Socializing Youth for Citizenship

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Abstract

Most researchers to date have theorized that programs to promote positive citizenship should begin with an opportunity for adolescents to participate in positive citizenship activities, such as community service or political volunteering. In the present study, we hypothesize that programs and policies to promote positive citizenship may need to begin by first focusing on informal interactions in youths' lives, such as with parents and peers, and on the culture in which youth are raised. We hypothesize that these informal interactions socialize or "prime" youth to have the motivation and values that subsequently lead to positive citizenship behaviors. To examine this hypothesis, we analyzed a large, diverse, longitudinal survey. The data were collected during a historical period in which a major opportunity to participate in a positive citizenship activity, and one that was salient to a large percentage of the sample, was present: The Million Man March. Our subsequent findings contribute to the field of youth civic engagement by providing more concrete evidence for the unique effects that informal social interactions have on youth, above and beyond previous citizenship engagement, religiosity, parental education, ethnicity and gender. Furthermore, we found that early adolescents who have altruistic values

and a motivation to better society are more likely to engage in citizenship

activities later in adolescence. More specifically for African American youth,

ethnic-related experiences and attitudes that are salient or matter to the

youths' self-concepts appear to be important predictors of later citizenship

engagement. From this finding, we theorize the key component of ethnic

socialization to be the salience of the socialization and the subsequent

citizenship activity to the youth's self-concept. The results are discussed

with regard to program and policy development as well as future research

directions.

Most researchers to date have theorized that programs to promote positive citizenship should begin with an opportunity for adolescents to participate in positive citizenship activities, such as community service or political volunteering. In the present study, we hypothesize that programs and policies to promote positive citizenship may need to begin by first focusing on informal interactions in youths' lives, such as with parents and peers, and on the culture in which youth are raised. We hypothesize that these informal interactions socialize or "prime" youth to have the motivation and values that subsequently lead to positive citizenship behaviors. To examine this hypothesis, we use data from a large, diverse, regional longitudinal survey to test whether the relationship between social, familial and cultural factors and positive citizenship behaviors is mediated by the development of altruism and motivation to be a good person in order to benefit society. The implications of our findings will be discussed in the context of program and policy development and future research directions.

Importance of Positive Citizenship

Adolescents have the capacity to be positive citizens in their communities. They can act to make their homes, communities, schools, and/or society a better place by being environmentally active, volunteering in community or political organizations, and committing smaller prosocial acts such as helping someone across the street. Adolescent positive citizenship has the dual effect of providing needed services to the community and society, and promoting psychological, social, and intellectual growth for the young citizen (Aguirre International, 1999;

Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Janoski, Musick & Wilson, 1998; Johnson, Beebe, Mortimer & Snyder, 1998).

Unfortunately, relatively few youth participate in positive citizenship activities. For instance, although there is a trend toward greater youth participation in community service (Faison & Flanagan, 2001), fewer than 50% (and, depending on the data cited, closer to 30%) of youth actually participate in volunteer activities (e.g., Child Trends, 2002; Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csap, & Sheblanova, 1998; Harris Interactive, 2001; National Association of Secretaries of State, 1998; U.S. Department of Education, 1999; Zaff, Moore, Papillo & Williams, in press).

The relatively low rates of volunteering are consistent with the low rates of another component of positive citizenship, political involvement. Recent data suggest a decrease in political involvement and an increasing cynicism among youth about the political process (Putnam, 2000). This is particularly important, considering, as de Tocqueville (1969) posited, that broad participation in the political process results in the strongest democracies. According to the National Election Studies, only 46% of voting eligible youth born in 1975 or later went to the polls in the 1996 presidential election, with a drop to 38% in the 2000 election. That percentage is significantly lower than for voters born between 1959 and 1974 (62%) and all other older Americans (over 80%). Non-presidential, federal election years give an even bleaker view of youth political involvement, with 20% and 15% of youth voting in 1994 and 1998, respectively. Political involvement can also take the form of political activism and club membership.

However, in one nationally representative study, only 14% of adolescents and young adults between 15 and 24 years of age reported ever participating in a club or organization that directly deals with politics or the government (National Association of Secretaries of State, 1998).

These low rates of political and community involvement do not mean that adolescents are disengaged from the world. In fact, nearly 80% of youth report being members of clubs, such as sports teams or academic and arts clubs (Ehrle & Moore, 1999; National Association of Secretaries of State, 1998). The key issue, then, is not how to engage youth in general activities, but how to engage youth in positive citizenship activities.

What Do We Know and What Still Needs to be Learned

There has been a recent increase in efforts among social scientists, policy makers, and practitioners to improve rates of youth positive citizenship. The National Educational Goals for 2000, adopted by Congress, set forth youth community service participation as an objective for preparing the country's young citizenry; the American Political Science Association has made youth civic education one of its major initiatives; and the Corporation for National and Community Service is a government entity that was created to fund volunteering and community service programs. Furthermore, several foundations and universities have developed centers and institutes assigned with the task of measuring and researching the antecedents of positive citizenship.

Although there is a relative dearth of research on the predictors of youth

citizenship behaviors, there is enough research, at least, to suggest important contributing factors in youths' lives. Several researchers have taken the theoretical perspective that engaging youth in civic activities is the most effective way to promote positive citizenship identity formation and subsequent positive citizenship in adulthood (e.g., Youniss & Yates, 1999). However, the available research findings are subject to self-selection bias, and experimental research (the gold standard of proving causality) has not produced consistently positive results (e.g., The Center for Human Resources, 1999). In fact, according to Colby and Damon (1999), parents, peers, and culture and society socialize individuals to have a sense of morality (or lack of morality). Thus, theoretically, when presented with a given situation, an individual may respond in a different way than a person with a different sense of morality. For instance, one individual might have been socialized to have a moral commitment to making society a better place, while others may not. Based on this theory, there are factors within the youth, such as values, and external to the youth, such as socializing agents, that act to promote or deter civic engagement. We turn, then, to factors within youths' lives that may promote positive citizenship.

Family, peer and background variables. Parent, peer, gender, ethnicity, religious participation, and societal and cultural variables have all been found to be associated with positive citizenship behaviors such as volunteering and voting. For instance, parents who act as role models, who reinforce volunteering behavior in their children, and who participate in general activities with their children have children who are more likely to be involved in volunteering activities (Dunham & Bengston, 1992; Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, 1998; Fletcher,

Elder, & Mekos, 2000; Hashway, 1998). Other relationships, such as with peers, can have similar implications (Wentzel & McNamara, 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998). Females are generally more likely to participate in community service and to be more knowledgeable about politics (Flanagan et al., 1998; NCES, 1999) and Caucasian American youth are more likely to vote and to volunteer in community service than African American and Hispanic American youth (Johnston, Bachman & O'Malley, 1999). Participation in religious activities is also related to a greater likelihood of participating in community service activities (Serow & Dreyden, 1990; Youniss, McLellan, Su, & Yates, 1999). Finally, research suggests that events in society, such as a political campaign, can increase participation in civic activities (Sears & Valentino, 1997).

Motivation and values. Much of the current research on positive citizenship has used cross-sectional research designs without adequate control variables, thus precluding researchers from drawing conclusions about the direction of the relationship between background and social relationship variables, and positive citizenship behaviors. Although there have been several longitudinal studies which enable researchers to suggest directionality (e.g., Youniss, McLellan, Su, & Yates, 1999), they have not included some important variables that are potentially related to positive citizenship and that may mediate the association between the background and social relationship variables and positive citizenship behaviors. For the present study, we theorize that motivation and values are intermediate constructs between background and social relationship variables and later positive citizenship behavior.

Motivation appears to be a good predictor of positive citizenship. For example, research suggests that collectivist motivations (i.e., wanting to act in order to benefit the community) are more predictive of positive citizenship behaviors than individualist motivations (i.e., wanting to act in order to benefit oneself; e.g., Avrahami & Dar, 1993; Omoto & Snyder, 1995; Perkins, Brown & Taylor, 1996). There has been little or no research on values as a contributing factor to positive citizenship, though valuing or having a moral commitment to community service has been linked to participating in service activities (e.g., Colby & Damon, 1995; Faison & Flanagan, 2001; Hart, Yates, Fegley, & Wilson, 1995; Horowitz, 1976; Serow & Dreyden, 1990). However, like other positive citizenship research, these studies have primarily used correlational or longitudinal designs with limited controls and small, non-representative samples.

It should be noted that the social and familial variables discussed above have also been found to promote the types of motivation and values that predict participation in positive citizenship activities. For instance, parenting strategies and parent civic behaviors are related to youth moral development (e.g., Hoffman, 1975; Gunnoe, Hetherington & Reiss, 1999; Pratt, Arnold, Pratt & Diessner, 1999), peers and siblings can model empathy, morals and values (Eisenberg, in press; Volling, in press), and the society and culture in which youth are raised may promote either individualistic or collectivistic motivations (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1988).

In summary, the existing literature suggests that parents, peers, and the culture and society in which youth develop all promote positive citizenship behaviors, but the predominant use of small sample sizes and/or cross-sectional

designs has limited researchers' ability to conclude whether these predictors each

provide unique variance. Furthermore, relatively little is known about the role of

values and motivation in predicting positive citizenship and nothing is known about

whether motivations and values mediate the relationship between background

variables and positive citizenship behaviors. Therefore, in the present study, we

use a long-term longitudinal dataset of a diverse cohort of youth in order to test a

mediation model of positive citizenship development (see Figure 1). In short, we

hypothesize that having values and motivation to make the world a better place

(what we consider to be a *primed youth*) will mediate the relationship between

background factors and youth participation in positive citizenship activities (see

Figure 1).

Method

Data Source

The data come from The Maryland Adolescent Development in Context

(MADIC). There were two main purposes of this survey: to examine how social

context influences psychological determinants of behavioral choices; and to

examine various developmental trajectories during adolescence. This survey is

intentionally rich with information on family background, parenting, peer influence,

schools, neighborhoods, ethnic socialization, and several individual-level

characteristics. The data were also collected during a historical period in which a

major opportunity to participate in a positive citizenship activity was present: The

Million Man March. Much organization of the march took place in Prince George's

County, Maryland, a historically African American community and the location of the survey.

Many of the questionnaire items were derived from large-scale longitudinal studies and from other validated scales. A multitude of open-ended questions were also asked in order to allow for more in-depth responses to under-explored areas of youth development, such as youth's values.

Participants

Approximately 1,000 youth (and accompanying primary caregiver) were followed from 7th grade into early adulthood (three years post-high school). For the present study, we focused on the third wave (i.e., summer after 8th grade) and the fourth wave (at the end of 11th grade). The sample is composed of 51% males and 61% African Americans. The sample comes from families that represent a broad range of socioeconomic statuses, with a median income for African Americans between $50,000 and $55,000 and for Caucasian Americans between $60,000 and $65,000. Fifty-four percent of primary caregivers are high school graduates, with 40% continuing on to graduate from college. Furthermore, the participants came from a diverse mix of neighborhoods, including: low-income, high-risk urban; middle class suburban; and rural. Ninety-two percent of the primary caregivers are female (see Table 1 for a break-down by ethnicity).

Measures

We used measures that assess individual-, parent-, peer-, and cultural constructs. A description of each measure, with accompanying alphas can be found in the appendix (see Appendix). Not included in the appendix are the

control measures of gender (male or female), ethnicity (African American, Caucasian American or mixed/other) and highest educational attainment in household (e.g., college degree). For measures for which it is relevant to calculate reliability, alphas ranged from .63-.89. Following is a brief description of the different constructs included in our analysis:

Youth activity engagement. We used two measures in 8th grade to assess the level of activity engagement among youth. The first measure assessed the level of participation in civic activities by asking about participation in civic activism or volunteering for community service. This was summed resulting in a citizenship engagement index ranging from 0 to 2. The other type of activity engagement is other non-citizenship extracurricular activities, such as sports or clubs. This was dummy coded as either 0 for no engagement or 1 for engagement.

Family involvement. There were multiple questions pertaining to family involvement. The first is whether parents had been involved in their parent, teacher, student association (PTSA) when their children were in the 8th grade. The second questions asked whether they had been engaged in the Million Man March when their children were in the 11th grade. These two measures were used individually for some analyses and summed together to form a parent civic participation index for others. The other family-level question pertains to ethnic-related activities. This question asks the youth about the types of ethnic-related activities in which they were involved with their family when they were in 8th

grade. Finally, a youth religiosity measure was included that asks about the types of religious activities in which youth were involved with their family when they were in 8th grade.

Ethnic importance. Two measures were used to assess the level of importance that ethnicity plays in the lives of youth and their families. The first was asked to parents when their child was in 8th grade. The questions include how often they talk about their racial background, how often they celebrate special days connected to their racial background, how important their racial background is to their daily life, among others. The second measure was asked to youth when they were in 8th grade. Questions included how much pride they have in their racial background, how important their racial background is to their daily lives, and how much knowledge they have of their racial background.

Social support. These measures, all from when the youth were in 8th grade, tap the different types of supports that youth have in their lives. The first measure deals with positive peer influences, asking questions such as how important school, church and college is in their peers' lives. A second peer question asks about the different issues that the youth may discuss with their friends, such as how things are going in their life or with their families and whether they are having problems in school. Another measure asks about social support from adults in school, such as whether they seek help from tutors or teachers with schoolwork. A final social support measure assesses youth's perceptions of the level of parental monitoring, asking about whether their parents keep track of their activities.

Citizenship motivation/values. This measure, from 8th grade, assesses the altruistic motivations that youth have to help in society as well as the values that youth hold to be better people in order to better society. This measure was constructed from open-ended questions asking what youth would do if they had three wishes or had one million dollars. Two other questions asked about the type of person that the youth want to be when they are older.

Youth positive citizenship engagement outcome. This variable was created in a similar way to the positive citizenship predictor variable; that is, it includes questions on civic activism and volunteering. Civic activism includes a question asking if the youth had participated in the Million Man March and a question asking whether they had participated in any other form of civic activism. For the Million Man March question, we considered positive responses to be either attendance at the march or intentionally watching the march on television, an indicator of civic engagement. We did this so that we could include the responses of females since the attendance at the Million Man March was restricted primarily to males. A third question asked if the youth had volunteered for any community service activities. All three questions were asked when the youth were in the 11th grade. A citizenship participation index ranging from 0-3 was then created, based on the total number of activities in which the youth were involved, with each activity given equal weighting.

Procedure

The survey was begun in 1991 and consisted of a total of five waves (7th grade,

two in 8th grade, 11th grade, and one-year and three-years post-high school), but

we used only waves three and four for the present study. The investigators used a

mixture of self-administered questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, and

telephone interviews to collect the data. For the purposes of the present study,

the respondents were the target youth and the primary caregiver.

Analysis Plan

In order to test the mediation model, we conducted a set of multiple

regressions. Multiple regression is the appropriate statistical method, as opposed

to logistic regression, because we are using an interval/ratio, continuous

dependent variable. For the present study, we conducted regression analyses to

examine whether informal interactions predict positive motivation/values. We

then conducted a hierarchical regression to determine if informal interaction

variables predict positive citizenship. The first step included 8th grade citizenship

engagement and 8th grade participation in other non-citizenship extracurricular

activities. The next two steps added social, familial, and religious variables. The

fourth step included both informal interaction variables and positive motivation/

values in the same model to predict positive citizenship. If, as we hypothesize,

the relationship between the background factors and citizenship diminishes or

disappears and a relationship between positive motivation/values and citizenship

remains, then we will be able to conclude that positive motivation/values mediates

the relationship between informal interactions and positive citizenship. For the

final step, we included the control variables of parental education, gender, and

ethnicity.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 lists the descriptive statistics (overall and broken-down by gender and by ethnicity) for the predictor and outcome variables used in the analyses (see Table 2). Across these measures, there are a few differences between males and females. Females are more engaged in 8th grade citizenship activities, have more peer support and have peers with more positive characteristics. Females also perceive their parents as monitoring them more and as having more adult support in school. Finally, females score higher than males on the scale of positive motivations/values. In addition to gender differences, there are some differences to note between the African American and Caucasian American samples. First, ethnicity questions were only asked of the African American participants. Second, African American parents participated at a higher rate in the Million Man March (a lower number indicates greater participation for this variable) and the Caucasian American parents participated at higher rate in the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA). Furthermore, while the Caucasian American youth were more likely to participate in citizenship activities and other extracurricular activities in 8th grade, African American youth were more likely to be engaged in such activities in 11th grade, probably because of the occurrence of the Million Man March. Finally, African American youth perceived their parents as monitoring their behavior less, but they received more adult support in school.

Informal Interaction Variables Predicting Positive Motivation/Values

We first examined which variables are associated with youth positive motivation/values. To determine these relationships, we regressed the other predictor variables on youth motivation/values. Two wave 3 (i.e., in 8th grade) variables are significantly related to youth motivation/values in 8th grade. More specifically, participation in wave 3 positive citizenship activities (B = .10) and parental monitoring (B = .09) are both related to youth 8th grade motivation/ values; p < .05. It is also worth noting that peer's positive characteristics (B = .09) has a marginally significant relationship with youth positive motivation/ values in 8th grade; p = .055.

Informal Interaction Variables Predicting Positive Citizenship

The first step includes positive citizenship activities measured during 8th grade (see Table 3) and participation in other extracurricular activities. As the results show, there is not a significant relationship between 8th and 11th grade engagement in positive citizenship activities; F (2, 707) = 7.54, p < .05, though there is a significant relationship between participation in other extracurricular activities and 11th grade engagement (B = .13), accounting for less than 2% of the total variance of 11th grade youth engagement in positive citizenship; R^2 = .018.

The second step (see Table 3), which includes 8th grade positive citizenship activities, 8th grade other non-citizenship extracurricular activities, familial and religious variables, is significant; F (5, 704) = 11.95, p < .05. More specifically within the model, parental participation in the civic activities (B = .21) is significant. Youth religiosity is also significant; B = .l2, p < .05. Participation in

other extracurricular activities is still significant, but with a smaller standardized-beta ($\underline{B}$ = .08), $\underline{p}$ < .05. The total model explains 7% of the variance of 11th grade youth engagement in positive citizenship activities; $\underline{R}^2$ = .073.

The third step (see Table 3) added peer and other adult support and influence. Peer influence, that is peer positive characteristics, is associated with wave 4 youth engagement in positive citizenship activities; $\underline{B}$ = .12, $\underline{p}$ < .05. Parent participation in civic activities ($\underline{B}$ = .21, $\underline{p}$ < .05) and youth religiosity ($\underline{B}$ = .09) remain significant, $\underline{p}$ < .05. Youth participation in other, non-citizenship extracurricular activities is no longer significant. This significant model accounts for 9% of the variance for 11th grade youth engagement in positive citizenship activities; $\underline{F}$ (9, 700) = 8.25, $\underline{p}$ < .05, $\underline{R}^2$ = .085.

The fourth step (see Table 3) adds the motivation/values variable to the variables included in model 3. This results in a significant change in the F-value and accounts for 10% of the variance of 11th grade youth engagement in positive citizenship activities; $\underline{F}$ (10, 699) = 8.68, $\underline{p}$ < .05, $\underline{R}^2$ = .009. Parent participation in civic activities ($\underline{B}$ = .21), youth religiosity ($\underline{B}$ = .08) and peer positive characteristics ($\underline{B}$ = .11) remain significant; $\underline{p}$ < .05. Youth motivation/values in 8th grade is also associated with youth engagement in positive citizenship activities in 11th grade; $\underline{B}$ = .12, $\underline{p}$ < .05.

For the final step (see Table 3), we added the demographic variables of highest education level in the home, the gender of the target youth and the ethnicity of the target youth. This results in a significant change in the F-value

and explains 19% of the variance for youth engagement in positive citizenship activities in 11th grade; $\underline{F}$ (13, 696) = 13.37, $\underline{p}$ < .05, R^2 = .186. In this full model, parental participation in civic activities ($\underline{B}$ = .16), peer positive characteristics ($\underline{B}$ = .10, p < .05), and youth motivation/values ($\underline{B}$ = .11) all remain significant at the .05 alpha-level. Youth religiosity is not a significant predictor in this model. Regarding the demographics variables, highest educational level in the home ($\underline{B}$ = .14) and the ethnicity of the youth ($\underline{B}$ =   -.31) are both significantly related to youth engagement in positive citizenship activities in 11th grade; $\underline{p}$ < .05. More specifically for ethnicity, African American youth are more likely than Caucasian American or other ethnicities to be engaged in positive citizenship activities in 11th grade. The dissipation of significance between ethnicity importance and 11th grade engagement in positive citizenship activities can be traced to the fact that the question was only asked of the African American participants.

The addition of the motivation/values variable does not result in the reduction in the standardized beta weight of the significant familial, other social or other background predictors. Furthermore, although engagement in positive citizenship activities in 8th grade and parental monitoring predict positive motivation/values, neither of these predictors is associated with engagement in positive citizenship activities in 11th grade. Therefore, we can conclude that the positive motivation/values measure does not mediate the relationship between the social and background variables and youth engagement in positive citizenship activities in 11th grade.

Since the ethnicity variable was so strong, we decided to run the models separately for the African American (see Table 4) and Caucasian American (see Table 5) sub-samples. For the African American sub-sample, the results are similar to the total sample results. The one main difference is that participation in other, non-citizenship extracurricular activities is consistent through the first four models, but becomes non-significant once parent education and child gender is added. The final model (with parent participation in civic activities (B = .13), peer's positive characteristics (B = .12), youth motivations/values (B = .10) and parent education (B = .17) as significant predictors) comprises approximately 10% ($\underline{R}^2$ = .097) of the variance of youth citizenship engagement, compared with 19% for the total sample; $\underline{F}$ (11, 393) = 4.96, $\underline{p}$ < .05. For the Caucasian American sample (see Table 5), in the final model, the results show that parent civic participation ($\underline{B}$ = .15), youth motivation/values ($\underline{B}$ = .21) and parent education ($\underline{B}$ = .19) are significant predictors of youth citizenship engagement, $\underline{F}$ (11, 210) = 4.34, $\underline{p}$ < .05. However, positive peer characteristics is not a significant predictor for Caucasian Americans. The model explains 14% of the variance ($\underline{R}^2$ = .143).

Finally, we examined ethnic-related variables for the African American sub-sample only. We did this to explore, more fully, the components that made ethnicity such a strong predictor in the full model. It should be noted that ethnic-related variables were only asked of the African American participants. In this set of analyses, we added a step for importance of ethnicity for both the youth and the parents. In the fifth model (see Table 5), importance of ethnicity for parents is significant (B = .12), but becomes non-significant when parent education is

included. We also split the parent civic involvement variable into participation in

the Million Man March and participation in the PTSA. PTSA participation remains

significant throughout the models, with a final standardized-beta of .12. Million

Man March participation, on the other hand is significant in the first three models,

but becomes non-significant once positive peer characteristics is entered. By

including the ethnic-related variables, the model accounted for 12% of the

variance for youth citizenship engagement ($\underline{R}^2$ = .119).

Discussion

This study was a longitudinal examination of the socializing of positive

citizenship of adolescents. Although other researchers have examined the

promotion of youth civic engagement, this is the first study, to our knowledge,

that has used a large, longitudinal sample starting in early adolescence and that

has used such a rich dataset that includes a measure of citizenship motivation and

values. Also, because the Million Man March took place during one of the data

collection waves, we were able to examine the factors that predict participation in

an historic citizenship event that was salient to a large percentage of the study

sample.

We hypothesized that familial, peer, other social relationships, religiosity

and ethnic socialization in 8th grade would predict citizenship engagement in the

11th grade. Furthermore, we hypothesized that having an altruistic value system

and the motivation to be good person in order to benefit society would mediate

the relationship between the background variables and the citizenship

engagement. The results partially supported our hypotheses. Parent modeling of citizenship behaviors, positive peer influences and ethnic socialization were all significantly associated with positive citizenship engagement. The composite variable of positive motivation and values was also uniquely associated with positive citizenship engagement, but motivation and values did not mediate the relationship between the background variables and citizenship. These results are somewhat consistent with previous research. For instance, other researchers have found that parenting is associated with youth civic engagement (e.g., Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, 1998; Jennings, Stoker & Bowers, 2001) as is peer influence (Wentzel & McNamara, 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998). Contrary to previous research, though, engagement in positive citizenship activities in 8th grade and engagement in other extracurricular activities are not associated with participation in 11th grade after controlling for various other relevant social factors. Previously, researchers have based their studies on the theory that current citizenship or general extracurricular activity engagement promotes future citizenship engagement (e.g., Youniss & Yates, 1999; Zaff, Moore, Papillo & Williams, in press), but they have focused on initial experiences that occurred later in adolescence (i.e., after 8th grade) or on consistent participation throughout high school. It is very possible that young adolescents are not able to internalize their citizenship experiences into a positive citizenship identity that would promote later participation. This is consistent with identity theory that suggests that young adolescents are at the very beginning of their identity search and that there is not a commitment to a particular identity, such as a civic

identity, until at least the end of adolescence (Marcia, 1966). This may be the same reason that we found religiosity not to be associated with later citizenship behaviors. That is, youth who are active in religious activities may not yet have internalized the religious values that they had encountered.

It appears that being altruistic and wanting to make society a better place is associated with later citizenship engagement. Surprisingly, though, the variables that were associated with later citizenship were not associated with motivation and values. Therefore, we did not find support for our hypothesis that motivation and values would mediate the relationship between background variables and later citizenship. In addition, we are not sure how to interpret the finding that parental monitoring and previous citizenship behaviors are associated with motivation and values to engage in citizenship behaviors, but not with later citizenship engagement. We believe that these findings might be the result of our inelegant measurement of motivation and values. We used an existing dataset, which did not originally include a valid and reliable measure of citizenship motivation and values. Future research on the promotion of citizenship should use motivation and values measures that are intentionally included in the survey.

Finally, parent importance of ethnicity is a significant predictor of youth citizenship engagement before parent education is added to the model. This dissipation of beta-size might occur because of an association between parent education and socializing youth to understand the importance of ethnicity. In other words, it is possible that those African American parents who are more highly educated are more likely to socialize their children to understand the

importance of their ethnicity. However, more research is necessary in order to answer this question. Furthermore, the fact that parent participation in the Million Man March becomes non-significant may be an artifact of including other ethnic-related variables such as the importance of ethnicity and involvement ethnic-related activities. Nonetheless, considering the strength of the ethnicity variable in total-sample model, we are confident in our conclusion that there is some sort of ethnic socialization occurring, whether we measured the appropriate components or not.

We also want to note that the association between parent education (our indicator for socioeconomic status) and youth citizenship engagement is consistent with previous research that has shown that being in a family and neighborhood with a low SES may act as a barrier to citizenship engagement opportunities (Hart et al., 1998). Although we included this variable as a control for our model, our study's overall focus included environmental influences and therefore the policy and program implications of growing-up in a low-SES environment are pertinent to our discussion.

In summary, our research contributes to the field of youth civic engagement by providing more concrete evidence for the unique effects that informal social interactions have on youth, above and beyond previous citizenship engagement, religiosity, parental education, ethnicity and gender. Furthermore, early adolescents who have altruistic values and a motivation to better society are more likely to engage in citizenship activities later in adolescence. The effects of these

factors contradict previous theory and research that state that previous civic

participation is the primary contributor to future civic engagement.

Implications and Future Directions

Considering that relatively few youth participate in citizenship activities (or,

more accurately, fewer than adults would like), finding ways to promote

involvement is very important. Overall, we recommend that programs and policies

take a holistic approach to the promotion of positive citizenship. That is, instead

of focusing on only one component of youths' lives, programs and policies should

incorporate multiple layers of youths' environments into their efforts. Our findings

suggest a few approaches that could help.

First, programs and policies should be aware of the potential power of

informal social interactions in the development of adolescent behaviors and

attitudes. For instance, promoting parental participation in citizenship activities

could have the dual effect of helping the community in its own right, as well as

promoting citizenship among their children. This is consistent with Jennings,

Stoker and Bowers' (2001) finding that there is parental transmission of political

ideology to their children, and McDevitt and Chafee's (2000) research on the

dialectical relationship that occurs between child and parent when discussing

politics. This implication is important to note, because many civic engagement

programs focus solely on the youth and the youth's school and neighborhood

environment. Focusing on the home environment could also be an important

target.

Peer relationships are also important contributors to the citizenship socialization of youth. Having friends that have positive academic, social and health aspirations and engage in similar behaviors is associated with a higher probability of being engaged in citizenship behaviors. We do not know whether youth who have such positive aspirations and engage in positive behaviors seek out youth with the same attributes, but we can conclude that these peer relationships at the very least perpetuate these positive attributes. Therefore, program developers and policy makers should be aware of the potential positive effects of interactions among peers, whether the interactions take place within a structured program or whether the interactions take place in more informal settings.

Promoting relationships is not the only answer, though. Programs and policies should also promote the specific motivations and values that are associated with positive citizenship. Other researchers have found that communalistic and altruistic ideologies are associated with citizenship among older adolescents and adults (Avrahami & Dar, 1993; Batson et al., 1995; Colby & Damon, 1995; Omoto & Snyder, 1995) and we have found similar results with an early adolescent sample. There are a plethora of local, state and national character education initiatives, which might instill these values and motivations, but these programs need to establish measurements that are accurate and reliable in order to ensure that they are having the desired effects. Reiterating our initial hypothesis, though, we believe that informal social interactions and community and cultural norms can prime youth to have these attributes. And, in fact, our

results demonstrate that parenting practices and youths' previous experiences in their communities are two possible predictors. However, more research using valid and reliable measures of values and motivations is necessary before more definitive conclusions can be reached.

Finally, our results suggest that the culture in which youth are raised can significantly predict youths' citizenship engagement. More specifically, we found that African American parents, who consider their ethnicity to be important and who participated in the Million Man March, have children who are more likely to be engaged in positive citizenship activities. This makes sense since African American cultural norms are traditionally more collectivist than Caucasian American norms (e.g., Nobles, 1973). Furthermore, one of the indicators of youth citizenship engagement is having been engaged in the Million Man March. Therefore, we theorize that ethnic socialization predicts engagement in ethnic-related events. This makes sense since these events would be more salient to youth who have been socialized to consider their own ethnicity and ethnic-related activities to be important and therefore draws on components of their self-concept. Therefore, we suggest that programs and policies take into account the cultural context within which their targeted youth are raised and try to promote consistent values and motivations. This does not necessarily have to mean teaching collectivist values. We could imagine, for instance, that youth raised within an extremely individualistic environment could be persuaded to be positive citizens if they could be convinced that their actions would, at least in the end, have a positive impact on their own life. We theorize the key component to be the salience of the socialization and the subsequent citizenship activity to the youth's self-concept.

Again, though, more research is needed on the relationship between different cultural ideologies and citizenship behaviors before we can be more certain of this conclusion.

Future research should also examine whether the predictors in 8th grade are associated with citizenship behaviors in adulthood and whether participation in 11th grade mediates adult citizenship behaviors. This would inform whether reaching youth at a young age could have long-term effects on citizenship and on what type of citizenship. Also, researchers should take into account how enjoyable and fulfilling citizenship activities have been and whether that enjoyment and fulfillment is associated to future participation. Sweeping the floors in a hospital, for example, is probably much less fulfilling for many adolescents than helping doctors and nurses with patients.

Limitations

Aside from the measurement of motivation and values that we previously discussed, there are a few limitations to our study that are important to address. First, we included a restricted selection of positive citizenship behaviors as our outcome variable. All youth do not have an equal opportunity to participate in civic activism and community service, and some youth might find other forms of positive citizenship to be a better match for their skills and personality. For instance, being an environmentalist, participating in student government or staying after school to help teachers clean-up the classroom are citizenship behaviors, but do not necessarily fall within the confines of the questions that we

used for our analysis. Also, youth who are from low-income neighborhoods have more barriers to volunteering than other youth (Hart et al., 1998). Future research should therefore take into account a wider variety of citizenship behaviors. This is also important because these other behaviors might be associated with participation in later citizenship behaviors. We also did not conduct sub-analyses on specific types of citizenship behaviors to see if there are different predictors depending on the activity type.

In addition, we did not examine the content of the activities in which the participants were involved. As researchers and practitioners of service-learning theorize, engaging youth in activities and teaching them about the importance of their participation is the most effective method for promoting citizenship. Our analysis did not allow for this level of specificity.

In conclusion, this study adds to the current knowledge of youth citizenship promotion. We found that social interactions, cultural socialization and young adolescents' own motivations and values are all independently associated with citizenship later in adolescence. By incorporating these findings into action, we believe that civic engagement programs and policies can become even more effective.

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Table 1. Demographics of Survey Sample.

	African American	Caucasian American
Sample Size	N=612	N=323
Median Family Income (1993)	$50-55,000	$60-65,000
Highest Education in Household	38% College Degree	60% College Degree
Family Structure	51% Intact	71% Intact

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics by Gender and by Race

	Total	Males	Females	Blacks	Whites
11th gr. citizenship engagement	1.15	1.11	1.18	1.30	0.85***
(N)	(1019)	(505)	(514)	(612)	(323)
8th gr. citizenship engagement	0.26	0.23	0.29*	0.19	0.39***
(0-2)	(1044)	(535)	(509)	(622)	(333)
8th gr. other participation (0-6)	2.31	2.31	2.30	2.23	2.50**
(N)	(1060)	(536)	(513)	(626)	(334)
11th gr. parent Million Man March participation (N)	2.17	2.17	2.17	1.99	2.44***
	(918)	(453)	(465)	(536)	(306)
Family involvement in own ethnicity-related activities (N)	2.85	2.86	2.85	2.89	N/A
	(719)	(381)	(338)	(625)	
Parent PTSA membership (N)	0.61	0.59	0.63	0.55	0.72***
	(989)	(498)	(491)	(566)	(347)
Youth's Religiosity (standardized) (N)	0.00	-0.03	0.03	0.07	0.14***
	(877)	(440)	(437)	(522)	(282)
Importance of ethnicity for parent (standardized) (N)	0.00	-0.02	0.02	0.01	N/A
	(687)	(360)	(327)	(623)	
Importance of ethnicity for youth (N)	3.49	3.48	3.51	3.54	N/A
	(719)	(381)	(338)	(625)	
Positive characteristics of peers (N)	3.21	3.09	3.34***	3.22	3.19
	(1041)	(532)	(509)	(620)	(333)
Peer communication and provision of support (N)	3.43	2.99	3.88***	3.39	3.46
	(1047)	(534)	(513)	(625)	(333)
School social support from adults (N)	2.92	2.86	2.98*	3.02	2.74***
	(1048)	(535)	(513)	(625)	(334)
Youth's perception of parental monitoring (N)	3.77	3.56	3.99***	3.67	3.93***
	(1042)	(533)	(509)	(622)	(332)
Citizenship motivation/values (0- 3) (N)	2.21	2.10	2.33***	2.22	2.20
	(1048)	(536)	(512)	(625)	(334)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3. Standardized Beta Coefficients for Predictors of Youth Positive Citizenship (Total Sample).

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Youth's Prior Participation					
8th grade civic participation	.04	.02	.02	.01	.06
8th grade other participation	.13**	.08*	.06	.05	.05
Family Involvement					
Parent's civic participation		.21***	.21***	.21***	.16***
Youth's religiosity		.12**	.09*	.08*	.02
Social Support					
Positive characteristics of peers			.12**	.11**	.10**
Peer communication & provision of			.05	.04	.06
Support					
School social support from adults			.01	.01	-.02
Youth's perception of parental			-.04	-.05	-.00
Monitoring					
Citizenship Motivation/Values					
Positive character attributes of youth				.12***	.11**
Demographics					
Race					-.31***
Highest education level in family					.14***
Child gender					-.01
Adjusted R-squared	.018***	.073***	.085***	.099***	.186***
Change in R-squared	--	.045***	.012**	.014***	.087***
(N)					(709)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4. <u>Standardized Beta Coefficients for Predictors of Youth Positive Citizenship (African American Sample).</u>

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Youth's Prior Participation					
8th grade civic participation	.05	.04	04	04	03
8th grade other participation	.17***	.14**	.12*	.11*	.09
Family Involvement					
Parent's civic participation		.17***	.17***	.17***	.13**
Youth's religiosity		.01	-.03	-.03	-.04
Social Support					
Positive characteristics of peers			.13**	.13*	.12*
Peer communication & provision of support			..07	.07	.06
School social support from adults			-.04	-.04	-.02
Youth's perception of parental monitoring			.01	.00	.00
Citizenship Motivation/Values					
Positive character attributes of youth				.10*	.10*
Demographics					
Race					--
Highest education level in family					.17***
Child gender					-.01
Adjusted R-squared	.035***	.054***	.068***	.077***	.097***
Change in R-squared	--	.019**	.014*	.009*	.020**
(N)					(404)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5. Standardized Beta Coefficients for Predictors of Youth Positive Citizenship (Caucasian American Sample).

|	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Youth's Prior Participation					
8th grade civic participation	.13	.10	.10	.08	.07
8th grade other participation	.17*	.12	.11	.08	.04
Family Involvement					
Parent's civic participation		.19**	.19**	.19**	.15*
Youth's religiosity		.10	.07	.06	.03
Social Support					
Positive characteristics of peers			.08	.06*	.05
Peer communication & provision of support			.04	.02	.05
School social support from adults			-00	-.01	.01
Youth's perception of parental monitoring			-.02	.00	.020
Citizenship Motivation/Values					
Positive character attributes of youth				.21**	.21**
Demographics					
Race					--
Highest education level in family					.19**
Child gender					-.07
Adjusted R-squared	.050***	.089***	.081***	.117***	.143***
Change in R-squared	--	.039**	-.008	.036**	.026*
(N)					(221)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 6. Standardized Beta Coefficients for Predictors, Including Ethnic-Related Variables, of Youth Positive Citizenship (African American Sample).

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Youth's Prior Participation						
8th grade civic participation	.04	.02	.01	.01	.01	.00
8th grade other participation	.16**	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06
Family Involvement						
Parent participation in Million Man March		-.13**	-.11*	-.10*	-.09	-.09
Family involvement in own ethnicity-related activities		.15**	.12*	.11	.11	.11
Parent PTSA membership		.17***	.15**	.15**	.15**	.12*
Youth's religiosity		-.04	-.05	-.06	-.06	-.07
Ethnic Importance						
Importance of ethnicity for parent			.11*	.11*	.12*	.10
Importance of ethnicity for youth			.04	.03	.02	.02
Social Support						
Positive characteristics of peers				.13*	.12*	.11
Peer communication & provision of support				.03	.02	.01
School social support from adults				-.03	-.03	-.02
Youth's perception of parental monitoring				-.00	-.02	-.02
Citizenship Motivation/Values						
Positive character attributes of youth					.14**	.14**
Demographics						
Highest education level in family						.10*
Child gender						.04
Adjusted R-squared	.023**	.082***	.089***	.096***	.113***	.119***
Change in R-squared	--	.059***	.007	.007	.017**	.006
(N)						(373)

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 1. Hypothesized model of positive citizenship development in adolescence.
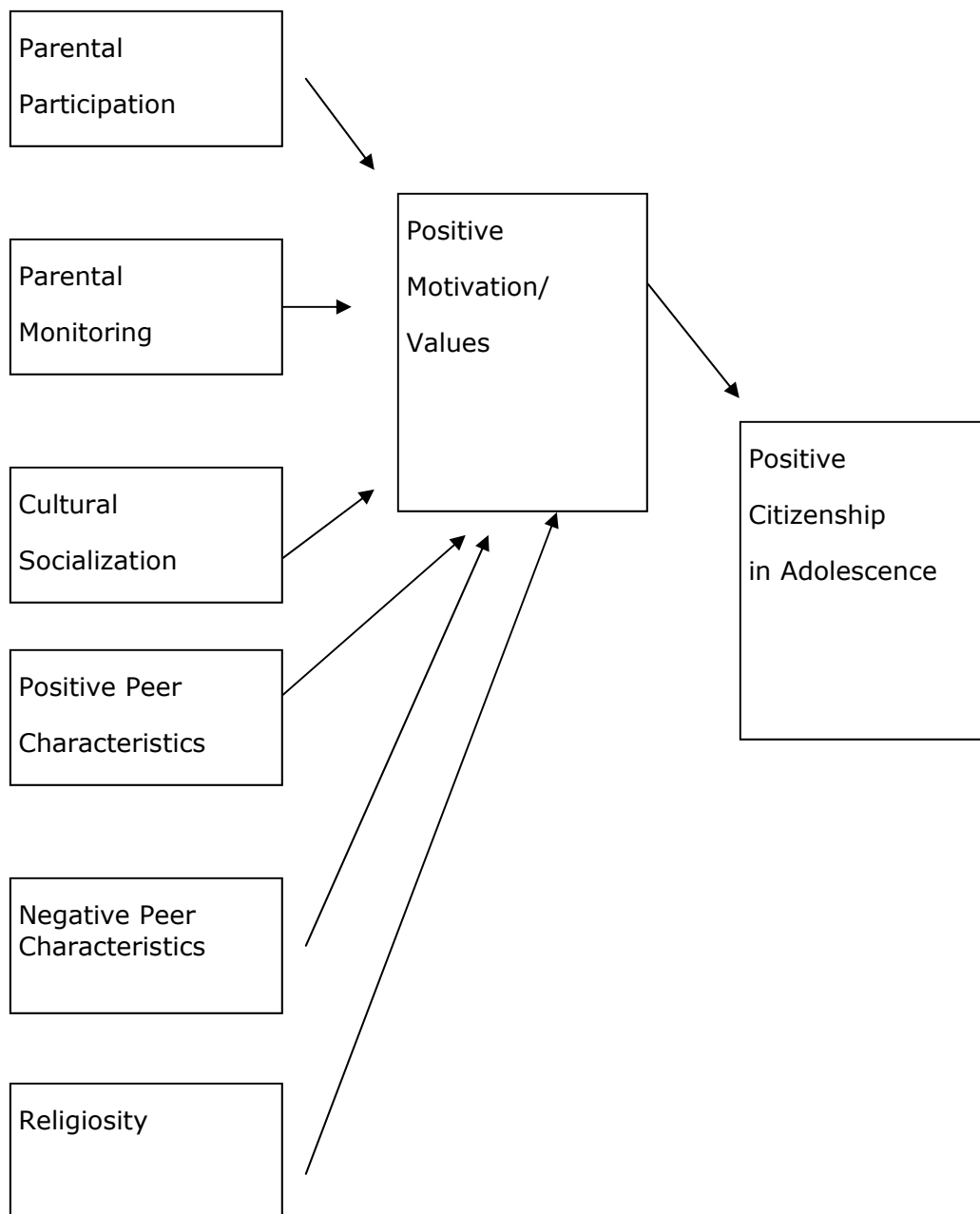
Summary of Measures

Youth's Activity Engagement

8th Grade Citizenship Engagement

A count of the number of civic activities with positive responses to the following questions (0 to 2):

> Thinking about the last year, that is, the last 12 months:

> …were you involved in any volunteer service activities?

> …were you involved in any civil rights activities?

8th Grade Other Non-Citizenship Extracurricular Activity Participation

A count of the number of civic activities with positive responses to the following questions (0 to 6):

> Thinking about the last year, that is, the last 12 months:

> …were you a member of any athletic or sports teams at school?

> …did you take part in any other school activities such as clubs or student government?

> …were you a member of any other groups in the community such as scouts, service or hobby clubs?

> …were you involved in any organized summer or after school sports or recreational programs?

> …were you in a tutoring program?

> …did you attend religious services or participate in other religious activities?

Family Involvement
Parent Civic Involvement

A composite of responses to the following two questions:

1) 11th Grade Parent Civic Participation

Did you go to the Million Man March in Washington last October?

(If no:) Did you watch the Million Man March on television last October?

1. attended

2. watched on television

3. neither

2) Parent Involvement in PTSA (8th Grade)

I'm going to ask you about your involvement in (CHILD's) school while (s/he) was in the 8th grade. Please tell me the number of times each of the following happened:

How many times did you (or your spouse/partner) attend a P.T.S.A. meeting, an "open house" or another special school program?

Family Involvement in Own Ethnicity-Related Activities (8th Grade Youth) (alpha =.67)

How often do you:

...talk in the family about discrimination you may face because of your race?

...study the traditions or history of people with your racial background?

...participate in community activities with people of your racial background?

...celebrate any special days connected to your racial background?

1=Almost Never 2=Less Than Once a Month
3=1-3 Times a Month 4=Frequently 5=Almost Always

Youth's 8th Grade Religiosity (standardized) (alpha=.72)

How important is religion in the day to day life of your family?

1=not at all 2=a little 3=somewhat 4=very

How often do you talk about your religion in your family?

1=almost never 2=rarely 3=occasionally 4=frequently 5=almost always

How often do you celebrate special days connected with your religion?

How often do you participate in community activities with people of your religion?

1=almost never 2=less than once a month

3=one to three times a month 4=about once a week

5=a few times a week 6=almost every day

Ethnic Importance

Importance of Ethnicity for Parent (standardized) (alpha=.72)

How often do you talk in the family about your racial background?

   1 = Almost never 2 = Less than once a month 3 = 1-3 times a month
      4 = About once a week 5 = A few times a week 6 = Almost eve-

How often do you celebrate any special days connected to your racial

How often does your 8th grader study the traditions of or about being (his/

How often do you participate in community activities with people of your

   1 = Almost never 2 = Rarely 3 = Occasionally 4 = Frequently 5 =
     Always

How important is it for your 8th grader to know about (his/her) racial back-

How important is your racial background to the daily life of your family?

   1 = Not at all 2 = A little 3 = Somewhat 4 = Very

Importance of Ethnicity for Youth (alpha=.63)

How important is your racial or ethnic background to the daily life of your family?

How important is it for you to know about your racial or ethnic background?

How proud are you of your racial or ethnic background?

   1=not at all 2=a little 3=somewhat 4=very

Social Support

Positive Characteristics of Peers (alpha=.74)

How many of the friends that you spend most of your time with:

…do well in school?

…plan to go to college?

…like to discuss schoolwork or other intellectual things with you?

…go to church or other religious services regularly?

…think it is very important to be respectful of teachers?

…think it is important to work hard on schoolwork?

1=none of them 2=a few of them 3=about half of them

4=most of them   5=all of them

Peer Communication & Provision of Support (alpha=.81)

You and your friends talk about:

…how things are going in your life.

…how things are going with your parents.

…your plans for the future.

…problems you are having in school.

1=almost never 2=less than once a month
3=one to three times a month   4=about once a week
5=a few times a week 6=almost every day

School Social Support from Adults (alpha=.69)

How often can you depend on your teachers to help you out?

How often can you depend on other adults in the school to help you out?

When you're having trouble with your schoolwork, how often do you go to your teachers for help?

When you're having trouble with your schoolwork, how often do you go to other adults in the school, like a tutor, for help?

    1=almost never 2=not too often 3=about half of the time

    4=fairly often

Youth's Perception of Parental Monitoring (alpha=.82)

    How often do your parents:

…try to find out where you go at night?

…try to find out what you do with your free time?

…try to find out where you are in the afternoon after school?

…really know where you go at night?

…really know what you do with your free time?

... really know where you are in the afternoon after school?

    1=never 2=occasionally 3=about half the time 4= fairly often 5=always

Youth Citizenship Motivation/Values

A composite of responses to the following open-ended questions:

Three Wishes: Tell me what you would wish for if you had three wishes.

Million Dollars: If you had a million dollars, what would you most want to do with it?

Possible Selves (Hopes): Many people know what they would like to be like in the future. They have a picture in their minds of a person they would like to be. Please tell me four things about the kind of person you most hope to be when you are in high school.

Possible Selves (Fears): Often people also know what kind of person they don't want to become. They know what they don't want to be true about themselves in the future. What are four things you do not want to be true

of you when you are in high school, or that you most want to avoid becoming by the time you are in high school?

There were three possible mentions each for the Three Wishes and Million Dollars questions, resulting in a range of 0 to 6. Responses were coded for mentions of altruism (defined as pro-social behaviors or attitudes of an individual that are beneficial to others but not necessarily beneficial to the individual) and materialism (defined as behaviors or attitudes of an individual that are beneficial to the individual and not necessarily beneficial to society). Examples: take care of family member(s) and give money to charity for altruism; and be rich and be famous for materialism.

There were four possible mentions each for the Possible Selves (Hopes and Fears). The Hopes question was coded for proactive values or the desire to be a good person within society; that is, striving to have characteristics that are helpful for the common good. Examples: positive behavior toward others (kind, nice, supportive); positive feeling/expression toward others (understanding, sympathetic); good/appropriate behavior (not in trouble generally, non-violent). This question was also coded for the desire to be a good person for oneself; that is, striving to have characteristics that are helpful for the individual, not the common good.

The Fears question was coded for reactive values or the desire to avoid being a bad person within society; that is, striving to avoid characteristics that are detrimental to the common good. Examples: negative "gossipy" behavior toward others (backstabber, gossip); bad feeling towards others (hating, unconcerned, racist); negative violent/aggressive behavior toward others (bully, fighter). The Hopes and Fears responses were coded separately for a range of 0 to 4 on each.

Five judges reviewed the coding schemes for face validity. Agreement averaged .90 for the three codes. Discrepancies were discussed and resolved by the authors. The final composite was a count of any mention on the three indices that indicated altruism, the desire to be helpful for the common good, and the desire to avoid being detrimental to the common good for a range of 0 to 3.

Youth Citizenship Engagement in 11th Grade

A count of the number of civic activities with positive responses to the following questions (0 to 3):

Thinking about the last year, that is, the last 12 months:

…were you involved in any volunteer service activities?

…were you involved in any civil rights activities?

Did you go to the Million Man March in Washington last October?