Service-Learning, Spiritual Orientation, and Social Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of the Vikings Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura

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INTRODUCTION

As the digital age transforms the nature of work and re-structures our communities, educators are faced with the dual problem of teaching students to be the best performing employees in today's extremely competitive economy while also instilling spiritual values that help in creating a humane society for all. Service-learning is viewed as a means of moral development and appreciation of the links between public participation and spirituality. According to Dalton (2006), Civic engagement is crucial to many higher educational institutes all around the world where he saw service learning as an opportunity for moral development and for appreciating the links between civic engagement and spirituality. Thus, Service-learning is a course-related educational technique that uses experiential education to teach the students about citizenship, academic subjects, skills as well as values.

There is a knowledge gap in understanding the contribution of a student-led club that encourages the spiritual growth of the individuals through service learning. Currently, there is no research conducted on understanding the role of the student led clubs in supporting learning and changing the members internally for a better world.

Student-led clubs and associations that pursue to improve entrepreneurial learning can be found in several universities. However, only the Vikings Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura and the Vikings Club of the University of Colombo support Social Entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka. As

service-learning is mainly a way of experiential learning, where the lessons are drawn from the experience of performing a service activity that meets community needs, the impact of the Viking Club on a student's level of service learning would be critical to unearth.

There are two purposes for this research. Firstly, this paper reports on a research that addresses the existing gap regarding the impact of a student-lead organization dedicated to the advancement of social entrepreneurship and investigates the degree of influence that the students' participation in the club's student projects have on their attitude and/or behaviour towards civic engagement during their professional careers.

The purpose of this research is to investigate how a student-lead social entrepreneurship club impacts the student's appreciation of spiritual aspects of life and entrepreneurship. Linking spiritual values with entrepreneurship is of greater importance as it has been neglected by scholars. Secondly, it also explores whether this simulates vital facets of social entrepreneurial learning such as satisfying a social reason, working for the society, financial and economic sustainability and achieving them with happiness (Dey & Teasdale, 2013).

RO01: To assess the effectiveness of Service learning in simulating vital aspects of social entrepreneurial learning.

RO02: To understand the contribution of the Vikings Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in enhancing the spiritual growth of a potential social entrepreneur through service-learning aspects.

As one of the first detailed research studies on social entrepreneurship clubs, the paper also reports on steering vision and objectives, the various club activities, the role of the club under the literature review and the students' motives for participating in them under the findings. Thus, the final outcome of that discussion is expected to facilitate answers to the below research questions.

RQ01: How effective is service learning in improving the vital aspects of social entrepreneurial learning?

RQ02: What is the contribution of the Vikings Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in enhancing the spiritual growth of a potential social entrepreneur through service-learning aspects?

This paper is divided into four sections; literature review, methodology, findings, discussion of findings, conclusion and summary. The literature section covers significant research in the fields of service learning, spiritual orientation and social entrepreneurial; the methodology section explains the in-depth interview process and autoethnography; the findings section provides an organized report of the in-depth interviews and autoethnography, the discussion of findings section provides an analysis of the key findings of the study followed by the conclusion of the paper and suggestions for future research directions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review covers five different domains, each of which are believed to be interconnected: Service-Learning, Spiritual Orientation, Spiritual Transformation, Social Entrepreneurship and Student clubs.

Service-Learning

According to Jacoby (1996), Service Learning (SL) is defined as "A form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service-learning" (p.5). Accordingly, it is clear that service-learning includes a service experience followed by critical reflection upon the experience as a means to facilitate learning.

SL has bloomed in the arena of education evidencing its usefulness concerning academic results and relative to social commitment which is further supported by their findings that confirm that the SL approach has a remarkable impact on students' evaluations of their own learning processes (Gomez-Estern , Arias-Sánchez, Macarro, Romero, & Lozano, 2021). The tasks led by students must be motivated by community-defined needs with the aim of building reciprocal connections in the process. Attention in this research is on a service-learning experience that strives to incorporate the following concepts: (1) Spiritual Orientation, (2) **Spirituality,** (3) **Social Entrepreneurship.**

Spiritual Orientation

An additional outcome of service-learning is the dependence of spirituality for a given spiritual orientation. Spirituality means diverse things to individuals depending upon their spiritual orientation.

Being spiritual is all about being human in full and about connecting all the energies that are integral parts of us. It is also about linking with the life force that defines us and integrates us together (Moxley, 1999).

Similarly, Hamilton and Jackson (1998) argued that spirituality consists of three key themes: the further growth of self-awareness; the sense of interconnectedness of all; and the association between the "higher power" or the "higher purpose."

The third theme does not essentially suggest a deity even though it definitely could. Either way, for Hamilton and Jackson, spirituality meant the connection to something greater than oneself, such as a higher purpose to serve a local community or a global community as well as a deity.

Spiritual Orientation (SO) has been conceptualized as the self-perceived spiritual knowledge, skills and attitude that effect one's capacity to stem meaning and purpose, from both work and life (Singh & Premarajan, 2007). Thus, SO is facilitating a strengthening belief system that consist of **Spiritual**

attitude which is having a positive opinion, thinking outside the apparent and having a feeling of inner peace, **Spiritual knowledge** which is being close to oneself knowing the various needs of others and understanding that everything is influenced by everything else, and **Spiritual skill** which is the capacity to exercise spirituality well, the capacity to live in the present moment and the capability to get responsibilities (Singh & Premarajan, 2007).

Dimensions of Spiritual Orientation

Built on the theories and definitions of spirituality specified by numerous authors, the below dimensions of spiritual orientation are acknowledged for the present study:

(1) Self-awareness

Self-awareness is knowing oneself, what he or she believes in or for what matters do they fight (Singh & Premarajan, 2007).

(2) Inter-connectedness

Inter-connectedness is viewed as an expression of oneness where everything is a part of everything else (Singh & Premarajan, 2007). Service-learning delivers a chance to feel the interconnectedness, an opportunity for "opening your heart," and the enlargement of self-inquiry as well as self-knowledge (Louie-Badua & Wolf, 2008).

(3) Respect for others

Respect for others consists of the personal privacy, physical space along with the belongingness, religious believes, gender and lifestyles (Singh & Premarajan, 2007).

(4) Feeling of inner peace

One must feel happy with self, environment, work and others while having no complaint with life and feel positive about life in order to live with peace of mind (Singh & Premarajan, 2007).

(5) Service towards humankind

The Service towards humankind accounts for caring, being hopeful, kind, considerate, compassionate and empathetic for other beings along with the ability to walk in the neighbour's shoes (Singh & Premarajan, 2007).

(6) Being vision and value led

It is the attainment beyond or partaking a sense that things could be well and better (Singh & Premarajan, 2007).

Spiritual Transformation

A basic part of spirituality is a connection between the self and others. This connection between the self and others, however, is not static; it frequently entails passing through a sequence of increasingly complicated and dynamic encounters. It was believed that spiritual formation occurs in five formative phases; unknown, awareness, connection, radicalization, and integration, based on the basic constructs

of developmental models described by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986), Perry (1970), Kegan (1994), and Yates and Youness (1997).

Phase 1 - Unknown: A prerequisite or a static phase of the **unknown**. This means individuals lack or have no *self-awareness*. The individual is unaware of or doubtful of her own personality, values or purpose at this point. Likewise, the person is unaware of or has no knowledge of "the other" outside of themselves. In an unknown situation, "the other" is a person and, in some cases, a geographical location that causes the student to depart her comfort zone as well as learn new things about herself and her role in the society (Cousins, 2006).

Phase 2 - Awareness: The person is engrossed in one's own world, oblivious to its contents and to the larger world beyond self-existence. The individual eventually progresses to a second phase in which she has **awareness** of both her sense of self and the presence of something or someone beyond one's own existence; in this state, the self and the "other" coexist yet do not interact. The image of two sports teams warming up on their respective parts of the playing field might be used to symbolize this awareness phase. Each team completes drills independently, without regard for what the other team is doing. Awareness supports shoulders witnessing the *feeling of inner peace.*

Phase3 - Connection: When there is a **connection** between the self and the "other," the next step begins. When two sports teams compete against each other which accounts for *Inter-connectedness*. When the competition progresses, each team begins to understand the significance of their participation in the game. Reflection is a common part of the dynamic process of making a connection in order to construct a meaning.

As fresh insights emerge from this introspective experience of connecting self with the "other", each individual is transformed. These new insights frequently lead, but not always, to transformation as the "me" acknowledges its connection to something and someone else, resulting in a shift from "me-ness" to "we-ness." The individual still maintains a personal identity at this point, but it has been altered. A shift in, or even a challenge to, attitudes, values or beliefs may be part of the transition. It could also entail a shift in perception and knowledge of the "other." Such transformation develops the *Respect for others.*

Phase 4 - Radicalization: The interpretation derived from the Connection leads to the next stage of **radicalization** which manifests itself in a shift in conduct. Radicalization transforms a person's life by encouraging them to embrace and participate in new ways such as helping people in need and advocating for a greater cause which accounts for the spiritual dimension *Service towards humankind*. Before, a person who understands her responsibility as a global citizen may avoid purchasing particular things due to the negative influence they may have, instead opting for more socially or environmentally friendly alternatives that help others and the greater good indirectly. This phase

requires the individual to leave their comfort zone, a long-held perspective or assumption, in order to take on by becoming something novel. To be radicalized means to become more zealous, ardent and dedicated to a cause.

Phase 5: **Integration** is the ultimate phase, in which the self envelops the other by abandoning some parts of individuality in order to become a part of something broader than it could be on its own. With regards to the sports, the individual athlete becomes a fully integrated member of the team. The self is still there, but it becomes a part of something else. This phase asks the person to leave their comfort zone, a long-held viewpoint or assumption, in order to take on the challenge of becoming something new.

Business organizations that were previously viewed as rational systems seeking for profit are now considered as creating room for the spiritual aspects, an aspect that has a lesser extent to do with rules and order and kept purpose, meaning, and the sense of community at the centre of focus (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

Spirituality is stepping into the business organisations, and business organizations are turning inward in search of a "soul" as a mode to drive creativity and to inspire leaders (Michele & Karen, 1995). Progressively, the well-educated new generations of employees are asserting that their spirituality be greeted in the office just as their intellect is (Smith, 2002). The employees' activities are no longer driven by the low-level requirements; they are looking forward for a developed order in need of self-fulfilment. Thus, the organizations want to have a setting that nurtures the growth of the human spirit in order to thrive.

Social Entrepreneurship

Social entrepreneurship (SE) is an emerging field of investigation within the entrepreneurship and not-for-profit marketing literatures (Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). Social Entrepreneurship is an innovative and a social value creating action that occurs within or across the non-profit, profit oriented, and the public sectors (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei–Skillern, 2006)**.** The first main component to highlight is the innovativeness. Entrepreneurship is a creative process that searches for opportunities to generate something new. The second major aspect is the social value creation which is a basic dimension differentiating SE from the commercial entrepreneurship.

Student Clubs

A student club is defined as an independent group of students that gather on a regular basis with the goal of enhancing their own learning on a specific topic or theme. Student clubs have a lengthy history, including student clubs at Oxford and Cambridge universities have been documented since at least 1729. Professional honour societies, subject-specific clubs (e.g., investment), and expert interests are only some of the possibilities for student groups (e.g., Chinese business). They also participate in

a variety of events that are dependent on the club's specific objective, such as guest lectures, seminar series, panel discussions, network meetings and competitions. (Cox & Goff, 1996).

The Vikings Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura

The Vikings Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura is a student club established by a group of undergraduates in the year of 2018 with the primary idea developed by Dulaj Udayanga (Jpura Vikings, 2019) with the steering vision of "Solving social problems in Sri Lanka through entrepreneurship". It is a student club that focuses on fostering social entrepreneurs and corporate social responsibility with the application of service learning.

"E.S. Wickramasekara, one of the authors and whose autoethnography is used in the data collection, was a founder member of the club and was also a former Vice President who was involved in the recruitment process along with the ideation and implementation of major social movements that were undertaken by the club.

Table 1:The Vision, Mission and the Objectives of the club

Vision	"Solving social problems in Sri Lanka through entrepreneurship"
Mission	"Creating the best 100 Social Entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka whilst fostering their benevolence and innovative spirit hence promoting Social Entrepreneurship globally"
Objectives	To nurture confident and responsible social entrepreneurs with a positive mind-set. To provide continuous mutual assistance to those interested in starting their own business. To give members exposure to the practical business world and consequently develop their business insights.

Source: (Jpura Vikings, 2019)

The corporate social responsibility movements of the club

There are a number of CSR movements the club organizes and conducts with the participation of the members of the club as reviewed under Table 2.

Table 2:The CSR movements of the club

The event	Description
	Walk of Mercy is organized to teach fellow Vikings well about the

Walk of Mercy	importance of humanity over material possessions in life, and as privileged members of the society, to educate and give them better opportunities to engage in community services to help the underprivileged. The Vikings continue visiting them following this first movement.
Medical Camp (Kruthaguna)	Vikings were able to undertake a health campaign for the sanitary workers at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in partnership with the Ministry of Health, Nutrition, and Indigenous Medicine. The University's sanitary staff members were able to have their physical diseases diagnosed as well as their blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol levels checked by general practitioner doctors and nurses. With the second installment of the Kruthaguna series, the Vikings were able to undertake an eye check-up campaign for the sanitary workers at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura thanks to a collaboration with the Sri Lanka Eye Donation Society. The Vikings continue kruthaguna following these first two movements.
Christmas with Kind souls	The Vikings spent the 24th of December celebrating Christmas with the patients and staff at Apeksha Hospital in Maharagama. Vikings managed to teach the world the true essence of Christmas. Vikings spent the day entertaining the residents of Apeksha Hospital, making it a cheerful Christmas evening. The Vikings continue visiting them following this first movement.

Source: (Jpura Vikings, 2019)

METHODOLOGY

The study's philosophical assumptions are based on the interpretive research paradigm which includes a subjective epistemology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) indicating that both the researcher and the respondents co-create knowledge as well as an ontological belief that emphasizes reality as socially produced. The interpretivism paradigm requires the researcher to inductively generate a theory (Creswell, 2012). As a result, the current study is an exploratory study using an inductive methodology.

The snowballing sample strategy was used in this study which entails selecting several 'information-rich" respondents (Patton, 2002). In line with this approach, 20 in-depth interviews were conducted with the selected members from the Vikings Club of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. The first

five respondents were solicited through the researcher's personal network and the rest were referred by those selected respondents. It was relevant because the researcher herself as a former vice president and an initiative member of the club had engaged in several social activities and therefore the respondents were personally known by the researcher.

One of the researcher's own autoethnographies was the very first instrument used to comprehend the other respondents' personal stories about their experiences and motivation to engage in the activities of the club. Telling the researcher's personal story made one reflects on her transformation that took place with the active participation in the club. Autoethnographies range from research regarding personal experiences of the respective research process in parallel exploration of the researcher's and the respondents' involvements and about the experience of the researcher while conducting precise research (Carolyn & Arthur , 2000).

As one of the researchers changed within her stay at the Vikings club, the identification of the main themes through the author's personal experiences made it easier to understand the respondents' stories. To reduce the biasness, all the interviews were conducted by two of the authors. All the interviews were analysed together with the supervisory authors.

As the study progressed, the researcher became aware of new potential respondents both those recommended by the first participants and those referred by others. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), the two basic types of data generation in qualitative investigations are in-depth interviews and group discussions. Respondents are able to provide extensive responses to complex situations when they are interviewed (Bowling, 2002) and thus the study used interviews. Semi-structured interviews were used for data collection in this study due to their flexibility, which allowed the researchers to guide the interviews to get the essential data while also allowing them to ask additional questions to enrich the data being collected. The interview questions for the interview guide were then created whereas the interview guide was created prior to the interviews. The interview guide contains a set of questions that must be answered during the semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2012).

The respondents selected were the former and current members who have received meaningful experiences with respect to the topic of study and who possessed an open-minded understanding of it as well as who had both the willingness and capability to articulate their own experience.

The interviews were conducted using the zoom platform due to COVID-10 restrictions. The length of the interview reached a maximum of sixty minutes and it was initially communicated to the responders. The responders were also informed that the entire interview would be recorded which no respondent objected against. To prevent any language obstacles interviews were performed in both Sinhala and English. Face-to-face interviews through Zoom with video on were done with the participants. Interview recording was required as it helps to overcome the limitations of human memory and enables a more methodical analysis of the interviewee's responses. Furthermore,

recording allows the researcher to focus on and listen intently to the response as well as examine the expressions of the interviewee.

The twenty interviews were recorded on two smart phones and directly transcribed word for word once they were completed. Table 3 presents the profile of the twenty respondents.

Table 3: The Respondents' Profile

Pseudonyms	Age	Gender	Religion	Membership	Business
Respondent 01	24	Female	Buddhist	Former Executive Board Member	Wishes to become a lecturer
Respondent 02	23	Male	Buddhist	Director of Entrepreneurship	Organic fruits and vegetable delivery
Respondent 03	23	Male	Buddhist	Director Marketing, junior director board	Online and physical tuition classes on Geography
Respondent 04	24	Female	Buddhist	A member of the junior director board and assistant treasurer	Has started a business in designer ladies' shoes but currently inactive
Respondent 05	24	Female	Buddhist	Director of Events	Wishes to do a job first
Respondent 06	27	Male	Buddhist	A member of the junior director board	Wishes to become a lawyer
Respondent 07	22	Male	Buddhist	A member of the	Undergraduate

				junior director board	
Respondent 08	23	Male	Buddhist	President 2020-21	Hasn't started a business yet
Respondent 09	26	Female	Buddhist	Former vice president and an initiative member	Lecturer
Respondent 10	25	Female	Buddhist	A member of the director board	A clothing line
Respondent 11	24	Female	Buddhist	Former executive board member	Has two businesses on greeting?? cards and cakes.
Respondent 12	24	Male	Buddhist	A member of the director board and a former Webmaster	Wishes to start a business in the future
Respondent 13	23	Male	Buddhist	Webmaster 2020-21	Wishes to start a business in the future
Respondent 14	24	Female	Buddhist	Former Director of members relations	Wishes to start a business in the future
Respondent 15	27	Male	Buddhist	Founder	Owner of few businesses

Respondent 16	24	Female	Hinduist	Former executive board member	Wishes to start a business in the future
Respondent 17	24	Male	Buddhist	Former Director of members relations	Sells electronic appliances as a business with a partnership with suppliers from China
Respondent 18	24	Male	Buddhist	Former Director of members relations	Wishes to start a business in the future
Respondent 19	22	Male	Buddhist	Current member	Undergraduate
Respondent 20	25	Male	Buddhist	Former webmaster	Wishes to start a business in the future

Source: Author Compiled

Data Analysis: Constant Comparative Method and Thematic Analysis

Tesch (1990) considered comparing the main intellectual process that underpins all grounded theory analysis, where she adopted the viewpoint:

> "Comparison is the most important intellectual tool. During analysis, the approach of comparing and contrasting is employed for virtually all intellectual tasks: constructing categories, defining category boundaries, assigning segments to categories, evaluating the content of each category, and discovering negative evidence. The purpose is to find conceptual connections, improve the discriminative ability of categories, and find patterns." (Tesch,1990).

The constant comparative method (CCM) was used for analysing the interview data. It was helpful as a purposeful way and in reporting the researchers' own experiences which assured the traceability and credibility of data analysis (Tesch, 1990). The responses were compared with each respondent when entering into conclusions. The comparisons were conducted by all the authors through a meeting. Thus, the researcher knew beforehand the comparative steps needed in the analysis with respect to the aims, the questions asked and the responses. To overcome the difficulties and ambiguities of analysing qualitative data, the interview responses were re-written and revised multiple times until the meaning was clear.

There is no technique or prescription for recognising exactly which comparisons are a fertile source for advancing categories and a theoretical model. Making the correct choices along the process is based on the experience, creativity, knowledge, support, talents and sensitivity of the researcher (Tesch, 1990). The comparison was complex with the number of interviews to be analysed and also as the data was collected from one group of people who shared a similar experience. However, the comparisons had a very significant role to play in the research specially since it was a qualitative research.

The patterning of the collected data provided the answers to the research questions that were examined in the study. Also, premature results were needed such as codes, conceptual profiles, summaries and field notes. Accordingly, thematic analysis was used for the development of codes and themes.

Thematic Analysis

The data was analysed for the current study using Clarke and Braun's (2013) six-step data analysis technique which included familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, looking for themes, reviewing themes, defining and labelling the themes, and finally producing the report. To begin, all of the transcribes were read numerous times in order to become comfortable with the data and the process was simple due to the fact that the data had been collected by the researchers themselves.

Following that, firstly codes were generated. Coding is the process of identifying the portions of a data set that are linked to the research topic, and a code is a word or a short phrase (Clarke & Braun, 2013). The first development and assignment of codes resulted in a total of 100 codes on the list. The list was organized in a way that corresponded to the questions asked. All of the codes were then manually recorded on a single sheet for easy reference. The manual editing also made the revision process easier. Many phrases were broken down into subcodes under a single parental code because

they all fell under the same code. The search for themes began after the initial sorting of data was accomplished. A theme should be able to explain something relevant about the data and respond to research inquiries (Clarke & Braun, 2013). After the prospective themes were established, the final evaluation of the themes was completed accompanied by the defining and naming of the themes, and they were reported under the findings.

FINDINGS

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the effects of a service-learning experience on a student's spiritual orientation as measured by their membership in the Vikings club. The results of the thematic analysis related to the interviews conducted with the twenty members are staged in detail below and they provide supporting evidence of the themes and sub-themes emerged from the data collected.

Accordingly, it was found that active participation in the club simulates important growth of the spiritual orientation. Many insightful descriptions were presented by the participants during the data collection that would enable the understanding of how the acknowledged dimensions of spiritual orientation were changed and influenced during their stay in the club. Under the six steps of the thematic analysis, the themes namely Purpose of life, Self-awareness, Inter-connectedness, Respect for others, feeling of inner peace, Service towards humankind, being vision-and value-led, and Social Entrepreneurship were recognized.

Purpose of life; a dimension of Spiritual Orientation

In order to understand how the respondents have changed their understanding as to the purpose of their life. The question, "Do you see any difference now in how you define your life's purpose?" was asked in the beginning to understand how the respondents perceived life and its purpose before becoming a member of the club and finally, a question was asked to understand their current understanding of the purpose of life.

The respondent one who wishes to develop her career in the academic field as a lecturer reported,

> *"The majority of the people talk about sustainability but personally, they lack the social well-being component of it. I did my undergraduate research in corporate sustainability and ethics related to the field of marketing, because I know that is the solution. The health issues and most of the problems arise because the corporate sector is not providing accurate information. So, one day, I want to do something that will set an example for others. I know the club is promoting such ethical conducts and that is why I joined the club."*

She also stated,

> *"I have understood that the large multinational corporations in Sri Lanka along with its marketing function create unnecessary needs for the consumers. Knowledge and intelligence are two different things, and I see that the attitudes of the people are in a very low position currently in our country. So, I want to bring in sustainable and ethical ways of doing business and products one day"*

Also, respondent two who is currently operating his own business that delivers natural organic fruits and vegetables to the consumers reported,

> *"I think the purpose of life is to live a long life in a healthy way. I think a lot of people today have given more value to money, but money isn't the only thing that we need in life. Most of us today eat a lot of unhealthy food and it inspired me to start my business. I started my business after becoming a member of the club. I got to know members who were conducting research in the field of agriculture and who are working with the technology side of agriculture. I first started to learn about different plant types. I had little knowledge as I came from a village"*

According to the respondent's response of the data collected, it appears to suggest that respondents have highlighted slight changes (only two of the three respondents mentioned the club; one stated that she already had strong convictions before joining the club and the other stated that she started a business after becoming a member, but did not give any credit to the club for helping her to start her business. So, the author's interpretation of the three quotes is that none of the three respondents' attitudes, opinions or behaviour are influenced by the club. As stated in the footnote, it is great to know today's students have such high values, but none of the three quotes attribute their high values to the club.) in the way of perceiving and thereby living their life with meaning and purpose along with the membership of the club. It is evident that the respondents have had spiritually driven purposes in life before becoming a member of the club (this is an accurate interpretation of the responses), and during their stay (Stay where?) they have added more value to the purpose of their lives with much more meaning and spiritual values with a proper understanding and experience received by witnessing the social and community problems while engaging in the initiatives of the club.

Self-awareness; a dimension of Spiritual Orientation
Almost all the respondents showed greater self-awareness with respect to the transformative changes that have taken place in their life following the membership. Respondent five who claimed that she was able to bond with other members greatly reported,

> ***"I'm not usually getting inspired to help other people just because I feel that pain. But recently as one of our members and his whole family got infected by covid-19, the cap members got together, collected money and other essentials, but I didn't give money as all***

the other members have donated, but I got the feeling that I must help, and I think that is an improvement."

Inter-connectedness; a dimension of Spiritual Orientation

Respondent ten who intended to start a business even at the point of joining the club reported,

" I manage to get to know a lot of good people through the club. I was surprised to say how kind and helpful they are. I was exposed to friends who are into studies before. They were only focusing on their studies but not on any extracurricular activities. But I always wanted to do something different."

It is clear that clubs do cause people to develop good connections as networking is one of the top reasons for joining a club, to find connections for personal, business, social or spiritual reasons. The above quote does identify the respondent's ability to find people with spiritually driven attitudes.

Respect for others; a dimension of spiritual Orientation

Respondent four who has improved herself with respect to actively and socially engaging in with others through the club reported,

> *"As undergraduates, usually we don't get the opportunity to visit the Hope Hospital and to actively engage with cancer patients. Also, the friendly relationships that we have with the non-Academic Staff, visiting the elder's homes, and spending time with them taught me the importance of respecting all human beings"*

Respondent 12 also stated,

> *" I was exposed to seeing how all the members respect each other even the senior members of the club. They are so friendly, kind and maintain no attitude or distance between each other"*

Feeling of inner peace; a dimension of spiritual Orientation

Most of the respondents did value peace of mind. They reported various sources of peace of mind for them but most importantly it was evident that the members avoided unnecessary troubles and looked forward to happiness and peace of mind. Respondent 9 who is one of the authors of the research along with the autoethnography reported,

"I value peace of mind now in my life more than anything. The true understanding of the purpose of life along with happiness reached me in 2020 with the learning of the philosophy of Buddhism. When I was working in the club, I did not have that understanding. And I believe with the

understanding that I have right now, if I had had it before I would have been able to do things with much more meaning and true value than not just doing it merely for the purpose of doing it"

(I don't understand how you can claim that the club influenced members "feeling of inner peace" when the quote you are using clearly states that "When I was working in the club, I did not have that understanding.")

Service towards humankind, a dimension of spiritual Orientation
Respondent 7, who has participated in several business competitions organized by multinational companies for which the willingness was inspired by the club reported,

> *"Happiness for me is getting to know that someone has achieved something because I helped. I always had that way of thinking and by entering into the club it increased"*

The response does identify a change, a positive increase, that occurred as a result of club membership.

Being vision-and value-led; a dimension of spiritual Orientation
It is evident that the respondents have become vision-and value-led with their membership. Respondent three who has a plan of improving the teaching of Geography in Sri Lanka reported,

> *"Joining the club improved my willingness to help one another more. I have previously taught in a Sunday school and currently, I have my own business. It has a Vision and a Mission. I'm working in a way that I will be able to achieve them. I came this long by myself, and I am looking forward to implementing both long-term and short-term goals and strategies to achieve them in the future."*

It can be stated that the respondents have reshaped their way of moving forward in life with the experiences that they have received by working with the club.

According to the evidence, it cannot be concluded that the club and its service-learning projects are the only reason for the respondents to provide such responses that highlight the spiritual orientation. Also, the statement applies to all of the findings as it is nearly impossible and most likely impossible to isolate the impact of club membership from all other sources that influence a person's attitudes, opinions and behaviour.

Social Entrepreneurship

It was found that active participation in the club has simulated important aspects of entrepreneurial learning. Most of the respondents reported that they did not have a sound understanding of the

concept of social entrepreneurship when they joined the club initially, yet over time, they have become well aware of it.

Respondent 8 who is the current president of the club reported,

> *"Even though I knew from my Sunday's school that we must help the people in need, I never practiced before as I do now. It is because I saw how the senior club members helped others even with a little money in hand. I understood the importance of solving social problems. A social entrepreneur is the one recognises the social problems and tries to solve them through a creative business idea. Also, I think it is our responsibility as human beings."*

Respondent 11, who has started three businesses of her own reported,

> *" I was inspired by the senior club members to start my own business soon. All the three businesses of mine have received a huge support from the club. "*

Weaknesses of the Club

The only weakness that was reflected was the poor understanding of spirituality and the true meaning of selfless service. Respondent 6 who has only joined the Vikings Club in the University reported,

> *" I think I became more selfish by becoming a member of the club. I learned that we have to communicate more greatly than truly working"*

Respondent 20 who had given up working in other clubs and decided only to be a member of the high Kings club because of its uniqueness reported,

> *" The members do not communicate well. They just listen to something that someone else tells and blindly believe them. I think the members must be more friendlier than they are now"*

It is clear that such problems occur due to the fact of understanding the true meaning of service-learning even though they plan projects that provoke selfless serving. Table 3 provides the demographics of the respondents.

DISCUSSION

According to the current research findings, it is clear that for a majority of the respondents the club has become a great platform towards improving their willingness and capability to serve other human beings and the society that they live in. The Spiritual Growth of the respondents has been further improved during their stay at the club.

According to the literature, the current study used a set of measures to measure the spirituality level and its growth among the respondents. It is understood that the members had been selected for the club through an interview process which was conducted by the founder, initiative members and the members of the existing board. The author had also got herself involved in the interview process and the selection process. At the initial stage, the members had been evaluated with respect to their level of kindness and their perspective on social issues, and what they were planning and hoping to do in order to avoid such social issues in the future. It is evident that the level of selflessness has reached a significant level since they have first joined the club and that selflessness has improved furthermore by now.

It is also evident that the respondents have been feeling spiritual happiness by engaging in the socially responsible events that have been mentioned under the literature review. It is identified that these respondents have clearly been feeling happiness more than pleasure. The literature clearly identifies the difference between happiness and pleasure where happiness is a mental state and pleasure is the chemical reaction that takes place in the brain by fulfilling the five senses. Pleasure can cause happiness, but it is short-term. Long-term happiness can be achieved by fully achieving the responsibilities and duties as a human being. Humans feel pleasure by acquiring power, wealth, prestige, position and reputation (Ulluwishewa, 2016).

Empathy is a great virtue that an entrepreneur must develop. The level of empathy of the respondents has also gradually increased by participating in the various social initiatives that they have been introduced through the club. Many respondents reported that they have felt empathetic by seeing how the old parents have been left alone in elders' homes and how they repent and miss their children through the social initiative called the "walk of Mercy". The current findings also adhere to the research findings of Solomon (1992), Shanahan and Hyman (2003). Founded on their work where they developed an innovative empirical virtue ethics scale out of 45 business virtues, they suggested empathy, the Protestant work ethic (understood as hard work), respect, piety, incorruptibility and reliability as a virtue of businesspeople, especially?? with managers.

It is evident from the responses received that the majority of the respondents have recognized the need to serve other human beings. They consider serving other human beings as a source of long-term happiness and as their responsibility. Serving other human beings is also recognized as a great virtue in the literature available. Morales-Sánchez and Cabello-Medina (2015) also understood, depending on a thorough inspection of the existing literature, a list of sixteen virtues for workers; transcendence, courage, environmental responsibility, commitment, generosity, honesty, optimism, humility, justice, perseverance, prudence, self-control, gratitude, service to others, solidarity and amiability. It can be stated that as serving other human beings has been perceived as a source of happiness, the respondents are more towards happiness-seeking than pleasure-seeking. It is discussed in literature that when a

person seeks pleasure that he or she perceives other human beings and the nature around them as potential pleasure objects. And the software and brain then make people understand them not as essential components of the whole, yet as individuals detached from others and from the environment, and to perceive our fellow human beings as 'others' as in competitors and enemies (Ulluwishewa, 2016). When they see themselves as individual beings, they become more self-centred. Self-centred human beings do not care about other beings which cost negative impacts on the other human beings and the nature around them. As entrepreneurs are change agents specifically social entrepreneurs as per the context of the current study, if they are self-centred, they do not start businesses that solve social issues, nor they conduct business in a way that protect the other human beings and nature.

It was also understood that the respondents have been backed by the religious beliefs that they hold in order to serve other human beings and to behave in a way that protects the environment that they live in. The majority of the respondents were Buddhists which made the Sample biased to one dominant religion. The service projects that organised by the club in which the respondents have participated have shouldered the respondents' ability in understanding the teachings that they have previously learned through Buddhism. According to the literature, service-learning projects are perceived as better opportunities for Christian students to exercise acting out their beliefs at their academia, rather than merely expecting or pondering them (Schaffer, 2004). According to the current research, the respondents have instead practiced Buddhism. And by engaging in such service projects, the respondents have been able to understand the reality of life and thereby, they have made some adjustments to their way of living with the understanding of the concepts of Buddhist philosophy along with real-life experiences.

The intention to engage in the service project was challenging to assess. The majority of the respondents have reported that they were also inspired by the learning of new skills that were taught by the club through the various projects that they have implemented. The majority of the respondents did not have a clear understanding of the purpose of the club when they were joining. The concept of social entrepreneurship was unfamiliar for the respondents at the beginning. Some of the respondents have seen the service projects that have been implemented by the club and that have driven them towards joining with the club. The uniqueness of the service projects that are initiated by the club can be recognized as a positive feature.

CONCLUSIONS

The research study advances the understanding of the role of service learning shouldered by the club in developing one's spiritual orientation. The current study provides practical implications for the

student club in rewiring the minds of the potential social entrepreneurs. Such transformations will inspire ethical decision-making at both individual and organizational levels. Accordingly, it can be concluded that Service learning is shouldering individuals to display ethical leadership and management where they will make ethically sound decisions and become socially responsible as the club is currently organizing and initiating socially responsible events which inspire its members.

The significance of measuring the spiritual orientation in individuals is critical as the club is driven with the prime objective of solving social problems and empowering future social entrepreneurs while sharing the efforts of the members to promote humanity whenever it is possible. Such planned and random acts of kindness account for the sharing of universal love.

The club is acting as a platform that transforms its members into humans with a greater spiritual orientation. Accordingly, the university and its authority are implied with the need of promoting more student clubs of similar nature as Vikings. With the growing importance of service-learning, all the universities are advised to formalize such service-learning initiatives in order to improve their way of thinking and behaviour in a favourable manner to other human beings and to nature as the understanding on how to better foster spiritual development among undergraduates can provide many benefits to students, society, and higher education institutions. Also, on the other hand it is important to uplift student clubs, associations and activities that are based on promoting entrepreneurship as it is a source of economic development. Further concentration on social entrepreneurship is critical as through social entrepreneurship it is not only the economic and the financial development that the entrepreneur looks into, but also social aspects of society (Constantinescu & Kaptein, 2019).

The majority of the respondents of the current study are former members. Future research can be conducted on the current active member base. Also, most of the respondents were former members of the Executive Board or are currently holding a position in the Executive Board of the club. Accordingly, future research can be conducted among the members who are not holding any position. As there are so many other student clubs and associations that are currently operating in the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, future research studies can be conducted in understanding the roles played by such clubs in growing the spiritual orientation of the members through the service-learning projects that they organize.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident that the theoretical knowledge regarding spirituality is limited among the members. It is better if the members can be educated at the initial stage (when they are joining the club) about the association with selfless serving and spirituality. The researchers expect a lot of effective transformations might take place with the provision of theoretical and scientific explanations of the relationship. As per the current study, the majority of the respondents have joined the club with spiritual values, yet the club can enhance the ability in growing the Spiritual Orientation of

individuals who lack spiritual values at the point of getting the membership of the club. With a proper understanding of how the brain works neuro scientifically, the members will be able to effectively understand how their brain rewires from the soft-wired self-centeredness to the hardwired selflessness through service-learning activities that they conduct through the club. By knowing the real purpose of doing selfless serving, the meaningfulness of the actions will grow.

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