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LEADING SERVICE-LEARNING IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: A FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL ¹

A APRENDIZAGEM EM SERVIÇO (ApS) NO ENSINO DA GESTÃO: PROPOSTA DE UM MODELO

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Abstract

The adoption of Service-Learning in higher education institutions has emerged as one of the contemporary teaching and learning methodologies. In these contexts, cooperation processes implemented between institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations turn out to be mutually beneficial. Despite the high volume of research on the adoption of Service-Learning, research is scarce on the role of Service-Learning in management courses. Thus, this study aims to conduct a systematic literature review to reflect on approaches to the implementation of Service-Learning in management courses. The process of systematic literature consisted of a review of protocol development, identification of inclusion and exclusion criteria for relevant publications, data extraction, and synthesis. Data were collected from the Web of Science and Scopus databases. The search resulted in 89 articles, with publication dates between 1996 and 2022. Based on the findings of the systematic literature review, we developed a conceptual framework that relates to the existing research on Service-Learning in management courses. We evaluated the applicability of the conceptual model by analyzing the implementation of four projects with the Service-Learning methodology in subjects of the Degree in Management, taught at Universidade Católica Portuguesa – Viseu. The research concludes with the definition of strategies for the implementation of Service-Learning in management education.

KEYWORDS: Service-Learning; Systematic Literature Review; Management Education; Universities; Non-Profit Organizations

Resumo

A adoção da Aprendizagem-Serviço nas instituições de ensino superior surgiu como uma das metodologias contemporâneas de ensino e aprendizagem. Neste contexto, os processos de cooperação implementados entre as instituições de ensino superior e as organizações sem fins lucrativos revelam-se mutuamente benéficos. Apesar do elevado volume de investigação sobre a adoção da Aprendizagem-Serviço, são escassas as pesquisas sobre o papel da Aprendizagem-Serviço nos cursos de gestão. Assim, este estudo tem como objetivo realizar uma revisão sistemática da literatura para refletir sobre as abordagens para a implementação da Aprendizagem-Serviço nos cursos de gestão. O processo de literatura sistemática

consistiu numa revisão do desenvolvimento do protocolo, identificação de critérios de inclusão e exclusão para publicações relevantes, extração de dados e síntese. Os dados foram recolhidos nas bases de dados Web of Science e Scopus. A pesquisa resultou em 89 artigos, com datas de publicação entre 1996 e 2022. Com base nos resultados da revisão sistemática da literatura, desenvolvemos uma estrutura conceptual que se relaciona com a investigação existente sobre Aprendizagem-Serviço nos cursos de gestão. A aplicabilidade do modelo conceptual foi avaliada através da análise da implementação de quatro projectos com a metodologia de Aprendizagem-Serviço em disciplinas da Licenciatura em Gestão, leccionada na Universidade Católica Portuguesa – Viseu. A investigação conclui com a definição de estratégias para a implementação da Aprendizagem-Serviço na educação em gestão.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Aprendizagem-Serviço; Revisão Sistemática da Literatura; Educação em Gestão; Universidades; Organizações sem fins lucrativos.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda and the incorporation of ethics, responsibility, and sustainability into accreditation metrics for Business Schools, there has been a renewed focus not only on curriculum and student experience but also on partnerships between the University and a series of stakeholders (Parkes et al., 2017). Business schools must have the capacity to promote positive social change, particularly in the context of sustainability and in meeting the goals of sustainable development (Storey et al., 2017).

The adoption of Service-Learning (SL) in higher education institutions has emerged as one of the contemporary teaching and learning strategies (Schimperna et al., 2022). In these contexts, cooperation processes between universities and non-profit organizations are implemented as lucrative that is mutually beneficial (Edwards et al.,

2001; Liu & Tsai, 2020). Implementing SL projects with organizations that have missions aligned with one or more of the SDGs makes students more aware and critical of the nature of social problems (Killian et al., 2019), which can boost and strengthen knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, and commitment to the SDGs (García-Rico et al., 2021).

The existing literature on SL has proliferated considerably in recent years, however, there has been a limited attempt to systematically review and synthesize the literature on its application in the context of management and business education, particularly the impact on students. The analysis of the literature reveals that there is one systematic review of the literature in this scientific field, for example, the review performed by Marco-Gardoqui et al. (2020) with the main objective of gathering, identifying, and classifying the benefits of SL in teaching business and management. Despite this growing body of research, foundational conceptualizations, such as those provided by Bringle and Hatcher (1995), emphasize that Service-Learning is more than a pedagogical technique—it is a structured academic endeavor requiring careful integration into institutional frameworks, curriculum planning, and community partnerships.

Nonetheless, the implementation of SL in higher education, particularly within management courses, often encounters practical challenges. These include logistical complexities, limited institutional support, resistance from faculty or administration, and difficulties aligning academic goals with community needs (Butin, 2006; Felten & Clayton, 2011). Such challenges underscore the necessity for leadership and strategic models that can guide the successful adoption and sustainability of SL initiatives.

Furthermore, the literature reveals certain contradictions regarding the outcomes and impacts of SL. While many studies highlight positive effects on student development, civic engagement, and community benefits, others caution that these results are highly contingent on project design and execution. Poorly structured SL experiences can inadvertently reinforce stereotypes or fail to achieve meaningful social outcomes, raising ethical and pedagogical concerns (Mitchell, 2008).

Thus, despite the high amount of research on SL adoption, we can confirm that there is not yet a systematic view of the literature that allows identifying exactly which issues are related to the impact on students of management and business courses. Therefore, there is a need to carry out a review of research and structure the existing literature in an integrated and systematic way on the application of SL in management and business courses, which is our main objective. Thus, in this study, we applied a systematic literature review (SLR) approach based on articles published in journals indexed in the databases Web of Science and Scopus databases.

The present study thus contains three research objectives (RO):

RO1: Analyze the profile of existing relevant research literature on the application of SL in management and business courses;

RO2: Identify the impact on student's academic, personal, social, and citizenship outcomes in existing research on the application of SL in management and business courses;

RO3: Develop an integrated research structure that helps in understanding the profile and application of SL in management and business courses.

Our research brings two essential contributions. First, we use an RLS methodology to assess current research trends on the impact of SL on students of management and business courses. This is a breakthrough in identifying growth and change in this field and on which future research can focus to further deepen this field of knowledge. Second, we contribute to research in this field by reporting on its internal structure and exploring trends, patterns and trajectories to culminate in a future research agenda.

While previous studies have provided important insights into the benefits and challenges of Service-Learning in business education, there remains a lack of conceptual tools to guide its structured implementation and leadership. This study goes beyond synthesis by proposing an original conceptual framework that integrates pedagogical objectives, leadership dynamics, and the societal impact of SL initiatives. This framework is not only grounded in a systematic literature review but is also validated through its practical application in four real-world projects

at a Portuguese business school, highlighting its relevance and utility for educators and institutions aiming to embed SL more effectively into management education.

The paper is organized as follows. After the introduction, we describe and justify the research methods applied in this study. We then present our findings structured around the impact of SL on students of management and business courses. Before concluding, we discuss the main trends and patterns derived from our analysis, which include some strategies for the successful implementation of SL projects in management and business students.

2. METHODOLOGY

The systematic literature review (SLR) methodology used in this study follows the guidelines established by Kitchenham and Charters (2007). First, a review protocol was developed, specifying the research objectives, search strategy, and selection procedures. Then, the criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of relevant publications were identified. Lastly, an in-depth search of the studies was carried out, followed by a critical evaluation, data extraction, and synthesis.

The inclusion criteria focused on peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2000 and 2023, written in English, and indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus databases. These databases were selected due to their comprehensive coverage of high-impact academic literature in business and management education. Grey literature, conference proceedings, and non-indexed studies were excluded to ensure methodological consistency and quality standards. Although some qualitative studies outside these databases may offer valuable insights, they were excluded to maintain a homogeneous dataset aligned with the review protocol.

A total of 61 articles met the inclusion criteria. During the selection phase, each article was screened by title and abstract and later by full text. While we did not apply a formal risk-of-bias assessment tool, a critical appraisal was performed considering factors such as clarity of research design, robustness of findings, and alignment with the research

objectives. Studies lacking methodological transparency or relevant focus were excluded.

The analysis of the selected articles involved an iterative coding process. Initial codes were derived deductively from the review's research questions, particularly the academic, personal, social, and civic outcomes of Service-Learning, as well as its implementation strategies. These codes were refined inductively during successive rounds of coding, allowing for the emergence of additional categories grounded in the data. This process enabled a thematic synthesis and the development of a structured conceptual framework.

In addition to synthesizing the existing body of knowledge, the systematic literature review informed the development of a novel conceptual framework. Rather than merely cataloguing prior findings, the methodology was used to identify thematic gaps, extract key dimensions of Service-Learning in management education, and integrate these into a cohesive model with practical and theoretical relevance. This framework represents a structured contribution to the field, aiming to support the leadership, design, and implementation of SL projects within business schools.

2.1. Review Protocol

The first stage of the systematic literature review consisted of the development of a protocol (figure 1) for the following steps.

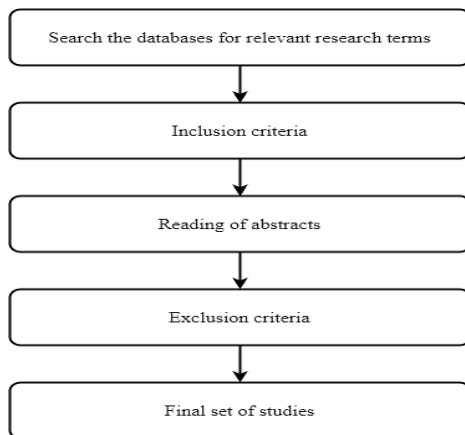


Fig.1.review protocol

The Review Protocol begins with a search in the literature, with the definition of the terms that will be used to determine chosen data sets to retrieve the maximum number of studies that can answer the formulated research questions. Articles relevant to this study were collected and compiled in the Web of ScienceTM Core Collection (WoS) and Scopus[®] (Scopus) online databases, owned by Clarivate Analytics and Elsevier, respectively, which include thousands of active journals and provide an overview of comprehensive research output worldwide (Ferreira et al., 2022). WoS and Scopus databases provide detailed metadata for indexed publications, including publication title, English abstract, keywords, authors, affiliations, document type, source information, and citation count, and search replication is possible, which is an advantage compared to searching in publishers' databases (Mohamed Shaffril et al., 2021). In the next phase, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined (Table 1).

Table1.Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	exclusion criteria
Related to SL	Not related to the business and management learning
Published in scientific journals	The complete document is not available

To identify relevant articles, searches were performed using the following expressions included in the title, abstract or keywords: ("service learning" OR "community learning") and ("management student*" OR "business student*" OR "mba student*" OR "economic student*"), refined to articles. The search for key terms in the databases selected in the review protocol resulted in 91 articles (56 publications in the Scopus database and 35 publications in the WoS database). After excluding duplicate articles (33 articles), 61 articles were obtained.

2.2. Data Extraction Analysis

The Data Extraction Analysis presents the analysis of several parameters of the selected articles, such as their chronological distribution, keywords, sources, and countries of origin of the authors. Fig. 2 presents a descriptive summary of the articles included in the present study. The articles involved were produced by 139 authors, 17 articles were published by a single author, and there were 1949 references included in our set of 61 articles.



Fig.2. Summary of selected articles

In Figure 3, the evolution of the selected articles over the years is observed, noting that, contrary to most scientific domains, there has not been an increasing number of publications in this domain. The first article was published in 1996. The year 2013 is the year with the highest number of publications (7 articles), followed by the year 2020 (6 articles) and by the years 2008, 2011, 2018, and 2022 (5 articles each). The average year of publication of articles was 2013.0, and 60.6% were published after 2013.

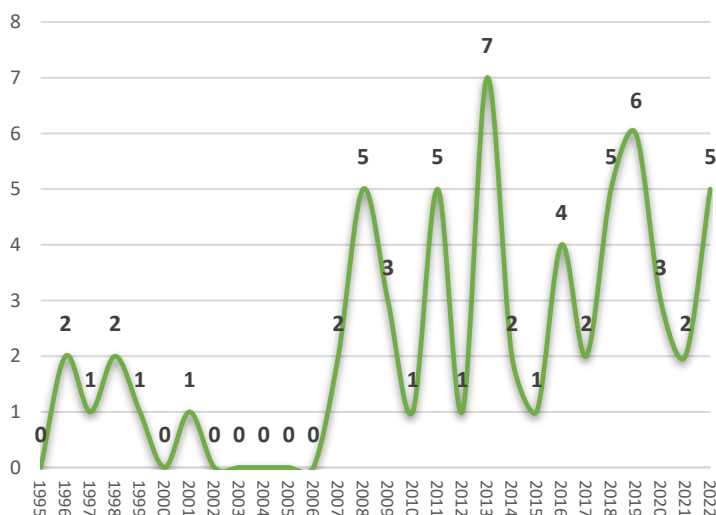


Fig.2. Evolution in the number of selected studies

Fig.4 presents the word cloud of the keywords included in the articles. It is observed that the keywords business education (10 articles), business ethics (4 articles), civic engagement (4 articles), leadership (4 articles), consumer behavior (3 articles), and virtual (3 articles).

Regarding the sources where the articles were published, the Journal of Business Ethics (7 articles) and Industry and Higher Education, International Journal of Management Education, Journal of Education

for Business, and Sport Management Education Journal stand out with three articles published on the theme.



Fig.3.Word Cloud of authors keywords

Table 2.Sources

SOURCES	ARTICLES
Journal of Business Ethics	7
Industry and Higher Education	3
International Journal of Management Education	3
Journal of Education for Business	3
Sport Management Education Journal	3
Academy of Management Learning & Education	2
Journal of Management Education	2
Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism	2

Concerning the number of articles published according to the country of authors (Fig. 5), the USA stands out with 73 authors as the country with the greatest scientific production, followed by South Africa (11 authors), Canada (7 authors), China (3 authors), India (3 authors) and Netherlands (3 authors).

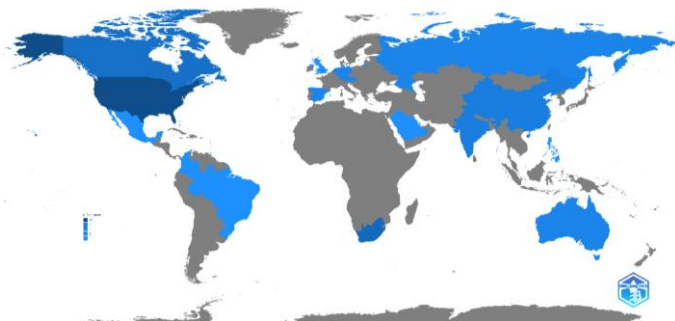


Fig.4.Number of articles published according to authors' countries

3. FINDINGS

To synthesize and categorize the studies based on their objective, an analysis was performed based on the four categories of impact on students defined by Conway et al. (2009). Key categories include (1) academic outcomes, (b) personal outcomes, (c) social outcomes, and (d) citizenship outcomes.

Table 4. Outcomes

Outcomes	Articles
Academic outcomes (n = 30, 42.3%)	(Albers & Johnson, 2016; Alejandro Cano & Ayala, 2019; Bartel et al., 2001; Calvert et al., 2011; Carmichael et al., 2008; Chen, 2013; Dal Magro et al., 2020; Desplaces et al., 2009; Elson, 2018; Ezeuduji et al., 2022; Garnjost & Lawter, 2019; Heo et al., 2014; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Issa, 2013; Manegold et al., 2020; Marco-Gardoqui et al., 2020; Matteucci & Aubke, 2018; McNatt, 2019; McWhorter et al., 2016; Mey et al., 2018; Monforte-Garcia & Arredondo-Trapero, 2021; Mosakowski et al., 2013; Ndlovu & Mofokeng, 2018; Phelps & Dostilio, 2008; Schembri & Garza, 2014; Sciglimpaglia & Toole, 2009; Sharma, 2022; Tucker et al., 1998; Wickam, 2018; Wong et al., 2021; Zlotkowski, 1996)
Personal outcomes (n = 29, 38.5%)	(Brackebusch, 2018; Byrd et al., 2022; Colakoglu & Sledge, 2013; Ezeuduji et al., 2022; Flannery & Pragman, 2008; Fleckenstein, 1997; Heo et al., 2014; Horak et al., 1998; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Jordan & Schraeder, 2011; Joseph et

	<p>al., 2007; Kenworthy-U'Ren, 1999; Manegold et al., 2020; Marco-Gardoqui et al., 2020; Marques, 2016; Matteucci & Aubke, 2018; McNatt, 2019; McWhorter et al., 2016; Mey et al., 2018; Monforte-García & Arredondo-Trapero, 2021; Mosakowski et al., 2013; Poon et al., 2011; Sabbaghi et al., 2013, 2019; Sahatjian et al., 2022; Sciglimpaglia & Toole, 2009; Seider et al., 2011; Sharma, 2022; Tucker et al., 1998; Tyran, 2017; Vega, 2007; Weber et al., 2008; Wickam, 2018; Wong et al., 2021; Zlotkowski, 1996)</p>
<p>Social Outcomes (n = 40)</p>	<p>(Arinze et al., 2022; Bartel et al., 2001; Bush et al., 2016; Byrd et al., 2022; Calvert et al., 2011; Carter, 2009; Desplaces et al., 2009; Elson, 2018; Flannery & Pragman, 2008; Heo et al., 2014; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Issa, 2013; Jordan & Schraeder, 2011; Kenworthy-U'Ren, 1999; Le et al., 2013; Manegold et al., 2020; Marco-Gardoqui et al., 2020; Matteucci & Aubke, 2018; McNatt, 2019; McWhorter et al., 2016; Mey et al., 2018; Mosakowski et al., 2013; Petrovskaya, 2019; Poon et al., 2011; Reeves et al., 2013; Rosenbloom & Alejandro Cortes, 2008; Sabbaghi et al., 2013, 2019; Sahatjian et al., 2022; Schembri & Garza, 2014; Sharma, 2022; Snell et al., 2015; Tucker et al., 1998; Vega, 2007; Weber et al., 2008; Wickam, 2018; Wong et al., 2021; Yu, 2011; Zlotkowski, 1996)</p>
<p>Citizenship Outcomes (n = 27, 19.1%)</p>	<p>(Arinze et al., 2022; Byrd et al., 2022; Carter, 2009; Dorasamy & Pillay, 2010; Elson, 2018; Flannery & Pragman, 2008; Heo et al., 2014; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Le et al., 2013; Marco-Gardoqui et al., 2020; Marques, 2016; Mey et al., 2018; Monforte-García & Arredondo-Trapero, 2021; Paphitis & Pearse, 2017; Petrovskaya, 2019; Phelps & Dostilio, 2008; Poon et al., 2011; Rosenbloom & Alejandro Cortes, 2008; Sabbaghi et al., 2019; Sahatjian et al., 2022; Seider et al., 2011; Snell et al., 2015; Tyran, 2017; Vega, 2007; Weber et al., 2008; Wong et al., 2021; Yu, 2011)</p>

3.1. Academic outcomes

Regarding the results in academic terms, some SL projects are a valuable tool for management and business students to experience in a real context the skills developed in the classroom (Alejandro Cano & Ayala, 2019; Carmichael et al., 2008; Chen, 2013; Dal Magro et al., 2020; Desplaces et al., 2009; Elson, 2018; Heo et al., 2014; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Issa, 2013; Mey et al., 2018; Monforte-García & Arredondo-Trapero, 2021; Ndlovu & Mofokeng, 2018; Phelps & Dostilio, 2008; Schembri & Garza, 2014), increasing student motivation and a positive attitude towards the content covered (Albers & Johnson,

2016; Bartel et al., 2001; Desplaces et al., 2009; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Mosakowski et al., 2013; Sharma, 2022), as well as developing presentation skills (Ezeuduji et al., 2022; Manegold et al., 2020; McNatt, 2019; Wickam, 2018).

3.2. Personal outcomes

The main personal skills acquired by the researched management and business students refer to decision-making and problem-solving processes (Fleckenstein, 1997; Le et al., 2013; Monforte-García & Arredondo-Trapero, 2021; Ndlovu & Mofokeng, 2018; Sahatjian et al., 2022; Vega, 2007; Wickam, 2018), career development (Bush et al., 2016; Ezeuduji et al., 2022; Ndlovu & Mofokeng, 2018; Seider et al., 2011; Tucker et al., 1998), critical thinking skills (Colakoglu & Sledge, 2013; Joseph et al., 2007; Rosenbloom & Alejandro Cortes, 2008), impact on self-esteem and self-efficacy (Heo et al., 2014; Marques, 2016; McNatt, 2019), reflection on values (Dal Magro et al., 2020; Petrovskaya, 2019; Sahatjian et al., 2022) and the moral behavior of students (Fleckenstein, 1997; Kenworthy-U'Ren, 1999; Mosakowski et al., 2013; Poon et al., 2011; Vega, 2007).

3.3. Social Outcomes

In research on the social impact on management and business students, emphasis is given to interaction or work with other people. (Arinze et al., 2022; Bartel et al., 2001; Flannery & Pragman, 2008; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Issa, 2013; Manegold et al., 2020; McNatt, 2019; Reeves et al., 2013; Snell et al., 2015; Vega, 2007; Wickam, 2018; Yu, 2011), leadership skills (Byrd et al., 2022; Elson, 2018; Jordan & Schraeder, 2011; McWhorter et al., 2016; Sabbaghi et al., 2019; Sahatjian et al., 2022; Snell et al., 2015; Vega, 2007), communication skills (Matteucci & Aubke, 2018; Sharma, 2022; Tucker et al., 1998), The recognition and understanding of diversity and interculturality (Bartel et al., 2001; Mosakowski et al., 2013; Schembri & Garza, 2014; Zlotkowski, 1996); and feelings of solidarity (Arinze et al., 2022; Sabbaghi et al., 2019; Sahatjian et al., 2022).

3.4. Citizenship Outcomes

The most researched impacts of SL in terms of citizenship allude to civic participation (Arinze et al., 2022; Flannery & Pragman, 2008; Heo et al., 2014; Marco-Gardoqui et al., 2020; Marques, 2016; Paphitis & Pearse, 2017; Seider et al., 2011; Yu, 2011), the value of social responsibility in the curriculum of management and business studies (Carter, 2009; Flannery & Pragman, 2008; Heo et al., 2014; Monforte-García & Arredondo-Trapero, 2021; Phelps & Dostilio, 2008; Poon et al., 2011; Wong et al., 2021), motivations for volunteering (Byrd et al., 2022; Elson, 2018; Husseinifard et al., 2022; Petrovskaya, 2019) and social justice (Arinze et al., 2022; Sabbaghi et al., 2019; Sahatjian et al., 2022).

While the reviewed studies provide consistent evidence of positive impacts across academic, personal, social, and civic domains, several limitations were identified. A majority of studies relied on self-reported perceptions from students, raising concerns about subjectivity and social desirability bias. Longitudinal studies assessing the sustained effects of SL on students' attitudes or behaviours were scarce. Moreover, most research was conducted in North American or European institutions, limiting the generalizability of findings to other cultural and institutional contexts. These limitations suggest the need for more rigorous, diversified, and context-sensitive methodologies in future research on SL in management education.

3.5. Conceptual Framework

This systematic review of the literature contributes to current research on the application of SL in teaching management and business, providing an overview and synthesis of the empirical literature (n = 61). In addition to reporting what are the impacts of SL on students, this review provides an important contribution to current research by synthesizing and structuring these contexts.

Figure 5 establishes a conceptualization of SL according to the conclusions of the present study, thus consolidating a framework for the context of teaching management and business. Specifically, the

conceptual framework is mapped according to the findings presented in previous section .

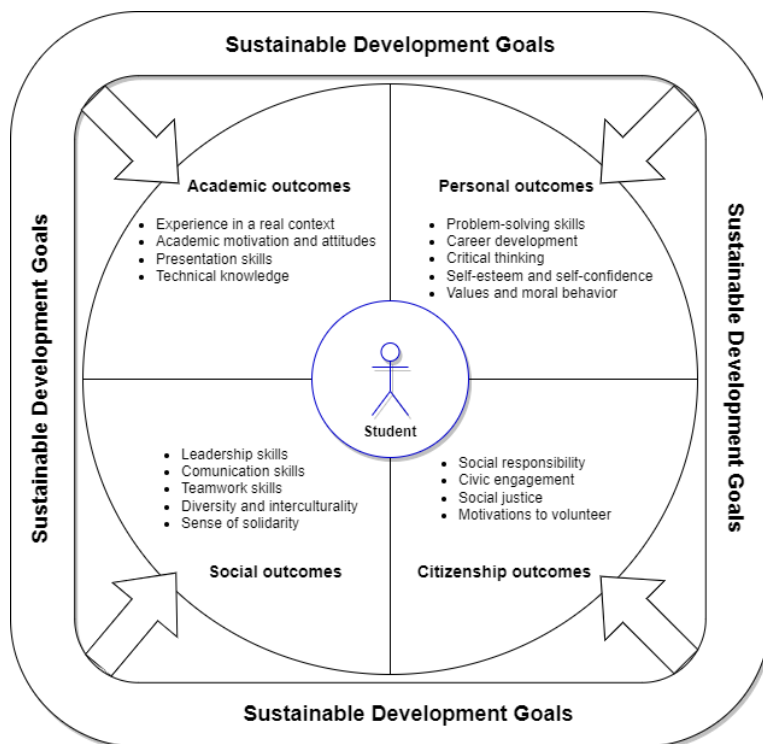


Fig. 5 Integrative framework

Schools that graduate business and management students must have the capacity to promote positive social change, specifically in the context of the SDG agenda (Storey et al., 2017). The students become more aware and critical of the nature of social issues in SL projects implemented with organizations that have missions aligned with one or more of the SDGs (Killian et al., 2019). The inclusion of SDG targets linked to the design of SL courses for management and business students boosts and strengthens knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, and

commitment toward social and community issues (García-Rico et al., 2021). Thus, in our conceptualization, of the implementation strategies of SL projects there must be a link with SDG goals. SDGs work as a catalyst for the teaching-learning process.

To achieve success in the implementation of SL projects with business and management students, the impacts on students in terms of academic results, personal results, social results, and citizenship results must be defined (Conway et al., 2009). SL strategies related to academic results must be conducive to the application in a real context of the skills developed in the classroom. These teaching strategies increase students' motivation, generate a positive attitude and a greater ability to learn technical knowledge, as well as boost presentation skills. They should also include a reflection on other acquired academic skills. The assessment of personal results obtained by management and business students needs to be properly specified for a successful strategy. This analysis should include results related to decision-making and problem-solving processes, career development, critical thinking skills, and impact on self-esteem and self-efficacy. They should also include a reflection on other acquired personal skills. Strategies with a social impact on management and business students should include encouraging interaction or working with other people and developing leadership skills and communication skills. Differentiating strategies should include a reflection on diversity and interculturality and feelings of solidarity. Finally, the implementation strategies of the SL methodology must include the citizenship results obtained by management and business students. These impacts may be related to civic participation, social responsibility, and motivations for volunteering. Strategies that promote the success of SL must include a reflection on social justice.

Despite the well-documented benefits of Service-Learning, its implementation in management education is not without challenges. Institutions often face logistical constraints, lack of faculty training, time limitations, and resistance to pedagogical innovation. To overcome these barriers, it is essential to create institutional support mechanisms such as dedicated SL offices, faculty development programs, and the integration

of SL into accreditation and quality assurance processes. Additionally, establishing cross-sector partnerships and flexible curriculum structures can facilitate the alignment of SL activities with community needs and learning objectives.

Regarding the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), institutions can benefit from defining concrete assessment metrics that measure both educational and societal impact. These might include the number of SL projects aligned with specific SDGs, student self-assessment of competencies related to sustainability and social responsibility, or community-based indicators such as improved service access, organizational innovation, or stakeholder satisfaction. Embedding these metrics within program evaluation frameworks can enhance accountability and ensure that SL initiatives contribute meaningfully to both student development and the broader goals of sustainable development.

To explore the practical relevance of the proposed framework, it was applied to four real-world Service-Learning projects conducted at Católica Lisbon School of Business & Economics. Each project involved partnerships with community organizations aligned with specific SDG targets, and provided opportunities for students to engage in meaningful learning experiences. The framework helped structure the design, execution, and evaluation of these initiatives, guiding both faculty and student leadership in aligning academic, social, and civic goals. This preliminary application served to validate the framework's utility as a planning and reflection tool in management education contexts, reinforcing its value as a structured and innovative contribution to SL practice.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The adoption of Service-Learning in higher education institutions has emerged as one of the contemporary teaching and learning methodologies. In this context, the cooperation processes implemented between higher education institutions and non-profit organizations prove

to be mutually beneficial, as they allow: to raise students' awareness of the need for institutions to practice entrepreneurship, to improve the application of their values and principles, the internal environment of well-being, promoting motivation, commitment, efficiency, productivity of employees and the sustainability of the institution; to raise students' awareness of the importance of volunteering in promoting a more just, inclusive, socially, economically and environmentally sustainable society; to support the innovation of partner organizations, including ensuring an environment conducive to, among other things, transparency; to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of partner organizations, ensuring equal opportunities and reducing inequality of results; to support partner organizations in strengthening their scientific and technological capacities to shift to more sustainable patterns of production and consumption; ensure responsible, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels; strengthen partner organisations to build better social responsiveness at all levels; provide consultancy and partnership, with theoretical and methodological support, to help partner institutions mobilise internal and external resources, mobilise additional funding as sources of innovation and promote their sustainability; allow students to come into contact with the business reality, so that they can put into practice what they learn in the classroom context.

Despite the large volume of research on the adoption of Service-Learning, there is little research on the role of Service-Learning in management courses. Therefore, this study aims to carry out a systematic literature review to reflect on approaches to implementing Service-Learning in management courses. Based on the results of the systematic literature review, we developed a conceptual framework that relates to existing research on Service-Learning in management courses. We assessed the applicability of the conceptual model by analyzing the implementation of four projects using the Service-Learning methodology in Management degree courses taught at the Catholic University of Portugal – Viseu. The conclusions drawn from this review are grounded in the structured analysis of the four dimensions of student impact – academic, personal, social, and citizenship – identified in the

literature. Each element of the proposed conceptual framework is directly linked to patterns observed across the reviewed studies. For example, the emphasis on structured reflection and the role of academic leadership responds to identified gaps in how civic and social outcomes are achieved and measured. Likewise, the integration of partnerships aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reflects the need to move beyond experiential learning toward socially transformative practices. This alignment between findings and framework reinforces the model's theoretical robustness and practical utility in guiding the design and implementation of Service-Learning in management education. The research concludes with the definition of strategies for implementing Service-Learning in management education. In summary, the proposed conceptual framework offers an innovative contribution to the field of Service-Learning in management education by explicitly integrating leadership dynamics, pedagogical goals, and social impact within a structured and operational model. Its preliminary validation through four real-world projects reinforces its applicability, and demonstrates how academic institutions can use it to design, manage, and evaluate SL initiatives more effectively. As such, the framework provides both a theoretical advancement and a practical tool for educators aiming to embed Service-Learning more strategically into management curricula. Future implementations of this model should further explore how SL initiatives can directly contribute to institutional SDG strategies, reinforcing higher education's role in promoting systemic societal change. The main limitations of the study are related to the scarcity of studies on the role of service-learning in management courses and the fact that it has only been implemented in four curricular units. For future research, it is suggested that the advantages of this teaching system be studied in practical terms in other curricular units of management courses.

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