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A supportive campus culture is critical to institutionalizing civic engagement and instilling the principles of active citizenship. This chapter explores a model that quantitatively measures the impact of the campus environment on civic engagement outcomes.

The Impact of the Campus Culture on Students' Civic Activities, Values, and Beliefs

Meredith S. Billings, Dawn Geronimo Terkla

Today more than ever, individuals are faced with solving complex, social problems. Thus, it is imperative for higher education to educate students to become informed, active citizens. Not only is this an essential value of higher education, but Jacoby and Hollander (2009) argue that this is also critical to the health and well-being of the nation and the future of American democracy. In addition, addressing citizenship development is an appropriate goal for institutions because nearly all leaders and professionals are educated at colleges and universities and there is an increasing attendance of all types of citizens at postsecondary institutions. Consequently, this makes it possible for higher education to shape the culture of society directly (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, Rosner, & Stephens, 2000).

In order to successfully instill the principles of active citizenship within the campus community, higher education needs to institutionalize civic engagement and discuss the importance of active citizenship with their students, faculty, and staff. One method to institutionalize civic engagement is to modify the campus culture to reflect a deep commitment to citizen development by integrating these principles into the organization's core values, beliefs, and practices (Jacoby & Hollander, 2009). This may be achieved by emphasizing the importance of civic engagement within the institutional mission, strategic plan, and presidential speeches. In addition, Hoffman (2006) adds that the campus culture is critical for educating citizen scholars because "students' perspectives and attitudes are shaped by their entire environment, not just the courses and programs designed to teach them" (p. 15).

Tufts University is committed to educating public citizens and leaders. In 2000, the institution established the Jonathan M. Tisch College of

Citizenship and Public Service (Tisch College) to facilitate and support student and faculty knowledge, skills, and values around civic engagement. Initially, Tisch College focused on integrating civic engagement courses into the curriculum, supporting civic engagement research, and developing strong campus–community partnerships. Currently, Tisch College has refined its strategy and works with four key constituencies (students, faculty, community partnerships, and alumni) with varying degrees of intensity (Hollister, Mead, & Wilson, 2006).

In an effort to evaluate the civic engagement initiatives, staff from the Office of Institutional Research & Evaluation (OIR&E) and Tisch College launched a series of research studies. The initial research study (Tisch College Outcomes Evaluation Study) began in 2003 and is a nine-year longitudinal design that examines the links between students' experiences and their civic and political actions and attitudes during college and as alumni. This study generated increased interest in evaluating civic engagement outcomes at Tufts and prompted OIR&E to design a common set of civic engagement questions to collect data across the majority of the student populations (undergraduate, graduate, and professional). This chapter focuses on a cross-sectional research study that examines how a supportive campus culture positively influences civic engagement outcomes in undergraduate students. The authors explain the development of the structural equation model that assesses the relationships among the campus culture, civic values and beliefs, and civic activity levels. In addition, the authors discuss the grounding of the study in the relevant literature, the implications for practice, and suggestions for future research.

Relevant Literature

Institutional culture is often described as either something the organization *has* or something the organization *is* (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Scott & Davis, 2007). In terms of this analysis, the authors focus on the first definition and refer to organizational culture as "an attribute or quality internal to a group" that has "a fairly stable set of taken-for-granted assumptions, shared beliefs, meanings, and values that form a kind of backdrop for action" (Smircich, 1985, p. 58). Masland (1985) adds to this definition and defines how individuals are shaped by the organizational culture by stating that the culture "induces purpose, commitment, and order; provides meaning and social cohesion; and clarifies and explains behavioral expectations. Culture influences an organization through the people within it" (p. 158).

At colleges and universities, the institutional culture influences the values and beliefs of faculty, staff, and students and how these values and beliefs impact their behavior. However, not all individuals experiencing the same campus culture will express the same behavioral outcomes. Instead, the institutional culture will establish a range of possible outcomes depending

upon certain characteristics of the organization (Birnbaum, 1988). In order to narrow this range, colleges and universities should strive for strong campus cultures. Clark (1983) and Masland (1985) have found that strong campus cultures typically are found at institutions that are smaller, older, have interdependent parts, and have experienced a traumatic birth or transformation. Colleges and universities with strong campus cultures have a more coherent set of beliefs, rituals, symbols, myths, and language. Conversely, weaker campus cultures lack this coherence (Masland, 1985) and may prove more difficult to either influence or change behavioral outcomes in a particular direction. Research studies on several college campuses have found that weak organizational environments are likely to have little to no effect on student outcomes (Berger, 2000; Clark, Heist, McConnell, Trow, & Yonge, 1972).

Strong campus cultures are cultivated through public visions, shared expectations, and collective purposes. One method to achieve this goal is through the development of salient institutional missions. In fact, Kuh (2000) found that institutions that emphasized character development within their missions were more successful in fostering these values compared to colleges and universities where this was not emphasized. Moreover, Kuh states, "at these [value-oriented] institutions, the environment seemed to matter to character development as much (or almost as much) as did the nature of students' expediencies" (p. 9). This is a significant finding because it conflicts with previous research that found where students go to college makes little difference in their development (Pace, 1990; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). In addition, Pascarella, Terenzini, and Pace assert that student effort (not the campus environment) was the most important influence on how college affects students. However, Kuh challenges this finding and argues that environmental factors are equally important at colleges and universities that have salient institutional missions.

The authors use Kuh's finding for the basis of their research study and explore whether there is a relationship between the campus culture and students' civic engagement outcomes at Tufts University. These outcomes include measures for students' civic values and beliefs as well as their civic activity levels. The authors use the findings from this research study to discuss the importance of the campus culture when developing an "engaged university." They also highlight why programmatic solutions alone will not often create the desired student outcomes if administrators do not address unsupportive campus culture for civic engagement.

Participants and Data Sources

Tufts University is a private research institution that attracts academically talented, first-time full-time freshmen. The main campus is located approximately five miles from Boston and houses the two schools (Arts and Sciences, and Engineering) that educate undergraduate students. Each year,

over 1,300 students graduate with bachelor's degrees and the institution has a consistent four-year graduation rate of 85% ± 2% (Terkla, Topping, Jenkins, & Storm, 2009).

The participants in this study include 4,118 seniors from the classes of 2005 to 2008, and the sample is equally divided (23.7% to 25.7%) among those who graduated in each class. The majority of the participants are female (55.9%), earned degrees from the School of Arts and Sciences (85.9%), and identify as Caucasian (66.0%). Approximately 7% of the sample are transfer students and almost half of the participants (47.7%) studied abroad while undergraduates at Tufts University. In addition, more than half of the sample (55.2%) participated in community service or civic engagement activities while in college.

The data source for the study is the senior survey that is administered to each graduating class during their final spring semester. The students are queried on a variety of topics: academic advising, curriculum, faculty, post-baccalaureate plans, campus services, and extracurricular activities. One section of the survey focuses on community service and civic engagement. These items assess how undergraduates became involved in civic engagement activities, measure how their civic values and attitudes were shaped by their college experience, and evaluate their civic activity levels at Tufts University and for the future. The senior survey has a high response rate as it is typically completed by 95% of the graduating class.

The survey questions were a subset of the Civic and Political Activities and Attitudes Survey (CPAAS). The CPAAS is the primary data source for the Tisch College Outcomes Evaluation Study and was developed by compiling questions from eight existing validated civic engagement instruments and soliciting input from national experts (Terkla, O'Leary, Wilson, & Diaz, 2007). All survey items were scored on either four-point or five-point Likert scales with higher scores representing more civically minded individuals.

Methodology

The authors conducted the statistical analyses in two parts using factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM). On one half of the dataset ($N = 2,043$), factor analysis reduced the survey questions into a manageable set of factors. Using the second half of the dataset ($N = 2,075$), the authors finalized the factor structure and used SEM to examine the relationship between the campus culture and students' values and beliefs on civic engagement. SEM allows researchers to simultaneously test the causal relationships between the variables of interest and examine how well the observed variables represent the underlying latent factors (Kline, 2005). The structural equation model was analyzed with AMOS 17.0 by maximum likelihood estimation.

Figure 4.1. The Proposed Conceptual Model Explaining the Impact of the Campus Culture and Students' Values and Beliefs on Civic Engagement Activities
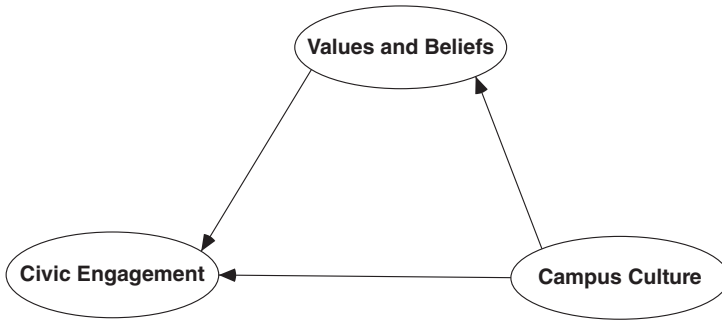
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Conceptual Model

After examining the relevant literature and using their personal experiences at the institution, the authors developed the following conceptual model in Figure 4.1. The conceptual model explains the impact of the campus culture on civic engagement outcomes with the goal of cultivating civically minded individuals. Civically minded individuals are defined as students who are involved in civic engagement activities as well as those who hold civic values and beliefs. The proposed model theorizes that there is a direct and an indirect pathway (via students' values and beliefs) between the campus culture and civic activities. The model also depicts a direct pathway between students' values and beliefs and civic activities. In addition, the authors test whether there are any differences in the impact of the campus culture on civic outcomes for male and female students and for students of color and White students.

Results and Discussion

When the authors tested the proposed conceptual model, the relationship between the campus culture and civic engagement was not statistically significant ($p = .154$). The authors then revised the SEM by dropping the direct pathway between the campus culture and civic engagement. Figure 4.2 represents this revised structural equation model. The goodness-of-fit indexes are CFI = 0.989, RMSEA = 0.045, and SRMR = 0.021, which indicates that the structural equation model is an excellent fit to the data.[1] All the path coefficients are statistically significant ($p < .001$) and summarized in Figure 4.2. In addition, the SEM model explains 10% of the variance in students' values and beliefs and 54% of the variance in civic engagement. The

Figure 4.2. Standardized Parameter Estimates for the Final SEM Describing the Relationships Among Campus Culture, Students' Values and Beliefs, and Civic Engagement
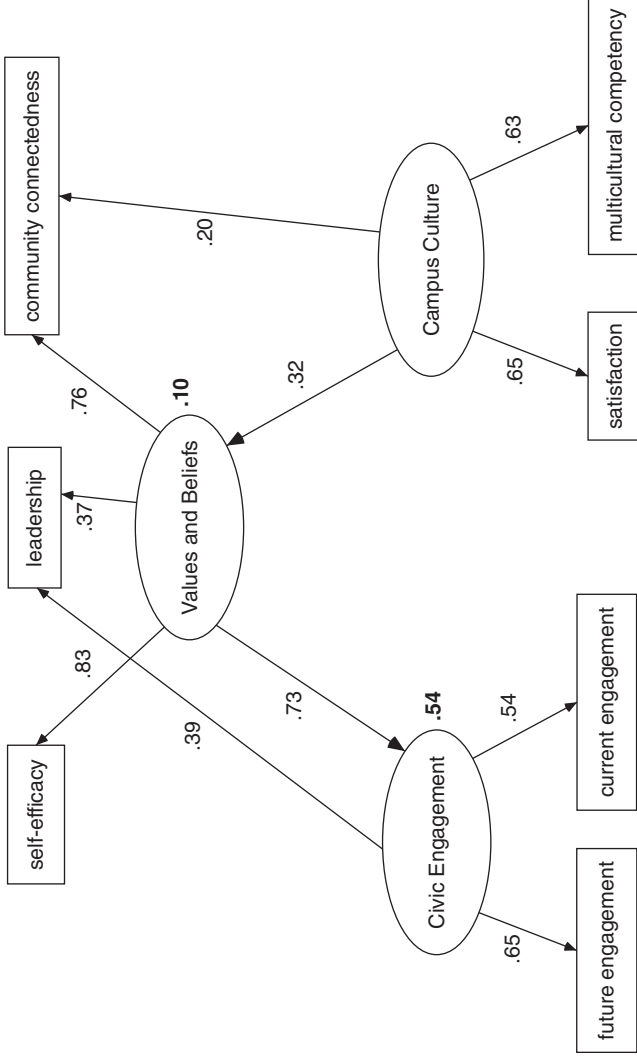
Table 4.1. Unstandardized Regression Coefficients for the Revised Structural Equation Model

Parameters	Campus Culture	Values and Beliefs	Civic Engagement
Civic engagement		0.664*** (0.039)	
Values and beliefs	0.367*** (0.041)[a]		
Self-efficacy		1.170*** (0.039)	
Leadership ability		0.527*** (0.068)	0.617*** (0.087)
Community connectedness	0.306*** (0.037)	1.000[b]	
Satisfaction with Tufts	0.928*** (0.077)		
Multicultural competency	1.000[b]		
Current engagement			1.000[b]
Future engagement			1.206*** (0.069)

Source: Billings & Terkla (2011). Copyright © 2011 by The Pennsylvania State University Press. Reprinted by permission of The Pennsylvania State University Press.
[a]Standard errors are in parentheses after coefficients.
[b]Not tested for statistical significance.
***$p < .001$.

unstandardized regression coefficients, standard errors, and *p*-values for the indicators and latent variables are shown in Table 4.1.

The structural equation model addresses the impact of the campus culture on students' civic outcomes. The results indicate that there is a positive relationship between the campus culture and students' civic values and beliefs (0.32). The authors use three measures: students satisfaction with Tufts (satisfaction), their interest and awareness of the issues facing their community (community connectedness), and how well Tufts prepared them to function in a multicultural society (multicultural competency) to represent whether students perceive that their campus culture is supportive of civic engagement. Higher values indicate that students perceive that Tufts has a campus culture that supports civic engagement.

There is also a positive relationship between students' civic values and beliefs and their civic activity levels (0.73). Therefore, students who perceive that the institutional culture is supportive of civic engagement are predicted to hold more civically minded values and beliefs. These civically minded values and beliefs are represented by whether they can effect change via civic engagement (self-efficacy), whether they strive to take on civic leadership roles (leadership ability), and their interest and awareness of the issues facing their community (community connectedness). Individuals with these civically minded values and beliefs are predicted to have higher levels of civic activity than their peers. Civic activity is measured by two sets of questions that asked about students' current and future engagement through community service, advocacy, political involvement, community-based research, donations to nonprofits and political campaigns, future educational pursuits, and future careers in the nonprofit field. Thus, this model highlights how higher education institutions who value civic engagement may want to focus on fostering supportive campus cultures as well as

targeting programs and initiatives that will develop the civic attitudes and values of its students.

One interesting finding is how the relationship between the campus culture and civic engagement is mediated through students' civic values and beliefs. As a result, the perception of a supportive campus culture for civic engagement influences the civic values and beliefs of its students, but only part of this relationship predicts their civic activity levels. Since civic values and beliefs are represented by self-efficacy, leadership ability, and community connectedness, the authors explore how these attributes mediate the impact of the campus culture on civic engagement activity.

One possibility is that students' self-efficacy is an important motivating factor to participate in civic activities and action. If students do not feel that political and community service can make a difference, they may elect not to participate. Therefore, it is an important for university faculty and administrators to design programs that increase students' self-efficacy and provide them with the necessary tools to initiate this positive change. Another possibility is that students need to feel empowered and to personally value taking active roles in civic engagement. If students are passive participants or do not feel that social issues are important, it will be difficult to increase their engagement in civic activities. Therefore, it is imperative that higher education institutions teach their students about the importance of strong leadership, urge them to seek out leadership opportunities to test and develop their skills, and explain why good leaders are critical for the health and well-being of society. Lastly, students may need to connect to their communities and understand the issues that they face before they become involved in civic action. In order to facilitate this objective, colleges and universities could increase students' knowledge of their communities by incorporating community-focused courses into their curricula, by hosting lectures/conferences/symposia on relevant community topics, and by encouraging students to become involved in cocurricular experiences on campus and off.

The authors also tested whether the model is invariant (equivalent) across sex and race/ethnicity, but found that the impact of the campus culture on civic outcomes was not significantly different for men and women or for students of color and White students.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this research study. Since the model used data from one institution, the relationships among the three latent variables may not generalize to other colleges and universities. In fact, the proposed model may only be applicable to institutions that are similar to Tufts University. In addition, college and universities that do not have supportive campus cultures for civic engagement may find little to no effect of the institutional culture on civic outcomes. Other researchers may find different

relationships among the three latent variables for institutions with supportive campus cultures compared to institution without supportive campus cultures for civic engagement.

Another limitation is that the research design did not contain covariates to control for precollege attitudes and beliefs. Since Tufts University tends to attract civically minded individuals to its student body, the impact of the campus culture may be smaller than observed if students' initial values were high when they entered the institution. Lastly, the civic engagement questions on the senior survey may not have fully captured the influence of the campus culture on students' civic outcomes. It is plausible if the entire CPAAS instrument[2] (and not a subsection) was administered to the same population, the authors may have found a stronger impact of the campus culture on civic outcomes.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research studies should explore whether the model is generalizable to other colleges and universities and whether institutional type changes how the campus culture impacts civic activities, values, and beliefs. This is particularly important at religious and liberal arts colleges that may have salient institutional missions that support educating citizen scholars. Another area of interest is exploring how supportive campus cultures for civic engagement influences the behavioral outcomes of faculty and staff. Does working in an environment that emphasizes active citizenship shape the civic activities, values, and beliefs of these individuals? Does teaching students who are civically engaged lead faculty to increase their commitment to this institutional goal?

Lastly, graduate and professional students are often neglected in the civic engagement literature that tends to focus on primary, secondary, and undergraduate education. In addition, universities may overlook this population when discussing the best methods to develop civic engagement outcomes in its students. Therefore, more attention is needed to explore whether graduate and professional students display the same patterns of behavior as undergraduate students. Specifically, do graduate students show more variance in their civic engagement outcomes compared to undergraduates? Does extensive experience in their fields influence how graduate and professional students perceive the importance of civic engagement in their daily lives? Lastly, do graduate students who attend programs that emphasize civic engagement incorporate civic learning into their courses as faculty members?

Conclusion

"Character cannot be 'taught' in a single course, or developed as part of an orientation program or capstone experience. Rather the multiple

dimensions of character are cultivated through a variety of experiences that take place over an extended period of time in the company of others who are undergoing similar experiences" (Kuh & Umbach, 2004, p. 51). Kuh and Umbach make an excellent point about how intentional colleges and universities need to be in order to instill the principles of active citizenship within its students. Instead of focusing on individual events in a vacuum, higher education institutions need to craft purposeful plans to integrate students' experiences toward the development of public citizens and leaders.

One method to achieve this goal is to embed civic engagement within the campus culture. This institutionalizing of civic engagement emphasizes the importance of citizen development to the college community, aligns campus practices with civic values, and creates a campus-wide infrastructure for civic engagement. Without the cultivation of a campus culture that is supportive of civic attitudes, principles, and values, it will be difficult for university administrators to systematically effect the civic outcomes of their students.

Notes

1. The authors determined that a model with CFI > 0.95, RMSEA ≤ 0.05, and SRMR < 0.10 is an excellent fit to the data (Kline, 2005; Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006). Although the value of the chi-square test is significant ($\chi^2(10) = 52.496$, $p < .001$), which indicates a lack of fit, several researchers advise against using the chi-square test as the only fit statistic due to its sensitivity to sample size (Bentler, 1992; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1978).

2. The CPAAS survey questions assess civic and political engagement on campus and within the community as well as the importance and belief in civic values and attitudes. These activity and attitudinal questions were also designed to examine the role that the institution had in developing and influencing active citizenship (Terkla et al., 2007).

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MEREDITH S. BILLINGS is a PhD candidate in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at the University of Michigan.

DAWN GERONIMO TERKLA is the associate provost of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Evaluation at Tufts University.