive affect in such circumstances. Therefore, Machiavellianism may delineate between participatory and non-participatory students due to the high level of cooperative behaviour that is required to engage in prosocial activities.

There is an alternative perspective which may account for the mediation of the relationship between volunteering and extraversion and that is the premise that high-Machs can be adept social actors who seek to disguise their intentions in order to achieve their goals. Therefore, they can appear as intelligent and charming individuals, who are more likely to engage in citizenship activity if they could view participation as being advantageous to them in some way. Attention has been drawn to the fact that HEs have tended to ignore the moral aspects of the challenges associated with contributing to a democratic, civilised and inclusive society by concentrating much more on instrumental

processes. Students who would not normally consider engaging in service-learning programmes may find university strategies for recruitment relating to employability more attractive than the notion of community involvement itself.

It is evident that attitudinal factors can account for a larger proportion of the variance between those who choose and choose not to participate than personality variables. For example, a meta-analysis by Borman and Penner (2001), presented a model where conscientiousness, empathy for others, and helpfulness were the strongest predictors of citizenship behaviours. Historically, studies assess the personal growth of students undertaking citizenship activities without initially measuring important personality and prosocial characteristics beforehand and/or they are measured at different time points from one another. Once this had been controlled for, it was found that significant programme effects factors such as their well-being, self-esteem and academic performance were negated. More recently, researchers have concluded that students with the appropriate predictive dispositional and attitudinal qualities already differ from others in their cohort and are more likely to self-select to volunteer (Penner, 2004).

Of concern is that those students who could potentially benefit themselves and society most from this experience are less likely to engage in community participation. Cemalcilar (2009) highlighted that most of the studies that attempt to profile students who are involved in citizenship activities collect data either retrospectively and/or cross-sectionally. She suggested the need to undertake longitudinal studies to fully assess the impact of community participation. Notably, on doing this her study concurred with

those that highlighted a 'self-selection' bias. She found that on a range of self-perception variables those who chose to volunteer differed from non-volunteers. Further, the citizenship programme that they engaged in did not have any significant effect on their personal characteristics. However, the development of these particular variables may not have been within the remit of the overall programme objectives and/or there are other characteristics, skills and values that the programmes are seeking to develop which have not been measured.

Berkowitz, Althof and Jones (2008) suggested that it was important to find ways to nurture key dispositions (e.g. prosocial attitudes) and integrate moral characteristics with democratic citizenship in order for citizenship programmes to be effective. For those dispositions to lead to consistent behaviour certain skills (e.g. co-operation, tolerance, leadership) and knowledge need to be acquired. There are concerns that service-learning initiatives without a critical edge can reinforce unequal power relations. Therefore, it is important to examine some of the knowledge, skills and values relating to social justice and responsibility that might be expected to contribute to and develop through participation in citizenship activities (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Borman & Penner, 2001; Dudley & Cortina, 2008). In addition, this will provide a further avenue in which to explore the large proportion of unexplained variance that exists in previous studies (Dudley & Cortina, 2008). By including additional variables (e.g. attitudes to citizenship, citizenship skills, perceptions of social justice, community and political involvement) as well as comparing two different groups of students the present study intends to address this with the collection and analysis of a more comprehensive and robust data set.

Dudley and Cortina (2008) met with some success in linking knowledge and skill variables to the personal support (e.g. helping) dimension of citizenship behaviour. The relative importance of understanding skill and knowledge factors is that they are more likely than dispositional qualities to respond to training initiatives (Dudley & Cortina, 2008). Much of the research that has centred on the citizenship behaviour and skills that are required beyond motivational factors (e.g. prosocial orientation & self-efficacy) has been conducted with employees in organisations rather than students in HE. The rewards through financial remuneration from the benefits of a prosocial personality and skill base are likely to be more long-term. However, there is a fear that unless there is some attention paid to skills and the link between this and the quality of the experience, then the overall goals of citizenship programmes including, challenges to social injustice, may not be achieved.

The focus by the university involved in the current study in developing a Service and Leadership Award accords well with the notion that there is a need to move beyond providing students with opportunities to build up their volunteering hours in a quantifiable way to finding qualitatively new directions for educating young people in order to prepare them for their future citizenship. The programme is closely aligned to the university's faith-based mission and values as well as its strategic aim of increasing opportunities for all students to have an international experience during their time in HE. This study extends previous research by not only measuring the personal characteristics and attitudes but also the knowledge, skills and values that volunteer students have towards issues of community participation, cohesion and social justice and responsibility

in comparison with those who choose not to volunteer to engage in the programme. The initial information that this generates will enable service and leadership programmes in HE to develop appropriate and better informed programmes of learning that will enhance the critical thinking and political engagement that it seeks to address. In conducting any longitudinal research it is important to collect baseline data from which more rigorous judgements about the relative impact of education programmes can be made. A consequence of not doing could mean that there is a heavy and perhaps unfounded reliance on the assumptions made in previous research of the personal characteristics that will be developed. In addition, it is important to use this data to inform the nature of the programme itself so that the measurement of personal growth accords much more directly with the aims and objectives of the specific service-learning experience.

## **Method**

### *Participants*

The students who volunteered to participate in this study are part of the first cohort of the SALA which was implemented in 2009. The current study focuses on the establishing the characteristics of those volunteers within the first two weeks of signing up to the programme and prior to their engagement in the activities associated with it.

Participants were 121 (100 females) first year students in Liverpool Hope University, recruited via e-mails sent to all first year students. The mean age for the sample was 21.83 (SD = 5.4). Females and males were similar in age (22 years, SD = 5.86 and 21.0

years,  $SD = 2.30$ , respectively). The participants consisted of 57 students registered on the Service and Leadership Award (SALA) and 64 students who were not registered on the Service and Leadership Award (non-SALA).

### *Measures*

#### *Dispositional characteristics*

##### *Personality*

The Big Five Inventory (BFI) was developed by John, Donahue and Kentle (1991) and is a relatively short measure of personality, using phrases of 2-7 words to describe each of the personality traits. Eight of the questions measure Extraversion (three of which are reverse scored) ( $\alpha = .87$ ), nine of the items measure Agreeableness (four of which are reverse-scored) ( $\alpha = .76$ ), eight items measure Conscientiousness (three of which are reverse-scored) ( $\alpha = .74$ ), ten items for Openness (2 reverse-scored) ( $\alpha = .70$ ) and eight for Neuroticism (three reverse-scored) ( $\alpha = .86$ ). The questionnaire is a 5-point Likert Scale (disagree strongly, disagree a little, neither agree or disagree, agree a little, agree strongly). Example items include: “I see myself as someone who... is talkative” (Extraversion), “I see myself as someone who... tends to find fault in others” (Agreeableness, reverse-scored), “I see myself as someone who... does a thorough job” (Conscientiousness), “I see myself as someone who... has few artistic interests (Openness, reverse-scored) “I see myself as someone who... is depressed, blue” (Neuroticism). For each of the traits, all the words describing the trait are added, and divided by the number of words.

*Prosocialness*

Caprara and Steca's (2005) 16-item, five point Prosocialness Scale ( $\alpha = .89$ ) was developed as a short measure to assess adults' willingness to share, help, and feel empathetic to needs of others. Example items include: "I am available for volunteer activities to help those in need", "I intensely feel what others feel", "I easily lend money or other things. Possible scores range between 16 and 82. Higher scores on the questionnaire indicate a higher willingness to help others.

*Self-Esteem*

Rosenberg's (1965) 10-item, four point Self-Esteem Scale ( $\alpha = .80$ ) was designed to measure global feelings of self-worth or self-acceptance. Example items include: "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself", "I feel I do not have much to be proud of" (reverse-coded), "I take a positive attitude towards myself". The possible scores for the questionnaire range from 10-40, a higher score indicating higher self-esteem.

*Machiavellianism*

Machiavellianism was measured using the Mach IV scale ( $\alpha = .75$ ) devised by Christie and Geis (1970). The Mach IV is a 20-item, seven point scale that consists of questions asking about the views people have on human nature and the tactics they employ when interacting with others. Example items include: "Most people have a vicious streak waiting to come out", "Most people are basically good and kind" (reverse-coded) and "It is wise to flatter important people". The possible total scores on the questionnaire range from 20-140, a higher score indicating higher Machiavellianism.

## *Citizenship*

### *Attitudes and efficacy*

The 11-items in this section measure, using a five point scale ( $\alpha = .83$ ), the students attitudes to a range of citizenship concepts including the notion of volunteering itself, a sense of personal efficacy in effecting local and global issues is measured as well as the belief that the community itself can be effective in solving its own problems. Example items include: “Having an impact on community problems is within the reach of most individuals”, “University students should be required to provide a certain number of hours of community service in order to graduate”, “I think our social problems can be solved by the community”. This scale was originally developed by Scheurich (1994). One of the items is reverse-scored.

### *Citizenship skills*

The range of items requiring students to self report are based on an early version of a citizenship skill measure developed as part of the ‘Measuring Citizenship Project’ of the Whitman Center (1993). Two five point scales have been adapted from this for the purpose of this study. The first is termed *skills: for active participation* includes 8-items ( $\alpha = .84$ ) which give the students the opportunity to assess their own citizenship skills such as their ability to take action, leadership, communication and participation in community affairs. The second is termed *skills: tolerance and understanding* included 7-items ( $\alpha = .78$ ) for which the students were encouraged to think about their ability to understand other perspectives, respect other viewpoints and demonstrate empathy to all points of view. One item was reverse-scored.



*Perceptions of social justice*

In order to measure the complexity of students' conceptualisations of social issues and how they think they should be addressed a 15-item five point scale ( $\alpha = .50$ ) was developed (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Six items were reverse-scored. Example items include: "People who receive support from Government agencies or the voluntary sector only have themselves to blame" (reverse-scored), "If I could achieve one thing about society, it would be to achieve greater social justice" and "The most important community service is to change public policy". Students' beliefs that social justice is a critical issue, and that changing policy is the most important approach are measured by single items as the internal consistency of the items was relatively low in comparison to the other measures used in this study.

*Procedure*

Participants were recruited via e-mails sent through the University's mailing list. The students were requested to participate in a study looking at personality in relation to citizenship behaviour and views about society. All of the participants had the opportunity to win a prize, £50 in gift vouchers. Participants were directed to an on-line survey, which they could complete anonymously. However, the students were requested to leave their student number that could be used for the identification of the prize winner.

## Results

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Insert Table 1 here

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Table 1 reports the means and standard deviations for both SALA and non-SALA students for the questionnaire items that measure personality, Mach IV, prosocialness, self-esteem, citizenship attitudes and beliefs, skills relating to active participation and tolerance. SALA students scored on average higher on measures relating to extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, prosocial behaviour, self-esteem, citizenship attitudes and efficacy, and skills relating to active participation and tolerance. The non-SALA students scored on average higher on the Mach IV and neuroticism scales.

The main purpose of this study was to investigate nature and extent to which a number of dispositional and attitudinal factors known to impact on pro-social volunteering behaviour were able to account for those students who elected to engage in a service-learning programme at University. A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of the two groups of students (i.e. SALA and non-SALA) on the dependent variables for personality, pro-social behaviour, self-esteem, Machiavellianism, citizenship attitudes and efficacy, and skills relating to active participation and tolerance. Significant differences were found among the SALA and non-SALA students on the dependent measures, Wilk's  $\lambda = .71$ ,  $F(11,107) = 3.90$ ,  $p$

< .001. The multivariate  $\eta^2$  based on the Wilk's  $\lambda$  was 0.29, thus indicating that 29% of the multivariate variance of the dependent variables is associated with the group factor.

Analyses of variance (ANOVA) on each dependent variable were conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. Univariate ANOVAs for extraversion,  $F(1, 119) = 5.87, p < .05, \eta^2 = .05$ ; conscientiousness,  $F(1, 119) = 7.87, p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$ ; openness,  $F(1, 119) = 4.33, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$ ; Machiavellianism,  $F(1, 119) = 5.84, p < .05, \eta^2 = .05$ ; pro-social behaviour  $F(1, 119) = 14.17, p < .01, \eta^2 = .11$ ; self-esteem,  $F(1, 119) = 4.75, p < .03, \eta^2 = .04$ ; citizenship attitudes and efficacy,  $F(1, 119) = 39.43, p < .01, \eta^2 = .25$ ; citizenship skills in active participation,  $F(1, 119) = 9.20, p < .01, \eta^2 = .07$  and citizenship skills in tolerance and understanding,  $F(1, 119) = 6.81, p < .01, \eta^2 = .05$  were significant. Therefore, those students who volunteer for participation in service-learning programmes exhibit a different trajectory of dispositions, higher self-esteem, more pro-social behaviours, are less like to be manipulative, have different attitudes and efficacy, more of the skills that would be associated with active participation as well as tolerance and understanding of others than those who do not volunteer. An effect size index, the  $\eta^2$  was also computed. The  $\eta^2$  value ranges from 0 to 1. Traditionally, an  $\eta^2$  of .01, .06 and .14 represent small medium and large effect sizes, respectively. Therefore, the results support the conclusion that citizenship attitudes and efficacy demonstrates a large effect size showing that nearly 25% of the variation in the associated scores can be accounted for by group membership. Pro-social behaviour demonstrated quite a strong effect size ( $\eta^2 = .11$ ), as did citizenship attitudes and efficacy ( $\eta^2 = .25$ ). Conscientiousness ( $\eta^2 =$

.06) and citizenship skills in active participation and tolerance and understanding demonstrated medium effect sizes.

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Insert Table 2 here

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Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics for the single items that comprise the students' perceptions of social justice. The SALA students on average scored marginally higher on 10 of the items in comparison to the non-SALA students.

A further aim of the study was to determine the perceptions of social justice that the two different groups of students held at the beginning of their University studies. Analyses of variance (ANOVA) on each item were conducted. Univariate ANOVAs revealed that the items measuring the degree to which students felt that social problems were not their concern,  $F(1,119) = 9.02, p < .01, \eta^2 = .07$ , what they did in their daily life affected people in other countries  $F(1,119) = 6.88, p < .01, \eta^2 = .06$  and their desire to understand why there are problems in the world  $F(1,119) = 4.59, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$  were significant.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to establish the nature and extent of the individual differences in the personal characteristics between those students who participate and those who choose not to participate in a widely advertised and encouraged programme of service-learning. This study extended previous research that has investigated the

personal growth and self-selection bias characteristics of volunteers in a number of ways. Firstly, by including a wider range of variables in order to establish a more comprehensive baseline of dispositions, attitudes, skills and perceptions of social justice that students bring with them to a service-learning programme. A clearer understanding of these dynamics will better inform the nature of the training practices in service-learning that will be offered to encourage a more structured development of citizenship and civic responsibility. Secondly, it was intended to provide a detailed insight into more appropriate facilitation strategies for those students who are not accessing the opportunities for involvement in service-learning programmes.

The analyses of variance that were conducted indicate that at the outset students registered on the SALA tend to score significantly higher on the extraversion and openness personality scales, lower on Machiavellianism and higher on items relating to self-esteem. Overall the findings suggest that the strongest effects were for measures of citizenship attitudes and efficacy and prosocial behaviour. Conscientiousness, skills in active participation and tolerance and understanding were also relatively important in accounting for the differences between the two groups of students. More complex was the pattern of variation revealed by the univariate analyses for the perceptions of social justice held by the students. Students who elect to engage in the SALA do not appear to differ at the beginning of the programme on some of the factors which are important to political action and the development of more effective long-term citizenship. For example, the items “It is important to me personally to influence political structure” and

“The most important community service is to change public policy” were not significantly different between the two groups of students.

The differences found in personality characteristics are not unexpected and the relationship to this and prosocial behaviour has been found in previous research, especially amongst the business community (Borman & Penner, 2001; Kamdar & Van Dyne, 2007). However, the current study did not substantiate a significant difference between the two groups of students on agreeableness. This is surprising given the relationship between the characteristics associated with agreeableness and altruistic behaviour that would reflect the flexible and more caring nature of those students. The finding possibly reflects the fact that both groups of students that participated in the study were engaged in undergraduate courses that reflect some of the constructs that underlie agreeableness (e.g. psychology, education & sport). Therefore, the results may have been more consistent with previous research if a more diverse range of students had participated in the study.

One of the differences between this study and the aforementioned research is that this research included all five personality factors (i.e. extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness & openness). In agreement with previous research conscientiousness demonstrated one of the strongest effects on volunteering action. Conscientiousness represents a degree of organisation and achievement orientation. Students who are confident in their organisational skills and ability seem to be more likely to undertake further challenges, such as those represented by the SALA, rather than feeling overwhelmed in the first few days with the commitments posed to them through

university induction. Further, if achievement orientation was also a factor then they may well have been better able to clearly draw together how the different opportunities that are available to them may provide potential benefits to their intended educational and future employment goals. According to Kamdar and Van Dyne (2007), it is not that the students low in conscientiousness will not perform well in their academic studies or should not become involved in other programmes but rather there needs to be a greater understanding that they might need different incentives to become involved. Developing meaningful relationships with others can help to reduce the negative effects of students who are low in both conscientiousness and agreeableness. This supports an argument that service-learning and citizenship programmes should be integrated more into the academic curriculum that the students are currently undertaking. There is an important role for the academic mentor in assisting students to make important links between their studies and community participation and thus providing one method of assisting to deepen their relationship.

The present study found that students who engage in the SALA programme scored significantly lower on the Mach IV scale, indicating that students who opt to undertake the SALA are less manipulative and cynical than non-participatory students. It could be that high Mach students could engage in activities that allow for the manipulation of interpersonal relationships if this will be of benefit to them. Universities are not only encouraging students to engage in activities to increase their democratic response to issues but to also increase their employability. It is this strategic aim that could serve to attract high Mach personalities, who are by definition thought to be opportunistic,

exploitative and highly adaptive to situational demands, to engage in such programmes. This was not found to be the case in this study.

The SALA provides a comprehensive and structured opportunity to engage in volunteering activity. This could be challenging to High Machs as they tend to favour unstructured environments that are less restrictive on their behaviour. At this early stage of their academic studies, these students might not be focusing on employability issues. The programme does have scope to enable the students to engage with it up until the end of the first semester of their second year and it would be interesting to investigate those students who decide to do so at this point. It is also possible that the High Machs might view this type of activity as a challenge to maintaining the sense of emotional detachment that they are characterised as having. Finally, prosocial indices and personality characteristics can predict whether someone will exhibit helping behaviours but it is questionable whether or not they are predictive of the quality of that support. Therefore, as Dudley and Cortina (2008) suggested competence factors also need to be considered.

Eyler and Giles (1999) pointed to the importance of the development of the interpersonal and community skills dimensions relating to citizenship behaviour. They included, for example, their ability to compromise, being more open to allowing ideas and opinions that they may not necessarily agree with, having a greater understanding of the perspectives of others in order to achieve greater tolerance and understanding as well as a commitment to taking action for social justice through participation in community affairs,



leadership, engaging in discussion, working with others and ultimately a willingness to fight for what they believed in. This study supports the notion that students who engage in the programme are highly likely to have more of those skills available to them before they embark on it. Orlenius (2008) indicated that being more open to allowing ideas and opinions that people may not necessarily agree with reflects an awareness of the equal and unique value of all people. This is crucial for a shift towards a more democratic human rights rather than a charitable process of participation in prosocial activities.

One of the central themes of service-learning is that it should add value both to the students undertaking prosocial activities and the wider community. This presents a challenge for leaders of service-learning programmes. From a positive perspective, it means that those students who opt to undertake such programmes are more readily able to engage at the level required for social action but it also represents a challenge in determining a programme that will provide them with the individual and community growth that is required to be fully effective in political participation. One possible avenue to explore is to extrapolate, those skills which are more able to be developed and those which are more intrinsic to particular personalities and make those the focus of training initiatives within the programme.

The largest effect size was demonstrated for citizenship attitudes, personal and community efficacy. With the exception of conscientiousness this was found to be stronger than that found for the dispositional variables that were measured. What is not clear at this stage of investigation is how those prosocial attitudes and personal and

community efficacy are formulated in the first place and prior to engaging in programmes that are designed to enhance them. Previous experience, therefore, needs to be considered. The relative import of conscientiousness and attitudes and efficacy may in part reflect the fact that those students made more of any previous opportunities through their own diligence. In order for students to become commensurate with the notion of acting as agents of social change they have to be familiar with how society is organised and their capacity within this to solve community problems. Political participation which involves leadership and community service at all levels is more demanding (Eyler & Giles, 1999). The students were asked to rate how far they agreed with the statement that community service would help them to develop their leadership skills. The capacity to lead is an important element of working with others. The participatory students were more likely to suggest that they understood the importance of this relationship. Further they indicated that they were significantly more likely to recognise that the skills and experiences that they gain from community service will be valuable in their future careers.

Finally, the research attempted to tease apart skills and perceptions that relate more specifically to social justice. The SALA students were found to differ significantly from the non-SALA students on the following items: “I feel that social problems are not my concern”, “I feel that social problems directly affect the quality of life in my community”, “What I do in my daily life affects people in other countries” and “I want to understand why there are problems in the world”. This could reflect two aspects of the motivation to register on the SALA in the first place: a concern for social well-being of others and the

fact that the students know that there is an international element of the programme that is heavily supported by the university.

If there is to be a movement of social change that takes students beyond the charitable then the fact that the participatory students do not differ from the non-participatory students on aspects of social justice that are required and require a more in depth political awareness is an important element the SALA must address. In order for students to be the agents of social change in the future then the agenda of this service-learning programme needs to be political. This is something that is not likely to be achieved in the short-term but through a long period of engagement in experiential activities as well as critical and questioning reflection. A reflection that requires the clear articulation of deeper future active participation in order to lead to committed long-term citizenship.

## **Implications**

Service-learning in conjunction with academic programmes of study should take into account students' prior learning and experiences as well as a clear understanding of those who are most likely to be attracted to participate in it. The current study suggests that it is possible to differentiate SALA and non-SALA students on a number of dispositional, attitudinal and skill-based variables. It is not necessarily the case that students who do not have some of the prerequisite skills that have been identified cannot engage in prosocial activities. However, there needs to be a clear pathway between service-learning and academic development with experienced mentors to scaffold and advise on the learning that is taking place as well as putting into place future action plans for

community placements. Some of the skills (e.g. discussion, leadership, critical thinking co-operation, a willingness to understand other perspectives) as well as increased self-confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy that have been identified will be developed and reinforced during their studies. Therefore, there should be multiple access points to the award during the course of their academic study. A focus on the quality and depth of experience that would allow the students to fully immerse themselves in the life of others rather than the number of volunteering hours will undoubtedly place within their reach the ability to make the world a better place for a greater number of people.

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Table 1: Descriptive statistics for dispositions, attitudes and skills: profile of SALA and non-SALA students

Assessment Scale	SALA	Non-SALA	Probability F	Effect Size
Personality				
Extraversion	3.66 (0.74)	3.33 (0.79)	.02	.05
Agreeableness	4.14 (0.58)	3.97 (0.50)	.14	.03
Conscientiousness	3.85 (0.58)	3.55 (0.61)	.01	.06
Neuroticism	2.92 (0.88)	3.14 (0.80)	.14	.03
Openness	3.61 (0.55)	3.38 (0.53)	.04	.04
Prosocial	62.89 (8.09)	56.73 (9.05)	.01	.11
Self-Esteem	18.93 (3.67)	17.06 (5.61)	.03	.04
Mach IV	66.03 (13.27)	71.63 (11.21)	.02	.05
Attitudes & efficacy	45.41 (5.10)	38.70 (5.94)	.01	.25
Skills: Action	28.03 (4.23)	25.48 (5.01)	.01	.07
Skills: Tolerance	27.54 (3.31)	25.67 (3.99)	.01	.06

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for social justice questions: profile of SALA and non-SALA students

Question	SALA	Non-SALA	Probability <i>F</i>	Effect Size
1. I feel that social problems are not my concern (R)	4.37 (0.64)	4.03 (0.59)	.01	.07
2. Government should get out of the business of solving social problems (R)	3.93 (1.03)	3.92 (0.98)	.96	.00
3. People who receive support from Government agencies or the voluntary sector only have themselves to blame (R)	4.09 (0.74)	4.13 (0.72)	.78	.00
4. I feel that social problems directly affect the quality of life in my community	3.93 (0.90)	3.53 (0.94)	.02	.04
5. Social problems are more difficult to solve than I used to think	4.00 (0.94)	3.84 (0.86)	.34	.01
6. The problems that cause people to need social assistance are frequently the result of circumstances beyond their control	3.70 (0.46)	3.65 (0.57)	.66	.00
7. If I could change one thing about society, it would be to achieve greater social justice	3.93 (0.84)	3.83 (0.79)	.49	.00
8. The most important community service is to change public policy	3.07 (0.80)	3.11 (0.84)	.79	.00

9. For the most part, each individual controls whether he or she is poor or wealthy	4.00 (0.71)	4.20 (0.67)	.11	.02
10. It is important to me personally to influence the political structure	2.95 (1.11)	2.64 (1.01)	.11	.02
11. We should reach out to specific people in need rather than create programmes to address social problems (R)	3.86 (0.67)	3.75 (0.64)	.36	.01
12. What I do in my daily life affects people in other countries	3.68 (1.07)	3.14 (1.19)	.01	.06
13. When I get a job it will be more important to me that I make lots of money than that I make the world a better place (R)	4.25 (0.78)	4.03 (0.71)	.12	.02
14. It is a good idea to have people of different backgrounds living together in the same country	4.14 (0.89)	3.92 (0.91)	.19	.01
15. I want to understand why there are problems in the world	4.30 (0.84)	3.94 (0.99)	.03	.04