

Character and service dimensions of global competencies for 21st century learning: cross-sectional perspectives

SISTER MERCEDITAS ANG
St. Paul University Philippines

Key words

character education,
service learning,
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In global education, the importance of character and service cannot be sidelined. This study determined the character and service dimensions of global competencies for 21st century learning from the perspectives of students, teachers, school administrators and professionals in various disciplines. The results identified the salient character and service traits of globally-competent individuals in terms of knowledge, values, skills, and behavior. Also discussed are the strategies and learning environment to facilitate the integration of character education and service learning in school.

Corresponding author: Sister Merceditas Ang

Email address for corresponding author: angmerceditas@yahoo.com

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Introduction

Learning in the 21st century is highly globalized, technology-driven, competency-based, and lifelong. Educators and policy-makers believe that in order to thrive and succeed in a global society, the students and graduates must be globally competent and be proficient communicators, creators and innovators, critical thinkers, and collaborators (Roekel, D.V., 2010, Anderson, M., 2017). The “6Cs of education for the future” includes critical thinking, communication, collaboration, culture, creativity, and connectivity (Miller, B., 2015). On the other hand, Michael Fullan, an education researcher, has set “character education” as one of the 6Cs for the 21st century teacher and student, together with citizenship, communication, critical thinking and problem-solving, collaboration, creativity and imagination (Parker, P., 2014). To meet the needs of 21st century learners, education authorities and researchers are exploring the process of deeper learning that promotes higher-order thinking skills, reasoning, and problem-solving in the context of using intensive curriculum, new pedagogies, performance assessment, and design of learning environment (Bellanca, J., 2014, Fullan, M. and Langworthy, M., 2014). For the millennials and diverse learners, a 21st century learning environment must blend physical and digital infrastructures to seamlessly support learning (Machado, J., 2017). The pedagogy and desired learning outcomes can determine the design of learning environments that would engage students and develop global competencies.

Global competence is a 21st century imperative (NEA, 2010). Moreover, it must be part of the core mission of education from K to 12 through graduate school. According to Veronica Mansilla and Anthony Jackson (2011), global competence is the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance. In the policy brief of the National Education Association in the United States (2010), global competence is described as the “acquisition of in-depth knowledge and understanding of international issues, an appreciation of an ability to learn and work with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, proficiency in a foreign language, and skills to function productively in an interdependent world community.” The World Savvy (2017) has come up with a global competence matrix that covers

core concepts, values and attitudes, skills, and behaviors. Also, human dignity and cultural diversity are considered as important elements in the development of global competence. Such that, a global mindset makes one better equipped towards building more just, peaceful, and sustainable societies (OECD, 2016). Global competence is not merely a specific skill but a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The Glossary of Education Reform (2014) points out that the 21st century refers to a "broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed by educators, school reformers, college professors, employers, and others to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in collegiate programs and contemporary careers and workplaces." From the perspectives of educational stakeholders, character education and service learning are two important components of global competencies that must be imbedded in the learning process.

The plurality and mobility of millennial learners can be challenging in terms of character education and service learning. Yet, it also offers the opportunity for the school to creatively tap the dimensions of service and character in the preparations of the youth to become globally competent and responsible citizens. Based on recent research findings, the Boston-based Center for Curriculum Redesign (CCR) published a Character Qualities Framework that identifies six essential character qualities, to wit: mindfulness, curiosity, courage, resilience, ethics, and leadership. Accordingly, Bialik, Bogan, Fadel, et. al (2015) used the CCR's framework to emphasize character qualities and they argued that "facing the challenges of the 21st century requires a deliberate effort to cultivate the students' personal growth and the ability to fulfill social and community responsibilities as global citizens." Citizenship training covers two aspects: local and community-based service learning and global learning and international experience (Ontario's Citizenship Education Framework, 2012). Service-learning for global competence provides the students with an experiential learning pedagogy in which education is delivered by engaging students in community service that is integrated with the learning objectives of core academic curricula, as premised on providing students with contextualized learning experiences that are based on authentic, real-time situations in the local and international communities (Billig, S.H., 2002; Felt, L.,2014; Whitehead, D.M., 2015).

Character education and service learning are crucial in the present era of globalization with its massive consumerism and degeneration of morals and human values (Ang, M. 2017; Roy, C., 2011). Character matters and character education is at the center of the school's mission. To succeed and gain fulfillment in life necessarily entails good character and ability to serve. Research findings support the assumption that character education is related to higher academic performance (Benninga, J.S., Berkowitz, M., et al., 2006). Also, character education has been shown to have positive effects on both the academic achievement and social development of children throughout their schooling and can improve the school environment (DeRosier & Lloyd, 2010; Berkowitz, M., 2002; Marshall, Caldwell, & Foster, 2011; White & Warfa, 2011). Peterson and Seligman (2004) described a scheme of 24-character strengths categorized under six main virtues which are necessary for life's tasks and survival. Thomas Lickona (2004) mentions ten essential character qualities: wisdom, justice, fortitude, self-control, love, a positive attitude, hard work, integrity, gratitude, and humility. Likewise, the training and discipline on good manners and personality development also focus on love of God and others, justice and peace, environmental stewardship, service, leadership, forgiveness and non-violence. It adheres to a holistic approach that integrates character development in every aspect of school life (Fatoni, A., 2017). Indeed, there is a need to inculcate among students the social and emotional skills and values of peace, truth and right conduct, compassion, integrity, non-violence, respect for human life and dignity, self-confidence and a sense of belonging, love and care of mother earth, and responsible citizenship (UGC, 2003; Schleicher and Piacentini, 2017).

Purpose and Statement of the Problem

This study is aimed to determine the character and service dimensions of global competencies, and for the integration of character education and service learning in school. Specifically, it is designed to:

1. identify the character and service traits of globally-competent individuals in terms of knowledge, values, skills, and behavior, as perceived and ranked in order of importance by the respondents who are students, teachers, administrators, and professionals;
2. assess the significant differences in the character and service traits based on the rank by order of importance given by the respondents, and
3. determine the strategies that facilitate the integration of character education and service learning in the 21st century education.

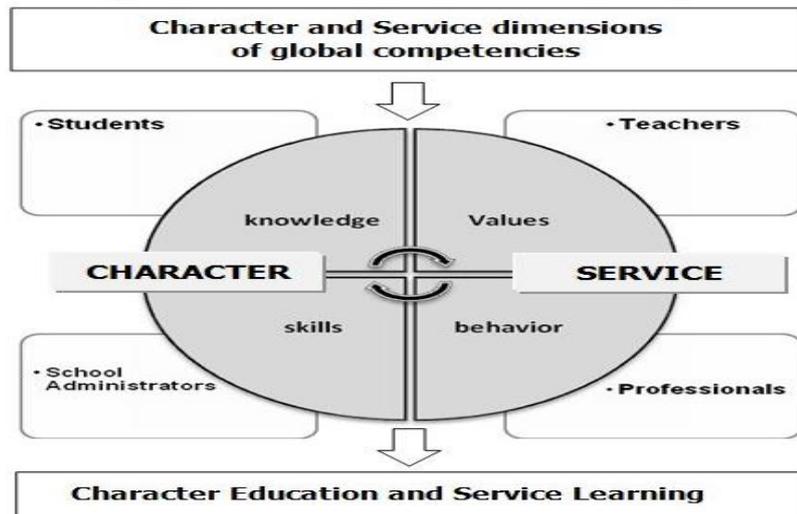
Methodology

A researcher-made survey instrument was used to gather data on perceived character and service traits of globally-competent individuals in terms of knowledge, values, skills, and behavior. The 563 respondents were a cross-sectional sample of college students, teachers, school administrators, and professionals in the fields of business, arts and sciences. The Kruskal-Wallis Test sometimes also called the "one-way ANOVA on ranks" was used for significant difference in the respondents' order of importance as to character and service traits, and the strategies and learning environment to facilitate the integration of character education and service learning in school. The survey was done through face-to-face and online. Focus group discussions and interviews were also conducted.

Framework of the Study

Figure 1 delineates the framework of the study. There were three stages involved: 1) the determination of the character and service dimensions of global competencies; 2) the assessment of the perceived order of importance of character and service traits in terms of knowledge, values, skills, and behavior, and 3) the determination of strategies and learning environment for integrating character education and service learning in 21st century education. Accordingly, the character and service dimensions of global competencies were identified and suggested by the respondents through survey and focus group discussions. Then, the common character and service traits were categorized by the researcher in terms of knowledge, values, skills, and behavior. Through face-to-face and online survey, interviews, and focus group discussions, the respondents who are composed of students, teachers, administrators, and professionals, chose five out of ten character and service traits per category and ranked these traits from 1-5, with 1 as the highest, based on their perceived order of importance. Also, the respondents chose ten out of twenty strategies that facilitate the integration of character education and service learning in the 21st century education. These strategies were ranked by the respondents from 1-10, with 1 as the highest, based on their perceived order of importance.

Figure 1. Framework of the Study



Results and Discussion

The respondents are familiar with global education and 21st century learning. Table 1 shows the profile of the 563 respondents, to wit: 57.37% are students, 16.70% are teachers, 4.44% are administrators, and 21.49% are professionals in the fields of business, arts and sciences.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of the type of participants

Type of Participant	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher	94	16.70
Administrator	25	4.44
Student	323	57.37
Professional	121	21.49
Total	563	100.00

From a list of 120 traits and qualities, the respondents identified the character and service traits which they perceived as important aspects of global competencies. Tables 2-5 show the traits that registered high frequency as ranked by the respondents by order of importance and categorized under knowledge, values, skills, and behavior. Also indicated is the overall ranking and test of significant difference in the ranking of the character and service traits by the four groups of respondents, namely: teachers, administrators, students, and professionals.

In the knowledge category, as reflected in Table 2, the overall top five character and service traits considered as important by the respondents are: 1) mindful of what is right and wrong; 2) awareness of local and global issues; 3) learning new ideas, language, and places; 4) understanding diversity of people and culture, and 5) interdisciplinary and international worldview. The orders of importance of the traits based on the rank differ significantly among the respondents, except for "awareness of local and global issues" and "learning new ideas, language, and places." The teachers consider as an important character and service trait, "ethical principles and convictions in life and work," while the group of professionals put importance on being "open-minded and having positive outlook." It is interesting to note that in the era of globalization and technology-driven education in the 21st century, the teachers, administrators, and students think that the most important character and service trait in global competence in terms of

knowledge is being “mindful of what is right and wrong.” This reveals a high sense of conscientiousness and moral disposition. Gus Lee (2014) considers discernment as the first competence of character. As discernment is moral reasoning, then it involves doing the highest right and listening to conscience. In character development, there is an intrinsic value in having a “discerning mind and heart” to choose what is right, moral, and ethical in the context of life’s complexities.

Table 2. Test for significance in the respondents’ order of importance as to character and service traits pertaining to knowledge

CHARACTER and SERVICE Trait – Knowledge	Teacher		Admin		Student		Prof		Overall		χ^2	P-value
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
1. Awareness of local and global issues	2.71	4	2.25	3	2.28	2	2.07	1	2.26	2	5.862	0.119
2. Mindful of what is right and wrong	1.32	1	1.24	1	1.64	1	3.20	6	1.73	1	83.647	0.001*
3. Understanding diversity of people and culture	2.70	3	2.13	2	2.44	4	3.11	5	2.64	4	20.137	0.001*
4. Learning new ideas, language, and places	2.36	2	2.50	4	2.43	3	2.59	3	2.46	3	1.344	0.719
5. Open-minded and positive outlook	4.07	8	4.75	10	3.52	6	2.71	4	3.37	6	23.970	0.001*
6. Interdisciplinary and international worldview	3.64	6	3.43	5	3.14	5	2.25	2	2.94	5	36.719	0.001*
7. Understanding of globalization and internationalization	4.16	9	4.53	8	3.87	8	4.56	9	4.06	9	31.359	0.001*
8. Comprehension of cultural diversity	4.19	10	4.57	9	3.79	7	3.31	7	3.81	7	19.762	0.001*
9. Know the essential things in life	3.82	7	4.29	7	4.79	10	4.00	8	4.45	10	34.112	0.001*
10. Ethical principles and convictions in life and work	3.51	5	3.87	6	4.24	9	4.69	10	4.06	8	47.336	0.001*

*Significant at 0.05 level

As shown in Table 3, the respondents consider as overall top five important character and service traits as to values the following: 1) respect for life and human dignity; 2) charity and compassion; 3) God-fearing and upright; 4) empathy and responsiveness, and 5) acceptance of individual and cultural differences. Apparently, the teachers, administrators, and students have similarly ranked as first and second, respectively, the values of “respect for life and human dignity” and “charity and compassion.” They also consider “honesty and integrity” as an important trait. On the other hand, the professionals think that being “God-fearing and upright” is the most important value. There is significant difference in the ranking of the traits by order of importance, except for “honesty and integrity.” The values chosen by the respondents affirm the universal mandate and global advocacy to protect life and uphold the dignity of the human person, to promote peace and unity through charity and empathy despite diversity, and to seek spirituality beyond materialism.

Table 3. Test for significance in the respondents’ order of importance as to character and service traits pertaining to values

CHARACTER and SERVICE Trait - Values	Teacher		Admin		Student		Prof		Overall		χ^2	P-value
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
1. Respect for life and human dignity	1.75	1	1.35	1	1.68	1	2.32	3	1.82	1	45.786	0.001*
2. Charity and compassion	2.00	2	2.1	2	2.00	2	2.85	5	2.11	2	13.720	0.003*
3. Empathy and responsiveness	2.98	4	3.45	7	2.34	3	2.31	2	2.56	4	22.939	0.001*
4. Acceptance of individual and cultural differences	3.61	7	3.29	5	3.18	6	2.8	4	3.14	5	11.010	0.012*
5. God-fearing and upright	2.30	3	2.14	3	2.76	4	2.01	1	2.50	3	21.217	0.001*
6. Honesty and integrity	3.33	5	3.28	4	3.16	5	3.58	7	3.25	6	4.301	0.231
7. Responsible citizenship	3.38	6	3.33	6	4.35	7	2.93	6	3.77	7	97.821	0.001*
8. Uphold the sustainable development goals	4.69	10	4.75	10	4.68	9	4.36	8	4.52	10	10.404	0.015*
9. Care for people and environment	3.88	8	4.17	8	4.47	8	4.55	9	4.32	8	11.549	0.009*
10. Justice and peace for people and nations	4.17	9	4.18	9	4.69	10	-	-	4.48	9	17.409	0.001*

*Significant at 0.05 level

In Table 4, the respondents have chosen as five topmost character and service traits pertaining to global skills the following: 1) critical thinking and problem-solving; 2) creativity and innovation; 3) collaboration and teamwork; 4) communicating tactfully, truthfully, and sincerely, and 5) interpersonal skills. These skills are aligned with the 21st century skills pointed out by several authors and educators (Miller, B., 2015; Anderson, M., 2017). In addition, the administrators consider “leadership” and “resiliency” as important traits in global competencies. Moreover, “entrepreneurship” and “resource mobilization and sustainability” are considered as important by the students and professionals, respectively. Except for “risk management,” there is significant difference in the respondents’ order of importance or ranking of the traits.

Table 4. Test for significance in the respondents’ order of importance as to character and service traits pertaining to skills

CHARACTER and SERVICE Trait - Skill	Teacher		Admin		Student		Prof		Overall		χ^2	P-value
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
1. Collaboration and Teamwork	1.32	1	1.50	2	2.89	3	4.00	7	2.21	3	59.940	0.001*
2. Creativity and Innovation	1.47	2	1.20	1	1.98	2	2.46	3	2.05	2	44.981	0.001*
3. Critical thinking and Problem-solving	2.60	4	3.33	6	1.56	1	2.33	2	1.87	1	48.874	0.001*
4. Communicating tactfully, truthfully, and sincerely	2.39	3	2.04	3	3.07	5	2.20	1	2.35	4	10.877	0.012*
5. Interpersonal skills	3.10	5	3.42	7	3.39	6	3.80	6	3.36	5	9.709	0.021*
6. Risk management	3.28	6	3.08	6	3.64	7	3.25	5	3.42	7	4.839	0.184
7. Entrepreneurship	4.14	9	4.06	8	2.97	4	4.29	9	3.38	6	81.091	0.001*
8. Resource mobilization and sustainability	4.29	10	4.35	9	4.27	8	3.11	4	4.10	8	33.060	0.001*
9. Leadership	3.44	8	2.75	4	4.44	9	4.33	10	4.35	10	18.158	0.001*
10. Resiliency	3.42	7	2.75	4	4.57	10	4.04	8	4.13	9	41.690	0.001*

*Significant at 0.05 level

The behavioral character and service traits ranked as five most important by the respondents, as shown in Table 5, include the following: 1) friendly and approachable; 2) just and fair in dealing with people; 3) self-discipline and good manners; 4) loving and caring, and 5) no bias and stereotyping. The students also consider it as important in global competence to “adapt easily to change, people, places, and environment” and to be “interactive and pro-active.” On the other hand, the professionals deem it as important to “exhibit inter-cultural and inter-religious sensitivity and tolerance.” The order of importance to the traits as perceived by the respondents show significant difference in all except for “self-discipline and good manners.” This implies that even in our contemporary times of highly wired transactions, people still put high premium on personal interactions and connectivity.

Apparently, the top traits put emphasis on equality, interculturality, adaptability, inter-faith dialogue, interconnectivity, and non-judgmental approach in relating with diverse people. In principle, this confronts the challenging issues of race, ethnicity, gender, cultural and religious differences, social justice, equity and access to education and opportunities (Zajda, J. & Freeman, K., 2009). Policy imperatives geared towards transformative education target optimum access to education and service without prejudice to race, ethnicity, culture, gender, religious beliefs, political affiliation, and social status. Accentuated by globalization, in the school environment with plurality and diversity of learners, exclusion and bullying can happen from various forces and dynamics like ethnocentricity, racial prejudice, gender bias, religious bigotry, cultural differences, learning disabilities, or simply peer pressure to conform towards certain group norms. That is why, it is necessary to foster mutual respect and community spirit among students of different nationalities and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. A sense of belongingness to the institutional and global community and openness towards cultural and religious differences can buffer racial, ethnic, and gender issues.

Table 5. Test for significance in the respondents' order of importance as to character and service traits pertaining to behavior

CHARACTER and SERVICE Trait - Behavior	Teacher		Admin		Student		Prof		Overall		χ^2	P-value
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
1. Loving and caring	2.71	4	2.00	1	4.00	8	-	-	3.25	4	6.937	0.031*
2. Just and fair in dealing with people	1.83	1	2.05	2	2.11	2	2.28	1	2.10	2	19.856	0.001*
3. Friendly and approachable	2.68	2	2.90	5	1.60	1	2.43	2	1.89	1	54.831	0.001*
4. Self-discipline and good manners	2.69	3	2.65	3	2.85	3	2.79	4	2.81	3	4.041	0.257
5. No bias and stereotyping	3.02	5	2.89	4	3.99	7	2.56	3	3.35	5	69.978	0.001*
6. Adapt easily to change, people, places and environment	3.48	6	3.90	9	2.92	4	4.05	7	3.41	6	40.296	0.001*
7. Kind and forgiving	4.08	8	3.00	6	3.65	6	4.16	8	3.76	7	13.287	0.004*
8. Exhibit inter-cultural and inter-religious sensitivity and tolerance	4.29	10	4.44	10	4.66	10	2.99	5	4.22	9	90.466	0.001*
9. Self-confident and purpose-driven	3.74	7	3.60	7	4.57	9	4.37	9	4.36	10	20.385	0.001*
10. Interactive and pro-active	4.28	9	3.80	8	3.63	5	3.25	6	3.78	8	14.353	0.002*

*Significant at 0.05 level

Global education becomes more relevant and holistic when enriched with character and service components. To develop the traits which are perceived by the respondents as important dimensions of global competencies in terms of knowledge, values, skills, and behavior, then it is good to incorporate character education and service learning. Shown in Table 10 are the strategies and learning environment identified and ranked by the respondents to facilitate the integration of character education and service learning in school. Accordingly, the following are included in the overall top ten: 1) blend the physical and digital learning environment; 2) integrate character education in curriculum and instruction; 3) reinforce good manners in school with positive recognition; 4) incorporate service learning in curriculum and instruction; 5) partner with parents and the community in the character formation of students; 6) involve the students, faculty and parents in community outreach services; 7) values must be taught and exemplified by teachers and parents in school and at home; 8) teach ethical use of social media and digital citizenship; 9) story telling with moral values for kids, and 10) design a learning environment conducive towards character formation and service learning. The students also deem it important to "encourage servant leadership and community extension services." On the part of the professionals, they perceive as important, too, to have "project-based learning on social problems in the community" and "learning activities and group discussion on character-building stories and examples." The respondents' order of importance as to the strategies reveals significant differences; however, the difference is not significant in the following: "incorporate service learning in curriculum and instruction", "socio-cultural activities to promote social graces and interpersonal skills", "journal writing on experiences of developing and nurturing values and virtues", "learning activities and group discussion on character-building stories and examples", and "story-telling with moral values for kids", and "visit to poor and depressed areas." The ten topmost strategies provide a clear roadmap to embed character education and service learning in 21st century education. Likewise, the importance of character and service is affirmed in the multi-dimensional process of education to prepare students for a global society.

Table 6. Test for significant difference in the respondents' order of importance as to strategies and learning environment that facilitate the integration of character education and service learning in school

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STRATEGIES and LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Teacher		Admin		Student		Prof		Overall		χ^2	P-value
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank		
1. Integrate character education in curriculum and instruction	1.22	1	1.43	1	2.09	3	2.21	1	1.95	2	82.5640	0.001*
2. Reinforce good manners in school with positive recognition	2.79	2	2.72	3	1.89	2	2.36	2	2.44	3	12.4640	0.006*
3. Blend the physical and digital learning environment	5.18	4	3.00	4	1.59	1	2.40	3	1.89	1	39.9000	0.001*
4. Incorporate service learning in curriculum and instruction	2.89	3	2.68	2	2.73	4	2.56	4	2.71	4	6.033	0.110
5. Partner with parents and the community in the character formation of students	5.80	7	5.25	7	3.57	5	4.12	5	4.27	5	55.9210	0.001*
6. Involve the students, faculty and parents in community outreach services	5.48	5	6.06	9	5.70	6	4.65	6	5.37	6	13.4150	0.004*
7. Design a learning environment conducive towards character formation and service learning	5.94	9	6.38	10	6.29	8	8.48	19	6.83	10	72.9220	0.001*
8. Teach ethical use of social media and digital citizenship	5.86	8	4.58	5	6.47	10	7.31	12	6.44	8	40.1660	0.001*
9. Values must be taught and exemplified by teachers and parents in school and at home	5.97	10	5.00	6	5.96	7	7.27	10	6.16	7	46.3750	0.001*
10. Immersion and exposure of students to poor and marginal communities	6.65	12	7.60	13	6.78	11	7.48	13	6.88	11	26.4610	0.001*
11. Project-based learning on social problems in the community	7.18	13	8.65	17	8.72	17	6.70	8	8.33	19	51.8390	0.001*
12. Socio-cultural activities to promote social graces and interpersonal skills	7.56	14	7.64	14	7.80	14	7.87	15	7.77	16	2.533	0.469
13. Journal writing on experiences of developing and nurturing values and virtues	7.87	16	7.08	11	8.20	15	8.41	18	8.10	18	1.422	0.700
14. Learning activities and group discussion on character-building stories and examples	7.57	15	8.25	15	7.23	12	6.94	9	7.27	13	1.297	0.730
15. Encourage servant leadership and community extension services	8.16	17	9.17	18	6.36	9	7.30	11	7.09	12	25.962	0.001*
16. Apply what is learned in the classroom in community-based activities	8.35	18	7.38	12	7.51	13	8.07	17	7.83	17	9.835	0.020*
17. Embed character formation in school activities	9.40	19	8.50	16	8.54	16	6.56	7	7.60	14	25.5910	0.001*
18. Story-telling with moral values for kids	5.80	7	6.00	8	-	-	8.00	16	6.82	9	3.270	0.195
19. Visit to poor and depressed areas	6.00	11	-	-	-	-	7.65	14	7.61	15	1.052	0.305
20. Video and film viewing on local and global problems and issues	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Significant at 0.05 level

Conclusion and Recommendation

The traits identified and ranked by the respondents in this study constitute the character and service dimensions of global competencies for 21st century learning. Gauged from the topmost traits in terms of knowledge, values, skills, and behavior, it is justifiable to uphold the relevance of character and service in a global society. To be mindful of what is right and wrong calls for discernment and signifies a solid moral foundation as well as direction for dealing with local and global issues, expanding perspectives and learn new ideas and language, understanding the diversity of people and cultures, developing an interdisciplinary and international worldview, being open-minded and positive about globalization, and recognizing the role of ethnicity and gender in inclusive education. Apparently, there is affirmation of the universal values of respect for life and human dignity, charity and compassion, empathy and responsiveness, acceptance of individual and cultural differences, honesty and integrity,

responsible citizenship, care for people and environment, justice and peace, and sustainability. It is noteworthy that spirituality is highlighted by the top rank accorded to being “God-fearing and upright.” The 21st century skills are perceived as important and essential, to wit: critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, collaboration and teamwork, communication, interpersonal skills, entrepreneurship, leadership, resiliency, risk management, resource mobilization and sustainability. The behavioral character and service traits considered as important in global competence can truly foster interculturality, interconnectivity, inter-faith dialogue, equity and social justice, fellowship and peace among peoples and nations. Accordingly, these traits emphasize interactions and relationships that are open, friendly, equitable, loving, flexible, positive, respectful of cultural differences and religious beliefs, non-judgmental, non-discriminatory, kind, and forgiving.

This study also came up with relevant strategies and learning environment that can facilitate the integration of character education and service learning in the curriculum and instruction, and in co-curricular and community outreach activities of the school. Partnership with parents, teachers, community, and other stakeholders is highly encouraged. The blending of physical and digital, as well as the ethical use of social media can provide a conducive learning environment, especially for millennials.

The findings resonate significant implications for educational leaders, managers and policy makers, particularly, in ensuring a meaningful education anchored not only on academic excellence and gainful employment after graduation but mostly in forming good character to lead purposeful, productive and fulfilling life. School policies and pedagogical designs must promote holistic learning and character development. We need competence in character and service to build a safe, decent and just society (Lickona, T. 2004). Character can shape the destiny of the person which in turn can influence the whole society. Indeed, character matters in the full development of the person to attain success in life and career, especially in the highly globalized and technologically-driven society that we have today. After all, the true flourishing of educating the young can be gauged by the quality of character and virtues that they ultimately become.

The locale of this study is set in a provincial university with a newly launched internationalization program. It contends with some limitations such as lack of impact evaluation of the character formation provided to students; local faculty and students are still beginning to grasp the nature and effects of global education; and inter-generational gap among millennial students and traditionalist faculty regarding the relevant dimensions of global competencies. It is thereby recommended as a direction for further research that the study can be replicated with a more extensive sample and additional variables.

Moreover, the results can be the basis to enhance an existing program on character and service formation in school. Likewise, the study can serve as springboard of further research, particularly, in the development of a program on character education and service learning based on the character and service traits highly considered as important in global competencies. Moreover, it is interesting to implement the strategies and learning environment and assess the impact of the integration of character education and service learning in global education.

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