



Civic Views of Young Adult Minorities:
Exploring the Influences of Kinship Communities
And Youth Mentoring Communities on
Prosocial Civic Behaviors

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INTRODUCTION

Civic involvement is a powerful opportunity in which young citizens can be more engaged in society (Alt & Medrich, 1994; Billig, 2000; Gray, Ondaatje, Zakaras, 1999; Kleiner & Chapman, 2000; Torney-Purta, Amadeo & Richardson, 2003). It provides young citizens with various opportunities to see themselves as contributing members to the community-at-large (Billig, 2000; Gray, et al., 1999; Kelly, 2002a; Kleiner & Chapman, 2000; O'Donnell, Michalak, & Ames, 1997; Parker & Franco, 1999; Rosenthal, Feiring, & Lewis, 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). Civic involvement enhances citizenship and civic engagement, allowing young citizens to develop a sense of community as an extension of their identities (Gray, et al., 1999; Kelly, 2002a; Kleiner & Chapman, 2000; McDevitt, Kioussis, Wu, Losch & Ripley, 2003; O'Donnell, et al., 1997; Parker & Franco, 1999).

However, for many minority youth, being engaged with society is a more comprehensive, cultural issue than merely voting, joining mainstream member organizations or volunteering through traditional service groups (Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, 1998; Schlozman, Verba & Brady, 1999; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Yates & Youniss, 1998; Watts, Griffith, & Abdul-Adil, 1999). Existing literature shows that young citizens who are reared in communities or have regular contact with social settings that maintain an unequal distribution of power with society at large are less likely to engage in civic life and feel alienated from civic and political institutions (Flanagan, et al., 1998; Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Schlozman, et al., 1999; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Yates & Youniss, 1998; Watts, Griffith, & Abdul-Adil, 1999). This is especially true for minority youths and young adults who, during their early years, may not have had strong civic influences or access to service opportunities (Kelly, 2002a; O'Donnell, et al., 1997; Parker & Franco, 1999; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Yates & Youniss, 1998). The following presents the civic views of young adult minorities and outcomes in their civic behavior as results of their relationships

within kinship communities and educational/youth mentoring communities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social and political scientists emphasize that social ties and shared norms enhance self-sufficiency, and help sustain civic engagement (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Skocpol & Fiorina, 1999). Civic engagement, in particular, ensures the development of individual capacities, and allows for citizens to become more independent, competent, and take responsibility for their interests and those of the community (Billig, 2000; Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Schlozman, et al., 1999; Skocpol & Fiorina, 1999; Zaff, Malanchuk, Michelsen & Eccles, 2003).

These building blocks – service-learning, group-based community service projects, and required or mandated community service, facilitate the acquisition of civic skill sets and an understanding of one's responsibility to and lasting appreciation for the governance of their community early in our development (Gray, et al., 1999; Kleiner & Chapman, 2000; Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). However, this lasting appreciation for civic service and participation begins early in one's development through relationships and social memberships (formal and informal) that place a high regard for civic participation (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Kelly, 2002a; Putnam, 2000; Rahn, et al., 1999; Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Rich, 1999; Schlozman, et al., 1999).

This assertion is based on the socio-cultural notion that civic engagement is a cognitive, affective and behavioral process that emerges from communities of practice. Communities of practice refer to the systems with which young adults are exposed (Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). It is from the social interactions within these systems that individuals are exposed to the civic beliefs, feelings and actions of the community (O'Donnell, et al., 1997; Parker & Franco, 1999; Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Watts, et al., 1999;

Yates & Youniss, 1998). Thus, communities of practice can promote or inhibit human relatedness, social competence, efficacy (self and external) and self-direction as it relates to prosocial civic behaviors of civic engagement and an identity of citizen-in-community (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Fletcher, Elder & Mekos, 2000; Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003).

Citizen-in-community refers to the relationship between the citizen and the civic culture of the community (Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). Through service learning, adult modeling of behavior, community messages regarding civic participation, easy access to governance, and service performed early in one's development, young citizens learn how to serve as well as the importance of civic service to the social and economic infrastructure of the local community (Billig, 2000; Gray, et al., 1999; Kelly, 2000a; Reese and Rosenfeld, 2002; Torney-Purta, 2003). The way of life in a specific community context offers overt and subtle nuances of what is expected of citizens to control the destiny of their community (Reese and Rosenfeld, 2002; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Watts, et al., 1999).

There are two communities of practice that can facilitate early socialization into civic culture – kinship communities and educational or youth mentoring communities (Joseph, 1992; Reese & Rosenfeld, 2002; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). The kinship community primarily consists of parent, sibling or other relative, while the educational/ youth mentoring community can consist of classroom settings, sports programs, or academic mentoring programs (Horvat and Antonio, 1999; Reese and Rosenfeld, 2002). Both communities promote a set of core beliefs, expectations and social experiences that are value-specific and relevant to the community to ensure full civic participation in the greater society of its citizens (Billig, 2000; Joseph, 1992; Kelly, 2002b; Rich, 1999). Further, both communities provide formal and informal traditions of passing on knowledge,

skills and wisdom to less experienced, younger individuals (Joseph, 1992; Kelly, 2002a; Kelly, 2002b; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). It is through positive identification with the values, expectations and culture of the community that individuals are likely to feel engaged with society.

KINSHIP COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Parents are viable resources and role models that influence future civic behaviors of youths. The caregiving environment or community facilitates the socialization of youth into society (Cheng, 2004; Ermisch & Francesconi, 2001; Hess & Holloway, 1984; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Morrison Gutman & Eccles, 1999; Peters, 1995; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Schneider & Younger, 1996). Moreover, the concept of "fictive kinship," in communities of color, serves as an adaptive strategy to ensuring positive socialization in and access to a broad social network (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995; Billingsley, 1992; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan & Buriel, 1990).

Fictive kinship is the caregiving and mutual aid system among individuals who are not related by blood or marriage, and who share a social and economic relationship (Billingsley, 1992; Harrison, et al., 1990). This relationship serves to buttress the child through periods of conflict, stress or discord (Billingsley, 1992; Fletcher, et al., 2000; Harrison, et al., 1990; McDevitt, et al., 2003). In communities of color, fictive kinships are ecological systems with shared ancestral history and social plight (Billingsley, 1992; Harrison, et al., 1990). According to Billingsley (1992), these "relationships of appropriation" have built-in mechanisms to promote civic engagement through existing models of caregiving and mutual aid.

Research has shown that altruistic-rich, caregiving environments facilitate positive bonding and interaction between parent and youth, and increase the likelihood of communication about altruistic activities beyond the home (Flanagan, et al., 1998; Fletcher, et al., 2000; Gunnoe, Hetherington & Reiss, 1999; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003).

In particular, the extended family social networks in communities of color comprise blood relatives and fictive kin where the social development of children is a shared concern (Fletcher, et al., 2000; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Scannapieco & Jackson, 1996). Kinship care alone is an adaptive, resilient civic response to child care crises in the family (Scannapieco & Jackson, 1996). As an instrument of mutual aid and civic duty, kinship care nurtures and protects children who are separated from their parents (Scannapieco & Jackson, 1996).

Unfortunately, less than 50% of youth today volunteer in their communities and the rate is lower for youth of color in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods (Kelly, 2002a; Watts, Griffith & Abdul-Adil, 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998; Zaff, Malanchuk, Michelsen, & Eccles, 2003). According to one longitudinal study of 1000 African American youth, when caregivers modeled civic behavior through their own volunteerism, the maturing youth were more likely to be involved in volunteering activities (Zaff, et al., 2003). Researchers in this study found that parent modeling of civic behaviors is significantly associated with positive citizenship engagement among youth (Zaff, et al., 2003). Further, research by Fletcher, et al. (2000) found that youths with socially engaged parents were more likely to become involved in community activities and to sustain their involvement over time. This supports the assertion by McDevitt, et al. (2003) that once political and civic communication become a family norm in the caregiving environment, the maturing youth's civic interest is promoted and self-sustaining.

However, contextual risk factors within the caregiving environment can diminish the likelihood that youth engage in self-governance and service to the community (Fletcher, et al., 2000; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). Established research shows that poverty, resident mobility, family size, maternal employment and immigration are structural contexts in a caregiving environment that can weaken a child's societal bond (McLoyd, 1990; Sampson & Laub, 1994). If

parents and caregivers disengage from society-at-large, or do not believe in their capacity to effectively contribute to their self-governance and civic service, it is highly likely that the young adult will disengage from society (Burns & Kinder, 2000; Fletcher, et al., 2000; Schlozman, et al., 1999). This assertion models the works of Rosenthal, et al. (1998) and Torney-Purta, et al. (2004) who suggest that early relationships in caregiving environments influence prosocial civic behaviors as well as feelings of external efficacy and general social trust among young adult minorities.

Thus, familial caregivers serve as protective agents providing information, learning opportunities and resources that promote healthy development and prosocial behaviors of youth into early adulthood (Cheng, 2004; Fletcher, et al., 2000; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Wang, Haertel & Walberg, 1993).

YOUTH MENTORING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Educational/youth mentoring programs can offer a distinct opportunity for sustaining civic engagement, and can promote positive social factors that aid the individual in affecting change in their own lives and those of others through community service (Kelly, 2002a; Gray, et al., 1999; McDevitt, et al., 2003; O'Donnell, et al., 1997; Zaff, et al., 2003). Youth mentoring programs influence engagement in the community by spurring the cognitive notion that the young citizen is a contributor to society (Joseph, 1992; Kelly 2002a; McDevitt, et al., 2003). These programs promote positive social interaction with adult mentors and peers as well as social group identification (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995; Joseph, 1992; McDevitt, et al., 2003; O'Donnell, et al., 1997; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997).

The domain of social group identification comprises the values, beliefs, abilities, social experiences, cultural norms and history of a specific social network group (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995; Deaux, 2000; Ellemers, Kortekaas & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Phinney, et al., 1997). It is the awareness of clear boundaries based upon social

acceptance, language, power and status and other derivatives that require an internalization of the norms and values of the social group as well as an emotional attachment to the group with a sense of individual sacrifice (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995; Deaux, 2000; Ellemers, et al., 1999; Phinney, et al., 1997; Tajfel, 1982).

Through the formation of their social group identity, a young citizen attempts to balance group identification needs and one's own personal desire for a positive relationship with the larger society (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995; Deaux, 2000; Ellemers, et al., 1999; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Phinney, et al., 1997; Tajfel, 1982). If this balance is not achieved through self-categorization, the young citizen may experience feelings of alienation, anxiety, depression or loss of identity (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995; Deaux, 2000; Ellemers, et al., 1999; Phinney, et al., 1997).

Self-categorization is an internal process through which a member of a low-power group can reconstruct their social identity outside their direct experience with the high power group or dominant culture (Deaux, 2000; Ellemers, et al., 1999). This process is particularly salient for persons of color who look to other forms of social belonging outside the dominant group through the following adaptive, resilient strategies – building own social organizations or groups; producing own social resources; and/or developing own civic opportunities and vehicles (Deaux, 2000; Ellemers, et al., 1999; Nakamura, Ostu, Taniyama, & Drake, 2001).

By influencing this positive social interaction within social groups like youth mentoring programs designed to promote social integration and cohesion, young adults are able to transfer those positive attachments to their school and community environments to inform healthy civic processes with individuals and groups in their communities (Ellemers, et al., 1999; Joseph, 1992; Phinney, et al., 1997). Further, through the collection of group activities, youth mentoring programs promote positive social factors – self-

esteem, locus of control, external efficacy, general trust, and self-determination – that can help the individual affect change in their own lives and those of others through community service (Arroyo & Zigler, 1995; Deaux, 2000; Ellemers, et al., 1999; Phinney, et al., 1997). This is accomplished by immersing the youth in a mentor-rich environment for approximately five years to ensure he or she is an adaptive, committed individual (Kelly, 2002b).

In a study on service learning and community service, of the 26,000 students who attended schools where community service was mandated and service placements were arranged, approximately 5,000 students were more likely to perform community service (Kleiner & Chapman, 2000). In the same study, researchers found that while Blacks and Latinos were less likely to participate in community service, Black and Latinos were more likely to participate in service learning (Kleiner & Chapman, 2000; Kelly, 2002a). This suggests that while Blacks and Latinos were more likely to fulfill the academic requirements regarding service, these requirements alone were not sufficient enough to sustain the performance of service into young adulthood.

Both kinship communities of practice and youth mentor communities of practice are caregiving, supportive environments that have the ability to model civic behavior, instill an expectation of performing civic duties, and perpetuate core beliefs about the history of and benefits from civic engagement beyond the community of practice. Unfortunately, evidence shows too many minorities remain disengaged from the social fabric of society (Fletcher, et al., 2000; Kleiner & Chapman, 2000; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Schlozman, et al., 1999; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Watts, et al., 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998). Thus, it is critical to explore with a subset of minorities specific views toward civic service and elements that may sustain or thwart civic engagement.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the qualitative study was to explore how young adult minorities interpret civic engagement, as well as the meaningful processes and actions that emerge from their interpretation. According to Strauss & Corbin (1990), grounded theory allows us to study subjects or areas we know little about. Grounded theory allows conceptual models to emerge from immersion in the field of study and data collection. This allows themes to become known that can clarify the area under study (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). While research exists that defines and measures even minority civic and political participation, grounded theory is helpful in allowing us to further explore reasons and rationales for minority participation in specific civic vehicles.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

This qualitative exploration emerged from a descriptive study on how participation in youth mentoring programs influenced educational outcomes, quality of life satisfaction, well-being and community service involvement. In February, 2002, a group of 131 young adults were exposed to a quantitative study occurring within eight years of their high school graduation and participation in a group mentoring program. The study group consisted of economically disadvantaged, high achieving persons of color between the ages of 20 through 27 years. Respondents came from communities throughout the nation – New York, California, Massachusetts, Texas, Louisiana, Ohio, New Jersey, Illinois, and Maryland.

From data collected, the 131 respondents indicated significant connections between civic participation during adolescence and civic participation in young adulthood. With 40% of the respondents identified as male, and 60% female, the study found that more than 75% of respondents participated in some form of service (formal and informal) in adulthood; 11% of the respondents participated in national service; and, 15% of the sample held some position in community leadership. These results provide a framework for the qualitative study to explore and

present the civic views of young minority adults.

THE STUDY SAMPLE & FOCUS GROUP

The qualitative study consisted of a detailed, online survey that allowed respondents to present a reflective journal on their civic experiences from adolescence to young adulthood. The principal investigator returned to the 131 respondents requesting participation in the web-based focus group. Out of the three initial mailings, only 29 respondents expressed an interest in being involved in a focus group. Much of the contact between the principal investigator and the respondents occurred via internet-based interaction. The survey used by the respondents lived on a website – www.groupmentor.com, and respondents were provided with detailed instructions on how to access the file and input their responses.

Journal entries from the online survey took an average of two to three weeks on average for respondents to complete and return to the principal investigator. Regular follow-up through additional mailings (a total of three) were required to ensure respondents' reflective journals were completed. Upon receiving the consent form and website-access protocols, seven individuals dropped immediately from the group citing "time constraints." An additional nine respondents either did not complete the journal survey or continuously replied they were "working on it." All group members received a promise of a monetary incentive to complete the online journal. Thus, using a focus group of 13 respondents from the previous study, the information obtained was acquired to learn more about young adult minorities' views on civic service.

The journal survey consisted of 34 open-ended, semi-structured questions within ten (10) areas (Table 1). These questions included "In looking back on your years of voting since turning 18 years of age, are you now more likely or less likely to believe your vote counts? Please explain?" Or, it included questions such as "How would you characterize your level of satisfaction with service performed? (Describe your satisfaction with what

you do or have done in serving others?)”

DATA ANALYSIS

Each journal entry was downloaded from the server and converted to a text file (ASCII format; .txt). The text files were transferred to Atlasti, a qualitative data management program. Coding of data occurred by coding each reflection according to questions posed. After, the data were initially reviewed for emerging themes. These initial themes were

- 1) strength of party affiliation;
- 2) degree of political efficacy;
- 3) level of participation in group mentoring;
- 4) level of parents' involvement in youth program activities;
- 5) types of service performed by respondents;
- 6) degree of commitment to service in adulthood;
- 7) level of satisfaction with service;
- 8) factors influencing civic service;
- 9) extent of philanthropy; and,
- 10) level of volunteerism.

A second analysis of the data yielded three categories (“families”) emerging as notions of civic engagement – 1) cognitive concepts; 2) affective concepts; and, 3) behavioral concepts. In reviewing the initial themes and the emerging categories, nine themes emerged from the data analysis and were grouped by the three concepts of civic engagement:

- 1) Cognitive
 - a) commitment to service
 - b) external/political efficacy
 - c) beliefs surrounding influential factors
 - d) beliefs surrounding parents' involvement in youth program activities
- 2) Affective
 - a) satisfaction with service
 - b) satisfaction with party affiliation
- 3) Behavioral
 - a) performance of service
 - b) philanthropy
 - c) voting

Using these three categories, respondents' ID numbers were converted to pseudonyms to preserve confidentiality of the respondents and to provide a better characterization of each respondent. Then, respondents were clustered according to service history and proximity to the composite of an “ideal volunteer” – a non-existing “constant” with a history of strong service (more than 100 hours) in high school, college and adulthood (See Figure A)

RESULTS

Of the 13 respondents in the focus group, there were four males and nine females (Table 2). The group consists of respondents who participated in the first study on educational achievement and service. These respondents were competitively selected to participate in a group mentoring academic-enrichment program as early as middle school. These academic enrichment programs provide academic support, community service placement and other enrichment and youth development activities throughout the respondents' high school and college careers. Further, due to the needs-based components of the programs in providing outreach services and support to economically disadvantaged families, respondents were once classified as “disadvantaged, high achieving students of color,” each sharing similar academic and socioeconomic histories.

RELATIONSHIP TO CONSTANT

The ideal respondent (a.k.a. the “constant”) exhibits a strong level of service (more than 100 hours per year) in high school, college and early adulthood. Moderate level of service refers to 50 hours to 100 hours per year, and weak level of service refers to less than 50 hours of service per year. The following provides a brief summary of each individual, with an emphasis on their level of service as portrayed in Figure A.

“Archie” is a 22 year old African American male, with a strong level of service performed in high school and college. He attended a public high school, and completed college at a selective

private university. A former participant of a group mentoring program in Louisiana, Archie exhibited a moderate level of service in early adulthood. As shown in Figure A, Archie is very close to the representation of the ideal respondent.

"Ella" is a 23 year old African American female from a group mentoring program in Ohio. She went to public school for her final year after attending a private school for three years. She did enroll in a selective university, but did not complete the program. She eventually completed her higher education at a community college. Maintaining a close proximity to the constant, Ella performed a weak level of service in high school and college, and a moderate level of service in the year prior to the study. She attributes this increase in her civic activities to her religious identification with Christianity, and expressed that "I am constantly giving and serving others and my goal is to please and satisfy people. When that person is happy and pleased, then that makes me happy, and I feel that my goal was accomplished."

"Meris" is a 22 year old Hispanic female who attended a preparatory day school during her high school years and a public university. She exhibited a moderate level of service performed in high school and college. A former participant of a group mentoring program in Illinois, Meris exhibited a weak level of service in young adulthood. Given this decrease in service, there are interesting characteristics of Meris' service given her proximity to the ideal respondent. Currently, Meris is a board member of a state-wide cultural institution that serves the interests and needs of the state's Hispanic residents and their communities. While Meris did not actively participate in her group mentoring program on a regular basis, she credits her program for instilling in her the value of giving back to society. "If it were not for these types of programs, I would not be where I am today. It taught me that there are resources out there to help everyone and that it is important to give back." Meris is the first in her family to attend and complete college.

"Lynda" is a 26 year old African American female from the same group mentoring program as Ella. She attended a Catholic school during her high school years. Also, Lynda completed college and an advanced degree at a non-selective college. Lynda exhibited a strong level of service in high school and college. However, during early adulthood, Lynda exhibited a weak level of service. She is at the mid-point between the remaining respondents and the constant. It appears that Lynda's service is more informal, in other words helping others as she goes about her daily activities. Also, Lynda is one of the respondents earning less than \$15,000 per year at the time of this study. However, within this study group, she was the only one unemployed and searching for employment, and she did not use this available time for formal volunteerism within or outside her community.

"Olivia" is a 25 year old bi-racial female who participated in the same program as Ella and Lynda. In addition to attending Catholic school during her high school years, she also completed college and an advanced degree at a non-selective college. Olivia exhibited a strong level of service performed in high school and college. However, during early adulthood, Olivia exhibited a weak level of service. Olivia, also, is at the mid-point between the remaining respondents and the constant. She indicated that she used to help out a lot more than she currently is helping. "I used to be required to do service... [but now] I have other commitments and I live pretty far away from services where I could volunteer." Similar to Lynda, Olivia's service is very informal including "being kind to others and saying hello to someone who looks sad or going out of your way to open a door for someone."

"Ben" is a 24 year old immigrant male from the Caribbean, who identifies himself as a Black male. A former student at a private boarding school, he completed college at a four-year private university and participated in a group mentoring program in New York City. Ben exhibited a moderate level of service in high school.

During college and early adulthood, however, Ben exhibited a weak level of service. Ben is removed from proximity to the constant as most of his service activities were college-club focused, and very irregular. Thus, the amount of service he performed in his younger years could not sustain active civic service into early adulthood.

"Jack" is a 23 year old African American male. He exhibited a moderate level of service in high school, which was a private boarding school. A former student of a selective university, Jack exhibited a weak level of service performed in college and adulthood. He participated in the same group mentoring program as Ben. Like Ben, Jack is removed from proximity to the constant. His service was more focused on raising funds for health issues such as breast cancer awareness through marathons and other awareness-event vehicles.

"Colin" is a 23 year old African American male from a group mentoring program in Maryland. With support from his group mentoring program, Colin attended a private day school, and a public college. Far from proximity to the constant, Colin exhibits a weak level of service from high school through early adulthood. Colin attributes this civic deficit to time. "I don't have the time to involve myself in community activities... primarily because I've worked 2, 3, sometimes 4 jobs at a time for most of the years since I've graduated from high school and have little extra time to invest in community service." However, Colin expressed more involvement in informal ways of helping others, similar to Lynda and Olivia.

"Gemma" is a 25 year old African American female. In addition to participating in a group mentoring program in the Bronx, New York, Gemma is also in "officer training" in the United States military where she is also studying to be a physician. In addition to attending a private boarding school, Gemma also attended a private four year college. Outside of her military commitments, her level of community service is weak from high school to adulthood. She indicates

that her current vocation is her service. Gemma expressed a high value should be placed on civic service. She characterizes civic service as honorable, which places the welfare and good of the public ahead of person providing the service. "The individual may receive employment but the principle is that individual gives up valuable commodities such as energy and time to devote to the public good who may or may not give the individual anything in return." It is important to note that Gemma always desired to join the U.S. armed forces, and completed college in order to fulfill her lifelong dream of becoming an officer. Thus, Gemma is an anomaly among the members of the study group and the constant, as her vocational choice is service to others.

"Harmony" is a 23 year old African American female who participated in a group mentoring program in Ohio. She attended a college preparatory boarding school, and also attended a historically Black college. Harmony is the only respondent who expressed a strong dissatisfaction with her high school teachers and did not feel as if she "belonged" within this elite, predominately White educational community. She shares a distant proximity to the constant with Colin and Gemma. Harmony exhibits a weak level of service from high school through early adulthood. Although Harmony places a high value on the performance of service in the community, she also cites the limited time she has to perform service.

"Ana Lee" is a 25 year old female who emigrated from the Caribbean. She identifies herself as African American. Ana Lee attended a private boarding school, and also attended a four-year private college, which she completed in six years. Ana Lee exhibited a strong level of service in high school due to the requirements of the group mentoring program in New York City. However, her level of service in college and early adulthood was weak. Ana Lee is one of three members far removed from the constant. She cites a need to attend to her own personal goals of "getting a college degree, getting married, and relocating for a better job." Currently, Ana Lee is an educator in

the Northeast and is seeking a graduate degree to be more competitive in the field of education.

“Gia” is a 26 year old African American female who participated in a group mentoring program in Maryland. With support from her group mentoring program, Gia attended a private day school and a public university. She exhibited a strong level of service in high school specifically because of the requirements of the group mentoring program. However, her level of service in college and adulthood was weak. Gia is also farthest removed from the constant. However, she expressed a strong belief in the benefits of service. “I think it’s very important - it gives you a better understanding of your community, and gives you more of a stake in its success. It’s like ‘putting a face on the issue,’... [c]ompassion leads to action.” However Gia admitted she has not performed service on a consistent basis since high school. “No excuse really - just didn’t make the time.”

Finally, “Charlotte” is a 23 year old multi-racial female, who identifies herself as White. She attended a local Catholic high school, and a public university. Charlotte exhibited a strong level of service in high school due to the requirements of the group mentoring program that was located in Louisiana. After high school, her level of service in college and adulthood was weak. Charlotte admits that she performed service in high school because of the requirements. However, she cites a strong commitment to her city and its surrounding areas, which is expressed through her keeping “up with things that are going on in my area and I vote on a regular basis.” Currently, Charlotte is a graduate student, and she expressed that she gets “immense satisfaction from serving others” by donating clothes and things to her community on a regular basis.

COGNITIVE CONCEPTS

The following discusses the cognitive concepts or notions of civic engagement – commitment to service, external/political efficacy, beliefs surrounding influential factors, beliefs surrounding parents involvement in youth program

activities.

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

Level of commitment to service was expressed through the following areas – extremely committed, committed, somewhat committed, not very committed, not committed. When looking at the study group, only five respondents (all female) appeared more committed to service in adulthood than the other respondents.

Meris and Charlotte presented as “extremely committed” to service. Meris expressed she was extremely committed to service in adulthood, as her service is performed through her community leadership as well as her mentoring of at-risk youth. She cited that “[c]ommitment is shown through time and resources dedicated.” Charlotte, on the other hand, indicated her commitment is expressed through her regular voting and her service to others through her in-kind gifts.

Lynda, Olivia and Ella presented as “committed” to service. Lynda expressed a strong interest in her community and its improvement, while Olivia expressed being committed to service but also trying to balance this commitment with her responsibilities to her family. Ella cited her commitment as a result of her religious beliefs.

“An individual’s commitment to serving others is being dedicated and dependable, and following through with your service... I feel that I am constantly serving others and I believe that is important in life, because I am a Christian....”

Ana Lee, Jack, Archie and Colin presented as “somewhat committed” to service. Ana Lee expressed that commitment is the “amount of hours” spent serving others. However, because of time constraints in her life, she is unable to contribute her time to serving others. Jack indicated that commitment is measured by serving through one’s career choice or as a volunteer.

However, his service is more focused on performing indirect service – such as marathons and raising awareness through event planning – because “it requires less of” his time. Finally, Colin expressed that “commitment to serving others would be shown by the effort, time, and heart an individual puts into helping others.” While this is his view of service, he cited little time or effort to contribute to helping others. However, Archie indicated a belief that

“[a] person’s commitment can be measure[d] by the consistency and amount of effort that is given to community service. It cannot be measured based on the medi[um] through which service is provided, nor [whether it is convenient].”

As such, Archie views his level of commitment to service as very low because many of his activities are not performed outside of his church.

Ben, Gemma and Gia presented as “not very committed” to service. Ben sees commitment to service as defined more by organizing events and raising awareness. He expressed that “I have ... helped organize little things like information sessions or seminars, but never really fully knowing or grasping how to be more involved. I just helped however I could to help push a message across.” Thus, due to his lack of service during the early years of his development, there is little knowledge of vehicles that can facilitate his performance of service and engagement in the community. Gemma characterized her commitment as low because “I do not have time or energy to spare.” However, Gemma views service as a lifelong vocation and the “involvement of the individual in the public workings of a community however large or small. This involvement isn’t limited to politics but can incorporate actions such as reconstruction of public works or protection of the public as in fire company volunteer.” Gia, finally, characterizes commitment as a “consistent pattern of support over time, either financially or by volunteering

one’s time.” She indicated her commitment is minimal because of time constraints, although she does donate to charity on an annual basis.

Finally, Harmony presented as “not committed” to service. Since her work is in medical research, she feels she’s doing her part “improving the health of others.” Harmony expressed that she does not have an interest in service beyond the parameters of her vocation.

EXTERNAL/POLITICAL EFFICACY

Respondents were evaluated on the degree of external/political efficacy from their responses. The areas are strong external efficacy; moderate external efficacy; and weak external efficacy. Lynda, Ella, Harmony and Charlotte exhibited strong external efficacy in their responses and strongly believed their votes counted. In particular, Harmony expressed that she knew her vote counted because of her faith, and Charlotte believed her vote affected outcomes in her community.

Olivia, Meris, Archie and Gia exhibited moderate external efficacy in their responses. Olivia believed her voted counted, but not in races where candidates were pre-selected by party brokers. Meris indicated that she was more inclined to participate more in local races and school board elections rather than participate in national elections, as she had “mixed feelings about this ever since the 200[0] Presidential campaign.” Archie concurs with Meris and is more inclined to vote in local elections because “there are no electoral colleges at these levels of governments.” Finally, Gia believes in voting but admits she is still too cynical.

Colin, Jack, Gemma, and Ben and Ana Lee exhibited weak external efficacy. Colin admitted that he never had a desire to vote until after the 2000 Presidential election. Jack had the opposite outcome as the 2000 Presidential election decreased his desire to vote. Gemma, on the other hand, does not believe her vote counts or that she has any power in the governance of her

community or nation. However, she expressed that she continues to vote every year "because I believe that I should continue to apply my tiny measure of power to effect change because I do not see the future." The two respondents who immigrated to the United States while they were children also exhibited a weak level of external efficacy. Ben strongly believed that votes count more in suburban areas that are less likely to be populated by persons of color, and Ana Lee also expressed that she did not believe her vote counted. Among all of the respondents, Ben and Ana Lee were the only respondents to specifically cite Florida as their example, and were passionate in their responses about the political losses for people of color in Florida.

BELIEFS SURROUNDING INFLUENTIAL PERSONS OR GROUPS

When probed who or what influenced their civic service and beliefs about civic service, there was an interesting range of answers from this study group. The influential persons or groups were 1) parent(s); 2) group mentoring program; 3) religion; 4) teachers; 5) peers; 6) adult mentors; and, 7) other persons or groups.

Respondents who believed their parents to be an influential factor were Ella, Ana Lee, Jack, Colin, and Lynda. Ella strongly believed her parents were most influential in shaping her beliefs about, commitment to and actions in volunteerism and voting. Colin, Jack and Ana Lee believed the parental influence was secondary to another influencing factor, especially Colin. Lynda believed the parental influence was somewhat influential, but not a significant or secondary factor.

Ana Lee, Jack, Lynda, Olivia and Meris believed their group mentoring program was influential in shaping their beliefs about, commitment to and actions in volunteerism and voting. In particular, Jack, Lynda, Olivia and Ana Lee felt strongly the values of their group mentoring program influenced their civic behaviors. Meris believed her group mentoring program was somewhat influential, but not as significantly as the others. More importantly,

given Ana Lee's immigrant status she received a wealth of support services from her group mentoring program, including financial support and college preparedness services. She indicated she "positively identifies" with the values of her group mentoring program.

Only four respondents believed religion influenced their service. Gia, Colin, Archie and Ella all expressed that religion played a significant role in their beliefs about volunteerism and voting. Colin, in particular, when asked "Who or what inspired you to participate in voluntary activities...?", he replied "God. Other than that, no one."

With respect to beliefs surrounding teachers (secondary school and college), only two respondents believed their teachers influenced their service. Ben and Ana Lee believed their teachers played a secondary role in influencing their beliefs about, commitment to, and actions in service.

Adult mentors were significant to Ana Lee, Ben and Meris. They expressed that their adult mentors left favorable impressions on them about "giving back" to the community. Meris, in particular, expressed that her adult mentor, a director of a non-profit youth program outside of her group mentoring program, inspired her and made her see various avenues of giving back to the community. "I wanted to do something to help other students like me..." she noted as she continues to support and contribute to her former mentor's program. Ana Lee indicated that her adult mentor, a director with a large insurance company, was critical to her development. Unfortunately, the mentoring relationship was too brief for Ana Lee.

Also, Meris, Ben and Ana Lee were the only respondents who believed peer mentoring to have influenced their service to others. While Ben and Ana Lee both indicated in their responses that peer mentoring was somewhat influential, Meris indicated that it was the most significant of all factors. Meris fondly remembers the relationships forged from peer mentoring and the benefits that emerged from these relationships. She indicated

that peer mentoring “made me want to be a Peer Mentor and I continue to mentor!”

Finally, six respondents identified other influential factors they believed spurred their commitment to and actions with service. Ben, in particular, believed his private college influenced his views about service, while Olivia believes National Public Radio also influenced her views about service. Jack believed Black pioneers such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X influenced his views, Ella believed the Americorps institution influenced her beliefs even though she did not participate in national service. Only two respondents believed one factor influenced their views about, commitment to and actions with volunteerism and voting – Gemma and Harmony, two individuals who are significantly removed from the constant. Gemma believes her own views about service influenced her commitment to and actions with volunteerism and voting. She indicated that as long as she could remember “I had already committed [myself] to a level of service with the [military] and as a doctor.” Harmony believed that being helped as a youth influenced her civic experiences into young adulthood.

BELIEFS SURROUNDING PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Of all the areas, beliefs surrounding parent involvement in respondents’ youth activities were bleak. Only three respondents believed their parents actively participated in the activities that shaped their education and lives during adolescence. Those respondents are Ella, Archie and Jack.

Ella’s parents were very involved with her school work as well as her group mentoring program activities. Further, Ella’s parents continue to involve themselves in her youth program and volunteer to assist other parents nine years after Ella left the program. Archie’s parents not only participated in the group mentoring program but also regularly volunteered their time in his school and in the program. Archie asserts that his parents modeled civic behavior to the other youths in the

program to the degree that his parents are still remembered by adult alumni of the program. “My dad also volunteered for our camping trip and he was most remembered for his pancakes... and talking in his sleep. I’ll never forget that!” Finally, Jack’s mother regularly participated in his group mentoring program but not in his school.

Unfortunately, the remaining respondents believed their parents had little or no involvement in their school activities or youth program activities. Colin, Lynda and Meris cited parents’ employment as an inhibiting factor to parental involvement, while the other respondents cited parents’ lack of interest as the inhibiting factor. Ana Lee, in particular, expressed that she “desperately wanted” her parents to be more involved in her youth program and in her school. However, Ana Lee’s parents did not express an interest and exhibited minimal academic expectations of Ana Lee.

AFFECTIVE CONCEPTS

The following discusses results among the affective concepts of civic engagement – satisfaction with service performed, and satisfaction with political party affiliation.

SATISFACTION WITH SERVICE

Feelings of satisfaction were identified as “extremely satisfied,” “satisfied,” “somewhat satisfied,” “neither satisfied or dissatisfied,” “somewhat dissatisfied,” “dissatisfied,” “extremely dissatisfied.” When looking at the responses, most respondents expressed they were either “extremely satisfied” or “satisfied.”

Jack, Olivia, Ella and Meris identified themselves as “extremely satisfied” with the service they have performed during their life cycle. Jack indicated he was satisfied but not content, while Ella expressed that her goal in life is to serve others. To Olivia, building homes is currently her area of focus and where she has focused much of her civic energies.

"I get a great deal of satisfaction from helping people build houses. I have read at story time, played the piano for the elderly, and put food in bowls in soup kitchens. I often feel better about helping, but sometimes get saddened when I am around the homeless because I feel that I am not doing enough to help them. I sometimes wonder if I should focus my energy towards one cause, then I won't feel like such a failure (at helping out), but I think I'm doing okay. Habitat, as mentioned earlier, is the most satisfying service activity I have ever done."

Meris does not merely characterize herself as "more than satisfied" she indicated she is "fulfilled."

"When you are a part of an organization, you feel like you are contributing to society, which can speak volumes toward a person's confidence and self-worth and can lead to a lot of positives for society as a whole such as less violence, drug addiction, gang involvement, etc."

Respondents who feel less than satisfied with their service were Ana Lee, Archie, and Colin. Ana Lee indicated that she feels guilty about her current level of service.

"I'm proud of what I've done in the past... [but] I experience guilt at having taken a couple years off."

Archie was somewhat dissatisfied because of his level of participation is currently not comparable to his past performance of service. Colin, however, is significantly dissatisfied with his performance of service and expressed a lot of concern regarding

his lack of service. Because of the many jobs he currently maintains, "I don't have the time to involve myself in community activities."

SATISFACTION WITH POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION

The following categories were established to evaluate respondents satisfaction with political party affiliation – strong democrat, weak democrat, independent, weak republican, strong republican. A majority of the group identified themselves as "independent" while the remaining respondents identified themselves as strong or weak democrats, or strong republicans.

Jack, Ella, and Gia identified themselves as strong democrats. Jack indicated that the reason he identifies himself as strong democrat is because his "needs are those of the majority of the party." However, Jack is not satisfied with the Democratic Party, and asserts that "I don't think [my needs] have been met." Ella, on the other hand, expressed satisfaction with the Democratic Party and noted that the "democrats have lived up to my expectations." Gia, finally, is neutral in her satisfaction, as she faults Democrats and Republicans for having "both hurt the Black community." She stated that the Democrats are the closest to meeting her expectations as "[they] seem to show more concern and support for social issues (health coverage, affirmative action, etc.)."

Archie and Lynda identified themselves as weak democrats. Archie, in particular, leans more toward the Democratic Party as he said he found that "democrats tend to do what is best for the community, especially economically." Archie indicated that while a person can never expect candidates to do everything that they promised in their campaigning, he feels more satisfied than not that "a democrat [would] stimulate the economy and show more concern for minorities and those in need." Lynda, on the other hand, did not have a strong affinity for the democrats. In contrast, Lynda stated that "Democrats definitely do not meet all of my hopes and expectations, that's why

I'm leaning more towards Independent." She also expressed that while she is weak in her satisfaction with the Democratic Party, she has a strong aversion to the Republican Party.

"I think the Republican viewpoint is not inclusive of all that actually occurs in the average person's lives. The necessities of the average middle class and [those] below don't seem to be a priority for Republicans. Unfortunately most people in [our] society fit into those classes so [Republicans] neglect a lot of people in their decisions."

Charlotte was the only respondent who identified herself as a strong republican. She expressed that she is "very pleased so far with my decision to be republican." Charlotte noted that while she votes consistently for the party's candidates, she votes for the person and on character than merely because of the candidate's affiliation with the Republican Party.

Given those results, who are the independents within the group? Ben, Ana Lee, Gemma, Olivia, Harmony, Meris, and Colin all identified themselves as independents. Ben and Ana Lee are the only immigrants within the group. Ben cited he had no specific affinity for either party – Democrat or Republican, or any other political group, and indicated that he did not "feel like I am mainstream with democratic or republican because of all the bickering and fighting...." Ana Lee identifies with the Green Party because she has similar general interests as the party. However, she is neither active with the Green Party, nor does she receive any information about them. Further, she expressed no attraction to or satisfaction with the Democratic Party or the Republican Party, as Ana Lee believes the Democratic message is that "government will take care of the [people]" and the Republic message is "more focused on supporting big business." Gemma does not "trust the wisdom or motivations of [any] political party..." and prefers

to retain her objectivity, while Harmony just identifies herself as an independent and purposely desires not to belong to any political party.

Olivia leans more toward the liberal party and is an avid listener of National Public Radio. She expressed that she grew up with republican parents but always felt her views were more liberal. She's satisfied with her political choices as she identifies them as well-balanced. Meris identifies herself as independent and votes based on a person's character and their public service history. She's also satisfied with her political choices as her focus is always what candidates and political leaders can "do for me and my community." Finally, Colin identifies himself as independent. He indicates that while he leans toward the Democratic party, he is less than satisfied with the Democrats and the extent of their liberalism. Colin noted that Democrats are "more sympathetic towards the African-American plight than Republicans but are sometimes a bit too liberal for my tastes." Colin's remarks were more critical of the Republican Party. "[They are] very willing to sacrifice socially beneficial programs for the economic good of the middle/upper class."

BEHAVIORAL CONCEPTS

There are three behavioral components that emerged from this study – actual performance of service, philanthropy, and voting.

PERFORMANCE OF SERVICE

Archie completed over 100 hours of service in high school and college, and more than 50 hours the year prior to the study. The bulk of his service was directed to after school tutoring for elementary children, serving as an adult mentor, and participating mostly through his worship center. As a tutor, Archie supported eighth graders in their need to know concepts of math and generate an interest in mathematics. As a mentor, Archie met regularly with young "minority students having problems in school," with the hopes that he could motivate them to aspire to attend college and

study engineering. Finally, through his religious community, Archie regularly visits the sick and participates in outreach activities that specifically support the religious community.

Ella completed 25 hours of service in high school during her four years, and no more than 10 hours of service during her tenure in college. However, in the year prior to this study, Ella completed over 50 hours of service. Ella's service career included volunteering at nursing homes as well as cultural organizations. In addition, she is very active in her religious community visiting the sick. Currently, she is a tutor and mentor with elementary students at a local school, and she continues to participate in a cultural group that brings artistic performances to support homeless families, youth in group homes, and the infirmed in nursing care centers.

Meris completed 80 hours of service in high school, 60 hours of service in college, and 20 hours of service in the year prior to the study. Her volunteerism is filled with various activities from working with "soup kitchens" to board leadership. As a board member, Meris creates programs designed to address and improve quality of life issues for the state's Hispanic community, and she also volunteers with various organizations serving the state's Latino population. In addition to her community leadership, which she does in addition to her employment in the field of business, Meris mentors to a young girl who had been involved with the state's juvenile court system.

Lynda completed over 100 hours of service in high school and college. However, in the year prior to this study, she did not perform service. Much of Lynda's service was accomplished through City Year, as well as providing after school tutoring. In addition, she volunteered at a day care center as an aide, and raised money for breast cancer awareness while also donating blood to the Red Cross.

Olivia completed 200 hours during high school and 150 hours during college. In the year

prior to the study, Olivia completed 20 hours of service. Olivia's service career revolved around her early work with Habitat for Humanity, which she loved. She also volunteered helping out in neighborhood "soup kitchens" while also donating her time to a "women's crisis shelter." Further, she is very active with her local library.

During high school, Ben did not perform any service, and in college, Ben performed about 10 hours of service. In the year prior to this study, Ben did not participate in service. The extent of his service surrounds college activities where he helped out at neighborhood pantries, and assisted with home building through an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. Similarly, Jack completed 60 hours of service in high school and another 20 hours of service were completed in college. However, in the year preceding the study, Jack performed only 5 hours of service. Much of his work was indirect service focus – raising money for Lupus, breast cancer or HIV/AIDS awareness through the running of marathons.

Colin performed no service during high school, college or the year prior to the study. However, Gemma, the military personnel, performed no service during high school, and only ten hours of service during college. In the year preceding the study, Gemma did not perform service. During college, she did participate in after school tutoring of inner-city youths. Since then, she has not returned to this activity in early adulthood.

Harmony completed 10 hours of service in high school, and 30 hours of service in college. In the year prior to the study, Harmony completed 30 hours of service. Harmony's focus has always been raising money for cultural groups or cultural interests. In addition, Ana Lee completed 120 hours of service in high school and 20 hours during college. In the year preceding this study, Ana Lee did not perform service. The bulk of her service contributions went to after school tutoring. Ana Lee's reasons for performing service were the requirements imposed by her mentoring program.

Gia was also required to perform service by her mentoring program. She performed 200 hours of service in high school, she did not perform any service during college or the year prior to the study. The bulk of her service was performed in a short period with City Year, and helping out at a senior center. She avidly participates in clothing drives. Finally, Charlotte completed 200 hours of service during high school. However, she did not complete service during college or the year prior to this study. During high school, she helped out in a day care center, with no other interactions with other volunteer outlets.

PHILANTHROPY

Philanthropy was grouped by "high contributions" (i.e. more than \$200 per year), "moderate contributions" (i.e. \$1 to \$200 per year), and "no contributions" (i.e. \$0 per year). Only three respondents contributed more than \$300 per year to a charity.

Ella donated \$2000 to her church community in the year preceding the study. Much of her donations were attributed to "tithing" or special offerings to her church community, in addition to in-kind gifts of clothes, food and other non-financial gifts. Gemma contributed \$350 to charity, and Meris contributed \$300 to charitable causes. While Gemma did not elaborate on the recipients of her donations, Meris elaborated that she gives back to the youth programs that helped her.

"[If we] who have benefited from non-profit programs do not in turn support them, they will not be able to continue to do what they did for us, for others."

Moderate contributions were provided by Gia, Lynda and Olivia. In the year preceding the study, Gia gave a total of \$110. The recipient of her gift was the group mentoring program that guided her through high school and college. In addition, she noted that all of her current and

future "monetary donations go to programs that support children and/or education." Lynda gave a total of \$50 to charity in the year preceding the study. Her motivation to giving is described as supporting those organizations she feels specifically "helped our society." Finally, Olivia gave a total of \$30. The recipients of her gifts are the Sierra Club, the Arbor Day Foundation, or her alma maters (high school, college, and graduate school). Olivia expressed that she donated her time and physical energy to Habitat for Humanity, but never considered donating financial contributions until this survey arrived.

The remaining respondents did not give any financial contributions to charitable causes in the year preceding the study. This sub-group includes all of the males, as well as Ana Lee, Harmony and Charlotte. Archie was pursuing entrepreneurial interests in engineering and did not have the finances to contribute to charity outside of his "weekly contributions to the educational fund" at his church (an amount he did not indicate nor whether it was contributed in the year of study). Further, since Jack owns his own talent search business, he primarily donates the company's resources to publicize his company. Ben said the focus of his charity is his high school's annual fund. However, he does not give on a regular basis. Colin indicated his contributions are in-kind gifts, primarily in the form of clothes to charities. Also, Ana Lee expressed that she is not in a financial position to financial contribute. Charlotte and Harmony gave no reason for their lack of financial contributions to charity.

VOTING

Respondents discussed their beliefs about voting, but also their voting history or likelihood of voting. Interestingly, for some of the respondents, they had not considered voting as a civic behavior until the receipt of the surveys. Respondents were grouped into three categories – 1) respondents who voted regularly; 2) respondents who voted sometimes; and, 3) respondents who hadn't voted.

Five respondents identified themselves as regular voters. Gemma noted that she votes

regularly to affect change, and Lynda noted that she goes out of her way to vote with others as a group or block to make an impact. Ella votes in all of the elections, no matter the subject matter, and Harmony votes regularly because of her faith and belief in the power of voting. Charlotte indicated that by regularly voting she's "participating in the community [and] its decisions."

Moderate voters included Ben, Ana Lee, Olivia, Meris, and Archie. Neither Ben nor Ana Lee indicated how irregularly they voted or the context. Olivia, Meris and Archie indicated their focus is local politics when it comes to their participation in voting. This limited participation in the breadth of voting in all areas of politics is spurred by their collective belief that in national politics their votes count less than in local politics.

The non-voters are Jack, Colin and Gia. With the exception of Jack who gave no reason for his lack of participation in voting, Colin and Gia never truly considered voting as a civic participation until the receipt of the surveys. In addition, Gia expressed her cynicism about voting remains, but that she was more apt to vote in future local elections rather than in national elections.

LIMITATIONS

There are five specific limitations within this exploratory study. First, the length and duration of the journal reflections were much longer than the principal investigator initially considered. The journal took, on average, two to three weeks to complete, rather than the two to three days presumed by the investigator.

Also, the requests to participate in this study came within six months of the completion of the previous study. Potential respondents may have experienced fatigue, as the second survey was less direct (open-ended) and much longer than the first survey. In addition to the length of the survey, technology may have also encroached on

the strengths of this exploration. The qualitative study was particularly reliant on technology and web-based interaction between the respondents and the principal investigator. This required more than minimal technological skill of respondents to properly engage in the study. As such, it is unknown the degree to which an emphasis on technology prevented potential respondents from participating.

While some of the group participants appear as though their level of engagement in civic service will sustain through adulthood, it is important to note that all of the respondents are at the beginning journey of their adult life. Some of the respondents only began to re-think their civic service after submitting their reflections. As such, their age and early adulthood status should be taken into consideration when reviewing the data. Finally, the themes that emerged from the study must be further explored. A conceptual model emerged from this study and identified the cognitive, affective and behavioral concepts as possible predictors of "elements of civic engagement" – positive citizenship identity, social connectedness, and social integration (Figure B). Thus, this model needs to be explored, measured and evaluated to ensure that this dynamic actually occurs, and how this process differs by ethnicity, culture, gender, socioeconomic status, and educational attainment.

IMPLICATIONS

While the study is exploratory and requires further research, there are salient notions emerging from this qualitative analysis. Respondents who were educated to prosocial civic behaviors with caregivers and mentors who modeled civic behaviors and commitments were more likely to exhibit a strong civic identity, positive feelings toward service and politics, and a sustained desire to remain involved in service. This signifies an act of critical consciousness, a cognitive notion to abate the harmful effects of oppression against minorities (Helms & Piper, 1994; Southwell & Pirch, 2003; Watts, et al., 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998). Respondents with moderate to high external

efficacy and regular voting practices and service behaviors are able to self-categorize as a way to define self and attain power and self-direction for one's own civic and political development (Southwell & Pirch, 2003; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Watts, et al., 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998).

Respondents who exhibited higher levels of disengagement were young persons who had a history with immigration as a child, or young adults who had strained relations with their parents or educational settings. Further, these respondents also experienced little or no parental involvement in their school or youth program activities. In addition, some respondents engaged in service because their youth program required the participation. However, when the requirement was fulfilled at the end of high school, there were no other incentives or motivations from their communities of practice to sustain their civic behaviors.

This suggests the youth program's service requirement during high school may have been diametrically opposed to the civic ecology in the caregiving environment, as the civic expectations of the youth group were not supported in the home (Flanagan et al., 1998; McDevitt, et al., 2003). Thus, this conflict between key social institutions for the maturing youth decreased the likelihood that civic participation could be sustained into adulthood (McDevitt, et al., 2003). As literature asserts, participation in service alone is not enough to sustain service and promote social integration (Fletcher, et al., 2000; Parker & Franco, 1999; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Yates & Youniss, 1998). However, continuity in the act of civic behavior, as well as social expectation and group norms regarding civic behaviors facilitate long-term sustained civic participation (Fletcher, et al., 2000; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Watts, et al., 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998; Zaff, et al., 2003).

It is critical to examine minority civic participation within the dominant social group as well as the intragroup civic diversity (Rosenthal,

et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Watts, et al., 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998). First, social capital and social cohesion can emerge from within the minority group (Rich, 1999; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Yates & Youniss, 1998). As such, the minority social network of relatives, fictive kin, educational role models, and youth organizations serve as protective factors that influence group norms within society and strengthen individual civic bonds with society-at-large (Fletcher, et al., 2000; Kawachi & Berkman, 2000; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003). Social capital and broad social networks within minority communities serve as adaptive strategies that can diminish the harmful effects of social exclusion and alienation (McDevitt, et al., 2003; Rich, 1999; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003).

Further, there remains diversity within diversity. By understanding the relationship between members of minority subgroups and the dominant culture, and how members internalize their relationships with the dominant culture, we gain greater knowledge of the subgroup's adaptive strategies toward acculturation and social integration (McDevitt, et al., 2003; Rich, 1999; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Yates & Youniss, 1998; Zaff, et al., 2003). "How is civic participation defined within the subgroups of this minority community including new arrivals/immigrants?" "What are the outcomes of civic duty expressed within these subgroups?"

Finally, civic knowledge is a product of caregiving environments, young mentoring programs and school settings (Fletcher, et al., 2000; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Zaff, et al., 2003). These social institutions have the ability to recruit, train and facilitate civic participation in society (Fletcher, et al., 2000; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Zaff, et al., 2003). Also, these institutions shape the civic beliefs, feelings and actions of young maturing members within these groups (Fletcher, et al., 2000; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Southwell & Pirch, 2003; Torney-Purta, et al., 2003; Watts, et

al., 1999; Zaff, et al., 2003).

Civic engagement begins with an early socialization to the values and culture of civic and political service. Caregivers set the tone for the youth as to what behaviors are expected in society, and voluntary organizations foster the maturing individual's engagement in society (Fletcher, et al., 2000; McDevitt, et al., 2003; Rosenthal, et al., 1998; Zaff, et al., 2003). Emphasis cannot be placed solely on voluntary organizations and their outreach to all segments of society. Caregivers establish a cultural foundation for the growing youth from which the child learns and subsequently accepts whether he or she has a place in society-at-large as a viable citizen.

Civic engagement is a reciprocal relationship between the individual member of a social group and society. In order for this individual to be known by society they must first be introduced to society as a meaningful productive member. Thus, civic expectations emerge from group membership within a kinship community of practice or an educational/youth mentoring community of practice. These key entities shape an individual's long-term civic knowledge and actions into a citizen-in-community.

CONCLUSION

Being engaged in civic society is an ideal goal for every citizen. The difficulty arises when maturing youths have little or no viable examples of civic and political participation. When a parent or caregiver is not fully engaged in traditional civic systems of society, their children will not be as well. Thus, youth organizations and mentoring programs become additional critical resources to ensuring a generation is fully engaged in all aspects of our society.

Civic engagement is not something that automatically occurs upon one's transition to adulthood. On the contrary, civic engagement is a developmental process that includes cognitive, affective and behavioral benchmarks. The origins of these benchmarks can be found in the various

communities of practice.

Civic participation provides individuals with civic skills that can be transferred to all areas of life. However, by adulthood, many individuals have little or no background in civic or political participation. In order to alter this disparaging fact, our social systems must increase opportunities for youth and their families to be involved with service opportunities. Early exposure to service ensures that developing citizens are more likely to be active in the political process, take interests in the equal distribution of community resources, and find themselves more inclined to mobilize fellow citizens for a cause.

In essence, civic engagement is more than a high level of altruism, buttressed by positive self-esteem, strong self-concept, and high self-efficacy. It is also a formal, consistent statement by the young citizen-in-community to society-at-large saying "I am a valuable member of my environment," and society, in turn, agrees.

Caregiving environments and youth organizations and community groups must see themselves as schools for democracy where the maturing youths have increased opportunities to enjoy participatory equality in our nation. Then, our nation will observe the elements of active citizenship emerge through adulthood across the cultural divide.

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TABLE 1
QUESTIONS WITHIN THE JOURNAL SURVEY

1. The ID number for this survey is
2. The sponsoring organization for this respondent is
3. There are many definitions of "civic engagement" currently being used. When you think of "civic engagement," how would you define it to others?
4. How would you characterize an individual's commitment to serving others?
5. How would you characterize your level of commitment to serving others? (Describe your commitment to what you do or have done in serving others?)
6. In looking back on your experiences with your sponsoring organization, describe how this program influenced your commitment to service.
7. How would you characterize an individual's satisfaction with service performed?
8. How would you characterize your level of satisfaction with service performed? (Describe your satisfaction with what you do or have done in serving others?)
9. In looking back on your experiences with your sponsoring organization, describe how this program influenced your level of satisfaction with service.
10. In your opinion, how important is an individual's performance of community service to being engaged in society?
11. How do you characterize your level of service since completion of high school – "high," "moderate," "low," or "none at all?" Explain.
12. Can you list all of your community service activities from high school to present? Include "organization," "time frame – high school, college, adulthood," "length of time," "volunteer role," and "primary duties."
13. Who or what inspired you to participate in voluntary activities during high school and beyond?
14. When you think of political participation, how do you define it?
15. Which political party, if any, do you belong, and have you found this political party to meet all of your hopes, expectations and aspirations? Explain.
16. When looking at other political parties to which you are not a member, identify these parties and discuss how you interpret their messages to you and your community?
17. In looking back on your years of voting since turning 18 years of age, are you now more likely or less likely to believe your vote counts...please explain?
18. Organized group mentoring is defined as an early intervention provided to youth from middle school through high school to increase student engagement in school –related activities....
19. When looking back on your experiences with your sponsoring organization, describe how this affiliation influenced your concept of citizenship and civic participation in adulthood?
20. Did this affiliation influence your participation or interest in participation in national service – AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Vista, etc.? Explain.
21. Did this affiliation influence your participation or interest in participating in campaigning for a political office? Explain.
22. Did this affiliation influence your participation or interest in participating in community school boards or community district boards? Explain.
23. Did this affiliation influence your participation or interest in participating on the board of directors of corporations or non-profit organizations? Explain.
24. Did this affiliation influence your financial contributions to organizations, informal groups or individuals? Explain, and identify the types of groups to which you donate your financial resources.
25. Counseling consisted of college financial aid counseling, college preparatory course selection....

26. Mentoring consisted of access to adult mentors, access to peer mentors, service learning curricula, access to family mentors....
27. Academic support consisted of tutoring services, summer enrichment classes, standardized test preparation....
28. Outreach support consisted of college tours, summer job placement, community service placement, access to pre-college enrichment opportunities...
29. Parental involvement consisted of volunteer opportunities for parents, and informational workshops to increase parents' knowledge....
30. When looking back on your affiliations with the sponsoring organization, please explain whether or not you identify with your sponsoring organization.
31. Please explain your current relationship with your sponsoring organization, and your group mentor/ advisor.
32. Please explain your current relationship with alumni from your sponsoring organization, and whether you attend alumni activities or events.
33. When you think about your sponsoring organization, do you feel the organization mentored and nurtured you into young adulthood....
34. Please describe your thoughts on civic engagement and people of color. What factors do you believe promote or inhibit feelings of citizenship in communities of color....

Figure A – Focus Group Analysis
N=13

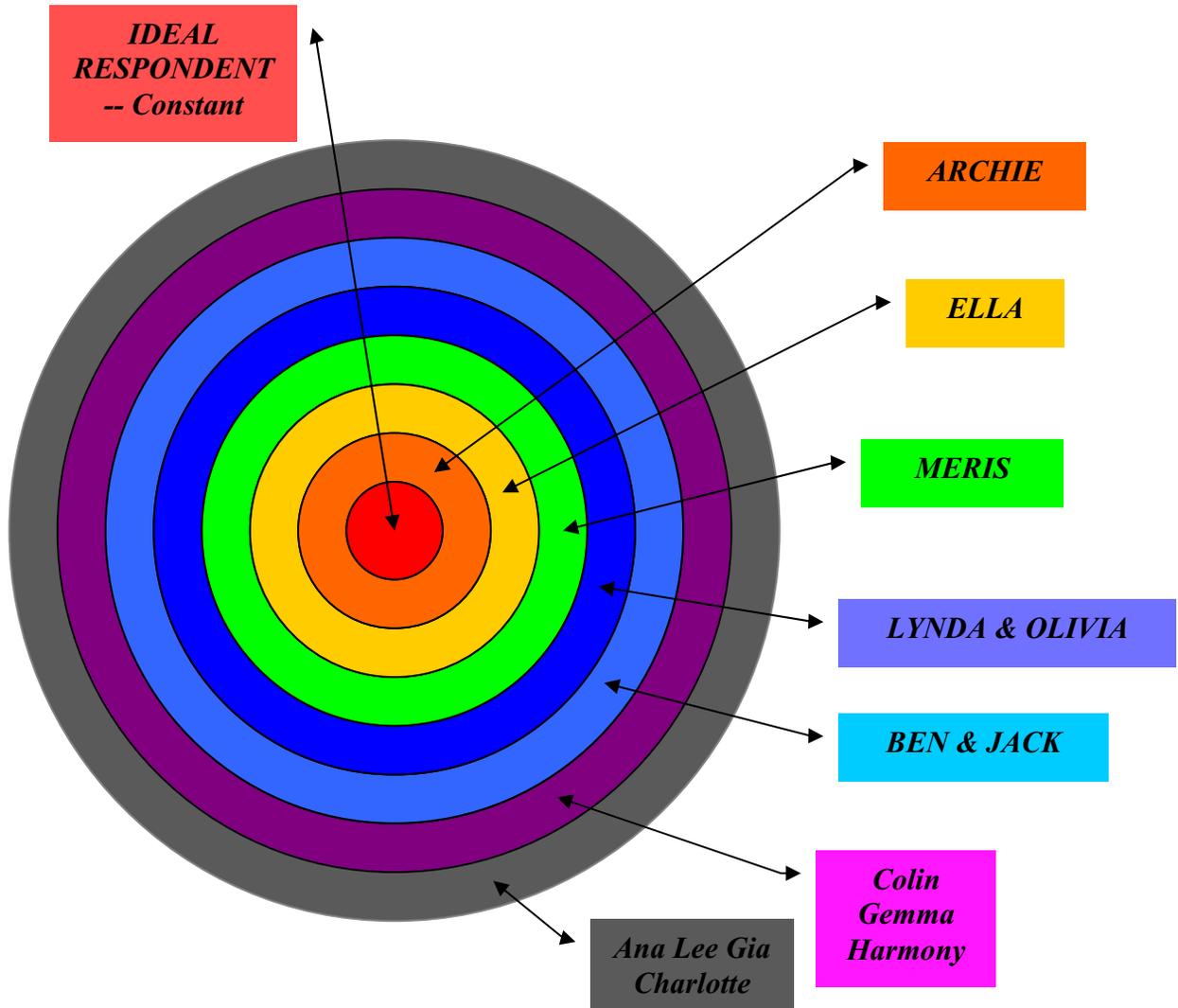


Table 2 – Current Demographics (N=13)

	Respondents' Gender	Current Salary	Current Field/Vocation	U.S. Region	Residential Type
Archie	MALE	<15K	Customer Service	South	Urban
Ella	FEMALE	25-35K	Business	Mid West	Inner City
Meris	FEMALE	35-50K	Business	Pacific Northwest	Urban
Lynda	FEMALE	<15K	Unknown	Midwest	Suburban
Olivia	FEMALE	35-50K	Education	Midwest	Suburban
Ben	MALE	35-50K	Unknown	Northeast	Suburban
Jack	MALE	<15K	Arts & Entertainment	Northeast	Inner City
Colin	MALE	25-35K	Science/Engineering	Mid West	Urban
Gemma	FEMALE	<15K	Military/Medical	Northeast	Inner City
Harmony	FEMALE	25-35K	Science/Engineering	Mid West	Suburb
Ana Lee	FEMALE	35-50K	Education	Northeast	Urban
Gia	FEMALE	15-25K	Graduate student	Northeast	Urban
Charlotte	FEMALE	<15K	Graduate Student	South	Unknown

Figure B
Conceptual Model

