Civic Learning and Engagement:

A Review of the Literature on Civic Learning, Assessment, and Instruments

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The times call for visionary leadership that locates education for democracy as a focal point of educational study, reflection, and practice. This moment in history calls on us to embrace a comprehensive and contemporary vision for civic learning.

A Crucible Moment, 2012, p. 6

Authors Note

This literature review was commissioned by the Civic Learning Task Force, a partnership between the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). We believe the findings will be useful to a range of constituencies – academic and student affairs administrators, faculty, higher education researchers, and graduate students among them. This review is concerned primarily with research related to tools for assessing civic learning. In the introduction we identify definitions for civic engagement and civic learning, two terms that are often used but not uniformly understood. Employing the established definitions, we divide research into four domains: civic knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors. We proceed to examine each domain focusing on published research using civic outcomes assessment instruments. We then discuss methodology and highlight findings that identify differences between groups based on identity. Finally, we identify gaps in the current research and make recommendations for future research.

Introduction

In 2012 the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement, in cooperation with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the U.S. Department of Education, published *A Crucible Moment: College Learning & Democracy's Future,* calling for more investment in higher education's capacity to build and renew the nation's civic and democratic capital (National Task Force, 2012). *A Crucible Moment* is the latest in a growing volume of scholarship focusing on the civic purposes of higher education. This volume of work emerged from a movement to reassert the civic purposes of colleges and

universities, which began in the 1980's and grew throughout the 1990's in response to the growing civic and political disaffection among America's youth (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011).

A common challenge within the movement to reclaim the civic purposes of higher education is definitional. There are many definitions of civic engagement, leading to challenges for both scholars and practitioners of civic engagement in higher education (Finley, 2011; Hatcher, 2011; Jacoby, 2009). For the purposes of this paper we use Ehrlich's (2000) definition of civic engagement. According to Ehrlich, civic engagement is

> working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing
>
> the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivations to make that
>
> difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both
>
> political and non-political processes (p. vi)

We chose Ehrlich's definition for two primary reasons: it can be broadly applied across multiple contexts within higher education and is commonly cited in the civic engagement literature (Hatcher, 2011; National Task Force, 2012). Although civic engagement has been narrowly defined within specific disciplines, Ehrlich's broad conceptualization including knowledge, skills, values, motivations, and behaviors allows for a robust examination of assessment within civic learning, providing a framework of dimensions to investigate.

A shared understanding of "civic learning" is also essential because it guides the selection of literature and instruments to be reviewed. For the purposes of this review, we use Howard's (2001) definition. Civic learning is

> any learning that contributes to student preparation for community or public
>
> involvement in a diverse democratic society…we have in mind here a strict
>
> interpretation of civic learning - knowledge, skills, and values that make an

explicitly direct and purposeful contribution to the preparation of students for

active civic participation. (p. 45)

According to Howard's (2001) definition, civic learning relates knowledge, skills, and

values to civic action or behaviors. Ehrlich's definition of civic engagement and

Howard's of civic learning work in tandem allowing for a synthesis of empirical work

related to the assessment of community or public involvement in higher education.

This review examines the assessment of civic learning of college students on college

campuses. There has been extensive examination of civic learning in the contexts of community

service-learning and political engagement. These two areas are included within the larger

umbrella of civic learning and certainly make an "explicitly direct and purposeful contribution"

(Howard, 2001, p. 45) to civic participation. However, literature related specifically to service-

learning and direct political engagement is outside the scope of this review. Additionally, it is

important to note differences between those who attend college and those who do not because

college attendees participate in civic engagement at higher rates on a wide number of metrics

(Flanagan, Levine, & Settersten, 2009). Because this review focuses on the assessment of civic

learning on college campuses, it addresses issues of civic learning on college campuses rather

than for all groups in the traditional college age range.

Operationalizing Civic Learning Assessment

Because civic learning is a construct comprised of knowledge, skills, values, and

behaviors (Howard, 2001), each component of this construct is apt for assessment. After an

extensive review of assessment instruments, we did not identify any instrument that fully

assessed the entire construct of civic learning. Many of the most popular instruments used to

assess civic learning partially assess knowledge, skills, values, and behavior. In fact, some of the

most popular instruments were not developed for the explicit purpose of investigating civic learning. Many of the most widely utilized assessments of undergraduate students in the United States that capture data related to civic knowledge, skills, values, motivation, and behaviors have become resources for assessment and research on civic learning. However, because these instruments were not designed for the specific purpose of civic learning assessment there is some tension in employing them in this line of assessment. Because many of the instruments used to assess civic learning were not developed solely for this purpose the body of literature around civic learning assessment is diffuse. There is not a single body of literature or set of easily identifiable instruments in higher education that are tied to the majority of civic learning assessment. Instruments that measure dimensions of civic learning are not often explicitly utilized for that purpose in empirical research.

Civic Knowledge

Civic knowledge is most similar to the historical conceptualization of civics. Assessment of civic knowledge has traditionally asked members of defined community to understand the structure of government and basic history of that defined community. This knowledge, while important, is no longer a sufficient standard. In *A Crucible Moment*, the National Task Force (2012) provides a framework for civic knowledge in the 21st century. Citizens of communities need to know the cultural and global contexts in which a community exists, understand the historical and sociological relevance of important social movements, have exposure to multiple cultural and religious traditions, and understand how their political system works.

Civic knowledge in higher education often is assumed to be discipline specific, emphasizing different areas of knowledge. Civic knowledge, from this perspective, deals with "actionable" information, related to a discipline, which can allow individuals to come together

and make positive change (Hatcher, 2011). Hatcher highlights how philanthropic studies, for example, may emphasize knowledge about nonprofit organizations, whereas social work may emphasize the role of advocacy or social justice. For students studying in the field of education, civic knowledge might relate to the intercultural awareness of teachers or how to teach children about civic issues in their respective local, national, or global communities. Because civic knowledge has been assumed discipline-specific, assessing the knowledge component of civic learning was (and remains) difficult. Organizations like the Pew Research Center and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute have conducted and published non-refereed reports assessing civic knowledge. However, our review was concerned with articles published in refereed journals and indicated there has been very little published in higher education literature about the assessment of civic knowledge of college students.

Civic Skills

Civic skills go beyond skills for political practice (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003). Hatcher (2011), suggested grouping civic skills into three broad areas: dialogue, interpersonal perspective taking, and critical systematic thought. *A Crucible Moment* (National Task Force, 2012) provides a framework for civic learning and democratic engagement identifying seven civic skills:

- Critical inquiry, analysis, and reasoning
- Quantitative reasoning
- Gathering and evaluation of multiple sources of evidence
- Seeking, engaging, and being informed by multiple perspectives
- Written, oral, and multi-media communication
- Deliberation and bridge building across differences
- Collaborative decision making
- Ability to communicate in multiple languages (p. 4).

These same skills are echoed in other classifications. Kirlin (2003) identified four dominant categories, suggesting that, despite the large number of authors referencing civic skills, few

authors identify them exactly and even fewer authors have done empirical work related to civic skills.

According to Kirlin (2003), the skills addressed in both theoretical and empirical work fall into four broad categories: organization, communication, collective decision making, and critical thinking. Organization skills include those necessary for accomplishing tasks and knowing how to navigate organizational settings. Communication skills, the most well-defined group, include writing, proficiency in English, and oral presentation skills. Collective decision making skills include a "distinct set of skills and behaviors which are necessary for a democracy" (p. 21), including the ability to express an opinion, hearing others' opinions, and working towards a consensus for the collective. Critical thinking or cognitive skills, the fourth category of civic skills, are necessary for describing, analyzing, synthesizing, and constructing opinions and positions on issues with civic relevance.

Civic Skills and Attitudes Questionnaire

The Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ), which assesses attitudes and skills affected by a service-learning experience, is one instrument which identifies and assesses specific groupings of skills (Moely, Mercer, Ilustre, Miron, & McFarland, 2002). The CASQ includes scales related to interpersonal and problem-solving skills, as well as leadership skills. The interpersonal and problem-solving skills scales are related to listening to others' opinions, understanding the position of others, cooperative group work, logical thinking, effective communication, and conflict resolution. The leadership skills scale examines items related to one's ability to be a follower, ability as a leader, and efficacy to make a difference (Moely, Mercer, et al., 2002). Moely, McFarland, Miron, Mercer, & Ilustre (2002) examined 217 scores on the CSAQ of students' participating in service-learning in a pre-post design, comparing them

to 324 students who were not engaged in service-learning. The students who participated in service-learning showed positive growth in self-evaluated ratings of their own interpersonal and problem-solving skills and leadership skills relative to students who were not engaged in service-learning.

Civic Minded Graduate

The Civic-Minded Graduate (CMG) Scale was developed by the Center for Service and Learning Research Collaborative at Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis. The scale was created in 2007 and is one of three instruments developed to assess civic-mindedness (Steinberg, Hatcher, & Bringle, 2011). The construct of the Civic-Minded Graduate conceptualizes someone who has the ability, capacity, and desire to work with others towards the common good. The CMG Scale is a quantitative student self-report measure designed for use with undergraduate students and can be implemented on a variety of levels (program, course, departmental, institutional). A narrative prompt as well as an interview protocol and rubric also have been developed. All three tools are designed for assessing civic-mindedness. Limited peer reviewed research has been published using the assessments.

Other Research

Bowman's (2011) meta-analysis examined the relationship of collegiate diversity experiences and civic engagement, specifically leadership skills and civic action. Bowman investigated whether a relationship between college diversity experiences and civic engagement existed, if there was variation across studies, and what study characteristics, such as type of civic outcome or type of diversity experience, were associated with the magnitude of this proposed relationship. Bowman's meta-analysis included 27 studies and found that diversity experiences during college were related to increased civic engagement. These diversity experiences were

specifically related to civic skills, attitudes, and behaviors as well as a variety of diversity experiences. Interpersonal interactions with racial diversity had the strongest relationship with promoting civic engagement. The relationship between diversity experiences and civic engagement did vary based on the type of civic outcome under consideration. Diversity experiences had stronger relationships with diversity-related civic outcomes than with the development of leadership skills, for example. Bowman also found the effect size for self-reported gains is almost three times as large as the effect size in longitudinal studies for civic engagement.

Civic skills related to interpersonal perspective taking and working across difference are highly investigated areas of civic learning in higher education. Based on our review there is a clear link between experiences with difference and development of civic skills, including collaboration, communication, and leadership skills. One area which is emphasized in conceptual literature but notably absent from civic learning literature is the assessment of the development of critical systemic thought including skills such as quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and inquiry, and evaluating evidence. There is an empirical link in the literature reviewed but more investigation could occur.

Civic Values and Attitudes

Civic values and attitudes are some of the most commonly assessed areas of civic learning (Keen, 2009). Civic values include dispositions such as respect for freedom and dignity, empathy, open-mindedness, tolerance, justice, promoting equality, integrity, and responsibility to a larger good (National Task Force, 2012). Other conceptualizations have included being involved in programs to clean up the environment, interest in influencing the political structure, and developing a philosophy of life (Lott & Eagan, 2011). The assessment of

civic values and attitudes relies primarily on student self-reported data (Finley, 2012; Keen, 2009).

CIRP Freshman and Senior Surveys.

Two different but related instruments utilized in assessing civic values are the CIRP Freshman and Senior surveys, both administered by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California – Los Angeles. The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) is a longitudinal study of higher education, and these assessments have been administered to hundreds of thousands of students over more than 40 years. Although the Freshman and Senior surveys differ slightly in their questions they are designed to be used longitudinally, assessing students' across their higher education experience.

CIRP findings.

Pascarella, Ethington, and Smart (1988) conducted one of the earliest assessments of civic values, using longitudinal data from CIRP surveys to examine the long-term influence of college on the development of humanitarian/civic involvement values on students after college. They examined a factorial-derived scale for humanitarian/civic involvement including activities in programs to help the environment, helping others, participating in community action, becoming a community leader, influencing social values, and influencing the political structure. Pascarella et al. (1988) also included pre-college characteristics, college structural characteristics, academic attainment, and post-college occupation. They found neither institutional selectivity nor racial context had an influence on the development of humanitarian/civic involvement values. College experience variables, grades, social leadership involvement, and faculty/staff familiarity all had at least one significant direct effect on humanitarian/civic involvement values, suggesting the undergraduate college experience had an

impact on the humanizing values of college students. However, the major conclusion of the study was that social leadership activities are particularly influential in value development.

Lott (2013), citing new practices in curricular and co-curricular experiences related to civic engagement, as well as new methodological techniques, conducted further study into civic values using CIRP data. Lott utilized an eight-item dependent variable for civic values, in which students rated the importance of influencing the political structure, influencing social values, involvement in environmental programs, developing a meaningful philosophy of life, participating in community action programs, helping to promote racial understanding, being informed in politics, and becoming a community leader. This conceptualization of civic values was developed using confirmatory factor analysis (Lott & Eagan, 2011), which added to the strength of the findings. Lott's (2013) model found that taking an ethnic or women's studies course, studying abroad, and majoring in a social science all positively influence the development of civic values. Also, students' political orientation, social experiences, and leadership experience all affected civic values. According to Lott's (2013) model, as students' political orientation moves from conservative to liberal, civic values increase. Finally, entering first-year students' values explained the most variance in civic values four years later; volunteering in college was associated with the second largest effect. Institution-level variables were also associated with civic values, including mean SAT score, specifically with higher SAT scores having lower civic values scores, and institutional status, with private institutions having higher civic values scores than public institutions.

Global Perspectives Inventory.

The Global Perspective Inventory (GPI) assesses how a student thinks, views themselves as a person with a cultural heritage, and relates to those from different cultures, backgrounds, and

values (Braskamp, Braskamp, & Engberg, 2013). The GPI examines cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains. Each domain has two scales, for a total of six scales. The cognitive domain has scales examining knowing and knowledge, the intrapersonal domain has scales examining identity and affect, and the interpersonal domain possesses scales examining social responsibility and social interactions. The GPI can be used with students any time during their collegiate journey. It is recommended to be used at entry into college; at the end of first, second, or third year, graduation, and at the beginning or end of a "study abroad" experience or any other active/experiential learning experience. Overall, 147 institutions have participated since 2008, with most institutions participating over multiple years.

Global Perspective Inventory findings.

In his 2013 article, Engberg presented the results of three different studies that investigated study abroad and service-learning, comparing the two experiences using the GPI. Using a pretest-posttest design, he investigated 659 students who participated in study abroad experiences. Paired samples t-tests revealed significant, positive differences across all six GPI scales in students' posttest scores. In his study of service-learning, Engberg used OLS regression to examine 897 students. Controlling for gender, race (white/non-white), and students' pretest score, Engberg found participation in a service-learning course was significantly positively related to four of the six GPI scales: cognitive knowledge, intrapersonal identity, social interaction, and social responsibility. The third study employed a cross-sectional design to compare relationships between study abroad and service-learning. Utilizing OLS regression, and again controlling for gender, race, and class standing, Engberg examined differences between study abroad and service-learning participants, relative to nonparticipants. After participating in study abroad, students scored significantly higher on four dimensions: cognitive knowing,

cognitive knowledge, social interaction, and intrapersonal affect. Study abroad had a negative

significant association with the identity scale. Service-learning participation had significant

positive effects on five scales (from largest to smallest): social responsibility, intrapersonal

identity, social interaction, cognitive knowledge, and intrapersonal affect.

Pluralistic Orientation

The Pluralistic Orientation outcome scale was developed by Dr. Sylvia Hurtado while at

the University of Michigan and is currently administered by UCLA as part of the Diverse

Learning Environments Survey. Pluralistic Orientation is a measurement of a person's ability to

work effectively with others of diverse backgrounds, openness to new ideas and perspectives, as

well as being empathic to others' perspectives (Hurtado et al., 2002). Pluralistic orientation is a

construct that could be included in this review under civic skills; however, it has been placed

here because it also measures attitudes and values that allow for working across difference (a

civic skill). The items relate to one's ability to see the world from someone else's perspective,

tolerance of others with different beliefs, openness to having ones views challenged, and ability

to negotiate controversial issues.

Pluralistic Orientation findings.

Engberg (2007) used structural equation modeling on a longitudinal sample of 4,697

students at nine public institutions to examine how undergraduate students across disciplinary

contexts develop pluralistic orientation. Students in the sample belonged to academic majors in

Arts & Humanities, Life Sciences, Business, Social Sciences, Engineering, and Education/Social

Work. Engberg found a common model, which accounted for 42% to around 50% of the total

variance in pluralistic orientation, to explain what factors influence growth of students'

pluralistic orientation during the first two years of college. Not surprisingly, precollege

pluralistic orientation was the strongest predictor of pluralistic orientation after the second year of college. Participation in co-curricular diversity activities was not significantly related to students' second-year pluralistic orientation and enrollment in a diversity course was only significant for engineering and life science majors. Students' positive and negative interactions across race had significant and opposing effects for students in all majors.

Engberg and Hurtado (2011), using a longitudinal sample, investigated racial differences in pluralistic orientation and found notable differences across racial groups in the development of pluralistic orientation at the end of the student's second year. These results are presented later in the review in the section examining racial/ethnic differences in civic learning.

Using data collected from the CIRP Freshman Survey, Denson and Ing (2014) performed a latent class analysis on the items related to pluralistic orientation. This method allows institutions to identify typologies of students to inform institutional decision making. By examining scores of incoming students they identified four groups of students. The two most salient groupings were high pluralistic orientation (14% of freshmen) and low pluralistic orientation (56%). Both these classes have high homogeneity for all five items on the scale. The other two groups identified are the low-disposition, high-skill group (10%) and the high-disposition, low-skill group (18%). These two classes were differentiated by the items related to tolerance of others with different beliefs (disposition) and ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues (skill).

Openness to Diversity and Challenge

The Openness to Diversity and Challenge (ODC) scale is an outcome scale developed as part of the National Study of Student Learning (Pascarella et al., 1996; Whitt et al., 2001). The scale assesses students' attitudes towards interacting with people from different backgrounds.

Items addressed include questions pertaining to openness to cultural and racial diversity as well as the extent respondents enjoy being challenged by different perspectives, values, and ideas.

Openness to Diversity and Challenge findings.

Pascarella et al. (1996), concerned with the future demographic shifts in the United States, investigated students' openness to diversity and challenge in the first year of college. The survey was administered to students at 18 institutions prior to entering college and at the end of the first year. The study investigated four sources of influence on students' openness to diversity and challenge: precollege characteristics, organizational environment, academic experiences, and nonacademic experiences. The data were analyzed using ordinary least squares regression. According to their model 42% of the variance of growth in ODC scores at the end of students' first year could be attributed to precollege variables. Not surprisingly, the strongest indicator of ODC was precollege openness to diversity and challenge; although entering academic ability and students' age had modest positive effects. Of the six environmental factors they investigated, a student's perception of a nondiscriminatory racial environment was the only significant predictor and had a net positive impact. Only two of the nine measures of students' academic experiences were found to have significant net effects, with hours spent studying having a positive effect and number of mathematics courses taken having a small negative net effect. Seven of the nine measures of students' nonacademic experiences had significant net effects. Living on-campus, participating in a racial/cultural workshop, hours worked per week, and interactions with peers (acquaintances scale, topics of conversation scale, and information in conversations scale) were found to have positive net effects, while joining a fraternity or sorority had a negative effect for White students and a positive effect for nonwhite students.

Whitt and her colleagues (2001) conducted a follow up study to Pascarella et al. (1996) investigating the influences of students' openness to diversity and challenge in the second and third years of college. Drawing from the same population of students, Whitt et al. examined the influence of precollege characteristics, institutional environment, academic experiences, and nonacademic experiences on ODC. In comparison to Pascarella et al. (1996), no new significant variables were identified to influence students during the second and third years of college. Seven variables demonstrated significant positive relationships with openness to diversity and challenge in all three years of college: precollege openness to diversity and challenge, sex (with women scoring higher), age (with older students scoring higher), the degree to which students perceived a nondiscriminatory racial environment, the diversity of student acquaintances, and conversations with others where different ways of thinking were emphasized (Whitt et al., 2001). In all three years the number of mathematics courses a student took was a negative predictor of openness to diversity and challenge. In the first and second year of college, race and living on campus were both significant, but not in the third year. In the second year of college only, the degree to which student perceived the campus' emphasis on being critical, evaluative, and analytical had a significant positive impact. In only the third year of college the total number of credit hours, number of arts and humanities courses, and experiences with faculty all have a positive impact. Students' learning, as determined by the course learning scale, which focuses on behaviors associate with classroom learning, has a slight, significant negative impact on openness to diversity and challenge (Whitt et al., 2001).

Based on research by Pascarella et al. (1996) and Whitt et al. (2001), Cabrera et al. (2002) examined the role of collaborative learning as a pedagogy on multiple outcome scales, including openness to diversity and challenge on second-year students. As justification for the

study Cabrera et al. cited previous findings that some students' personal characteristics and some classroom-based activities influenced ODC. Cooperative learning practices, a five item scale measuring the frequency with which students engaged in group projects, class discussions, and study groups, had the largest significant effect on ODC. Cabrera et al. also found students' precollege academic ability and the amount of time students spent studying to be positive predictors of ODC. High school GPA was a small significant negative predictor of ODC.

Bowman (2014) re-conceptualized ODC as an intermediate predictor variable that should influence students' experiences, achievement, and retention. Bowman suggested ODC may be an individual orientation influencing a student's engagement with their environment, essentially suggesting ODC may be a student input characteristic in Astin's I-E-O model. Using data from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, which included the ODC scale, Bowman examined students' ODC score upon entering college. He determined after accounting for demographics, prior achievement, and degree aspirations, ODC was a consistent predictor of student outcomes including higher GPA's, increased retention, higher levels of interaction with faculty/staff, quality peer interactions, and good learning practices. This indicates students who enter college with higher levels of openness to diversity and challenge are more likely to be successful on a variety of measures.

Socially Responsible Leadership Scale

The Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS) was developed to assess values associated with the Social Change Model of Leadership (Dugan, 2006; Dugan & Komives, 2010). The Social Change model of Leadership's definition includes aspects of leadership focused on social responsibility and thus can be tied to values associated with civic learning. Within the SRLS there are eight subscales measuring different values constructs: consciousness

of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, and change. An argument for each value indirectly contributing to civic learning could be made; however, we focus on the citizenship subscale for a direct measurement of civic learning.

Dugan and Komives (2010) defined citizenship, as measured by the the citizenship scale as,

> the process whereby an individual and the collaborative group become
> responsibly connected to the community and society through the leadership
> development activity. To be a good citizen is to work for positive change on the
> behalf of others and the community (p. 526).

The citizenship subscale assesses the societal value domain of the Social Change Model of Leadership; other items in the SRLS are considered individual or group values (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Dugan, Komives, & Segar, 2008). The original SRLS contained 103-items but a 68-item scale was adapted using data reduction techniques (Dugan, 2006).

Socially Responsible Leadership Scale findings.

The citizenship subscale of the SRLS, representing societal values, is the lowest scoring scale of the eight subscales among undergraduate students (Dugan, 2006; Dugan et al., 2008). Dugan et al. (2008) specifically recommended that campus leadership programs intentionally focus on developing the outcomes reported as weakest by students, including the development of citizenship. Dugan (2006) also examined whether students' scores across the eight subscales of the SRLS varied due to students' involvement in community service, positional leadership roles, student organizations, or formal leadership programs. Of the eight subscales, the citizenship scale was the most positively affected by student involvement in all four activities, with

community service showing the largest mean differences for students who participated relative to those who did not (Dugan, 2006). Dugan and Komives (2010) used hierarchical multiple regression with variable blocking to examine all eight outcome scales of the SRLS. They found socio-cultural conversations with peers and participation in community service were the two activities most strongly related activities to citizenship. Age, mentoring relationships with faculty, peer-mentoring relationships, and participation in moderate term leadership training were all significantly and positively associated with student's scores on the citizenship scale.

Dugan, Bohle, Woelker, and Cooney (2014) examined the relationships between social perspective taking and the individual, group, and societal domains of socially responsible leadership (using the SRLS). Dugan and colleagues hypothesized a model of the relationships between individual leadership, social perspective taking, group leadership, and societal leadership (the citizenship scale) while controlling for precollege leadership capacity. These authors found that social perspective-taking mediated the relationship between the individual leadership domain and the group leadership domain, but showed no direct effect on the societal leadership domain. The path from the group leadership domain to the societal leadership domain demonstrated a large effect suggesting the development of group-level leadership values plays a large role in an individual's development of citizenship than does the development of individual leadership.

Other civic values research

Hu (2008), working with data from three waves of longitudinal data assessing the Gates Millennium Scholars program collected by the National Opinion Research Center, investigated the relationship between financial aid awards, specifically Gates Millennium Scholarships, student engagement (conceptualized in a manner similar to NSSE), and college graduates'

democratic values and post college civic engagement. In his work he used composite variables for academic engagement, social engagement, student democratic values, and civic engagement after college. Student democratic values was a six item composite variable related to students' understanding of the nature of democracy and their own agency within a democracy. Student civic engagement was a four item composite variables from items which are well established by HERI to measure civic engagement. Hu (2008) found that receiving the Gates financial aid award influenced student engagement in educationally purposeful activities in college. Additionally, the financial aid award was directly and positively related to student post-college civic engagement. Student social engagement in college positively related to post-college civic engagement but academic engagement did not. Hu found that financial aid awards indirectly affected civic engagement by influencing student social engagement and development of democratic values. Democratic values were related to post-college civic engagement as well, serving as an outcome and mediating variable.

In our literature search, civic values were the most investigated area of civic learning, reinforcing Keen's (2009) conclusion. Civic values were operationalized in the literature in wide-reaching manner, ranging from open-mindedness and tolerance to identity and social responsibility. Civic values were often operationalized through composite variables. The inclusion of variables was not uniform across instruments; therefore it is important to investigate the items included in these composite variables when discussing civic values. Some assessments focus solely on working across difference, whereas others investigate environmental and/or political values. One thing does stand out from our review: Students' civic values are affected by their time and experiences in higher education.

Civic Behaviors and Collective Action

An article by Keen (2009) examined assessment methods of students' civic outcomes and recognized trends in current assessment efforts, concluding (as did we) that most instruments measure attitudes (values) and behavioral expectations. Civic behaviors can range from voting to volunteerism, from dialogue between individuals around difference to solving public problems with diverse partners. There is some ambiguity between civic skills and civic behaviors. From our review it seems as if assessing skills is related to ability, whereas assessment of behaviors involves assessing skills or abilities in action—often measured as energy expended, time spent, or numbers of engagements in certain behaviors. Assessment of civic behaviors often includes measuring activity during students' undergraduate years, investigating the kinds of behaviors one is likely to participate in, or it may include analyzing behaviors after graduation.

National Survey of Student Engagement

The National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered annually at hundreds of institutions around the country. NSSE was first administered in 1999 and is an auxiliary unit of the Center for Postsecondary Research in the Indiana University School of Education. NSSE measures student engagement – measured by the amount of time students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities and how institutions deploy resources and organize the curriculum and other learning opportunities. NSSE has two modules, which may be added to their core survey, which specifically investigate civic engagement and the development of transferable skills.

National Survey of Student Engagement findings.

Kuh and Umbach (2004) utilized NSSE data to examine what experiences during college are related to self-reported character development and if character development varied between

types of institutions. Using data from over 500 institutions Kuh and Umbach examined four dimensions of character development: knowledge of self, ethical development and problem solving, civic responsibility, and general knowledge. Civic responsibility consisted of two items: voting in local, state, and national elections as well as contributing to the welfare of one's community. Kuh and Umbach analyzed the data in three stages: descriptive statistics to construct a profile, hierarchical linear modeling to explore student and institutional characteristics, and hierarchical linear modeling to explore relationships between character development and engagement in educational purposeful activities. Hierarchical linear modeling identified relevant student and institution level effects on the civic responsibility dimension of character development. Student level effects included major field, with social science and humanities scoring the highest and math and science students scoring the lowest. Students attending full-time as well as those participating in a fraternity and sorority reported higher civic responsibility scores. Engagement experiences such as academic challenge, active and collaborative experiences, student-faculty interaction, volunteering, and participating in a learning community were associated with higher civic responsibility scores. Additionally a supportive campus climate related to interpersonal interaction, learning, and a climate of satisfaction were positively related to civic responsibility. Finally structural diversity integration and diversity-related activities were associated with higher civic responsibility scores. Kuh and Umbarch also examined institution level effects and found attending a doctoral granting institution was associated with lower scores on civic responsibility items, whereas attending a religiously affiliated institution was associated with higher civic responsibility scores.

Activism Orientation Scale

The Activism Orientation Scale (AOS) is a measure developed to assess individuals' propensity to engage in a wide variety of social action behaviors from a variety of ideological positions. Corning and Meyers (2002) conceptualized activist orientation as "an individual's developed, relatively stable, yet changeable orientation to engage in various collective, social-political, problem-solving behaviors spanning a range from low-risk, passive, and institutionalized acts to high-risk, active, and unconventional behaviors" (p. 704). The AOS focuses on activist behaviors rather than issues in an effort to be broadly applicable across individuals, regardless of the political orientation of respondents. The AOS is a 35-item scale in which respondents can score between 0 and 105, with a higher score representing higher levels of activism orientation and behavior, along two different forms of activism: conventional activism and high risk activism. Corning and Myers suggested that the AOS be used as a pre/post, a post-measure, or in longitudinal studies to track activism development. Despite these suggestions, the use of the AOS as a measure of civic behaviors has been limited in relation to college students.

Activism Orientation Scale findings

Klar and Kasser (2009) used a sample of college students to examine whether activists lead happier and more fulfilled lives. Using a shortened version of the AOS as part of their questionnaire, Klar and Kasser included additional questions related to activist identity and commitment, life satisfaction, and well-being and found conventional activism was associated with higher psychological well-being. Additionally, students who were assigned to engage in short-term, low involvement activist behaviors had higher well-being afterward than students

who engaged in nonactivist behaviors, supporting but not proving, a potential causal relationship between the two.

Community College Survey of Student Engagement

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was established in 2001 at The University of Texas at Austin. CCSSE was most recently updated in 2005 but features five items around a "special-focus" topic each year. CCSSE utilizes a self-reported questionnaire that asks questions in a multiple choice scale format. CCSSE shares the aggregated results of its annual survey widely utilizing five benchmarks: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners. An extensive search of literature and CCSSE's website revealed no publications related to civic learning. However, based on a review of the instrument there are items that connect to behaviors and action within the civic domain (Center, 2005). These items relate to participation in community-based projects, having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity, having serious conversations with students who differ in terms of religious beliefs, personal opinions, or personal values, critical thinking practices, and how collegiate experiences have influenced understanding of self and others.

Other Civic Behaviors Research

Weerts, Cabrera, and Pérez Mejías (2014) performed a latent class analysis, sampling college graduates from 1999 and 2003, to "identify classes of college students who share patterns of behavior in relation to participation in eight civic-related activities" (p. 149). The eight civic-related behaviors were categorized as professional, service, environmental, political, social, cultural, youth, and community. Because their data came from an American College Testing (ACT) dataset, the analysis was limited by somewhat vague civic behaviors items included on

the assessment instrument (Weerts et al., 2012). Four classes of students, based on civic engagement behaviors, emerged: Super Engagers, Social-Cultural Engagers, Apolitical Engagers, and Non-Engagers. Super Engagers, 30% of the sample, were classified as students who "did it all." They were highly engaged in leadership, policymaking, and service that had on- and off-campus impact. They were the only group engaged in political, environmental, and nonpolitical organizations. Social-Cultural Engagers, 6% of sample, engaged in social and cultural activities while avoiding youth related activities. Apolitical Engagers, 39% of the sample, participated in professional, service, social- and community-oriented organizations but were unlikely to be involved in environmental or political activities. Non-Engagers, 25% of the sample, were unlikely to engage in any activities and were most likely to avoid participation in almost all the activities.

Ishitani and McKitrick (2013), working with the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88/2000), investigated the relationship between students' academic program of study and post-collegiate civic engagement, using a 3-level, multi-level model, with academic program serving as the second level. The outcome variable was a composite variable created using various individual level behaviors considered to be indicators of civic engagement. The outcome consisted of 12 items (frequency participants read newspapers or magazines, read books, watch the news, visit a public library, go to a play/concert/museum, participate in organized religious activities, volunteer in a youth organization, volunteer in a civic/community organization, voter registration status, whether the participant voted in the 1996 presidential election, or if they have voted in last 24 months). Academic program, or level two of the model, accounted for close to 6% of variance in the outcome variable. Education was chosen as the reference group based on an assumption that students in education programs "have more

opportunities for volunteer activities as part of their curriculum" (p. 387). The study identified a relationship between postgraduate civic engagement and academic program. Findings suggest students in the field of education have the highest propensity to participate in civic engagement behaviors after college. Students from business, engineering, life sciences, physical sciences, and applied social sciences majors reported less post-collegiate civic engagement. Engineering possessed a medium effect and all other significant effects fell between small and medium size in magnitude. Ishitani and McKitrick also found that belonging racial group identity and collegiate civic engagement were related to post-collegiate civic engagement, whereas institutional selectivity had no effect on post-graduate civic engagement.

In one qualitative assessment of civic learning, Biddix (2010) employed Internet-based qualitative interviews to collect data from 22 campus activists at eight campuses. He utilized a phenomenological perspective to analyze data collected, assessing the role of technology in campus activism. Interviews were conducted using an interview guide. Participants were required to have an affiliation and active involvement with a campus group with an activist or political purpose. Biddix found campus activists used email as their primary form of technology. This form allowed for group decision making without boundaries created by student schedules. Email served other functions including promoting and maintaining student involvement, working with off campus constituencies, and connecting with individuals tied to larger organizations such as national movements. Student activists also used the internet, web pages, and blogs for civic purposes. These methods functioned as an archive and resource for others, providing recommendations to become involved in the students' causes. Students also used cell phones, primarily for texting, to mobilize others. Biddix also identified Facebook as a technology students were using. Facebook was adopted by student leaders in a variety of ways. Students

built advocacy and support networks, as a mass medium to get in contact with others, and to communicate with others quickly as students check their Facebook page(s) often. Biddix determined students were moving from exclusively face-to-face contact towards using informational and computer technology to engage in civic behaviors.

Civic behaviors and action are both vehicles through which civic learning is developed and in which civic learning manifests itself. Like civic values, assessment of civic behaviors involves a wide range of approaches. It is important to understand which behaviors are included in the research. Some research investigated predictors of behaviors which are highly encouraged in postsecondary education like voting and volunteering; while some research investigated riskier behavior which higher education institutions might not encourage, such as engaging in illegal acts at a political rally. Whichever behaviors are being investigated it is clear individuals choose different types of behaviors in which to engage. Some do not engage, some opt for political actions, and some focus on apolitical action. One thing is clear from our review, higher education has a role in shaping the civic behaviors of its students and graduates.

Examination of Methodologies Used

According to Keen (2009), the assessment of civic outcomes is characterized "by the use of mixed methods and approaches" (p. 3). She concluded that most assessments utilize self-report data, with some cross-sectional, and relatively few longitudinal studies. This review's primary concern was civic learning assessment as it relates to particular instruments, which resulted in the identification of more quantitative assessments than Keen found.

Despite assessment being predominately quantitative, the style of analysis varied widely based on the investigator of civic learning. The primary means of analysis was multiple regression analysis occurring at a single level of analysis (Engberg, 2013; Pascarella et al., 1988;

Whitt et al., 2001). Other variable-related methods of analysis included paired t-tests (Engberg, 2013), psychometric analysis (Braskamp et al., 2013; Lott & Eagan, 2011; Moely et al., 2002), multi-level modeling (Bowman, 2014; Ishtani & McKitrick, 2013; Kuh & Umbach, 2004), structural equation modeling (Dugan et al., 2014; Engberg & Hurtado, 2011), and meta-analysis (Bowman, 2011). Person-centered approaches such as latent class analysis were also employed (Denson & Ing, 2014; Weerts et al., 2014).

Consistent with Keen (2009) finding, the articles we reviewed employed cross-sectional assessment, however, there were some longitudinal data (Engberg & Hurtado, 2011). A majority of longitudinal data were tied to specific instruments such as ODC or specific research projects, like the National Study of Student Learning (Cabrera et al., 2002; Pascarella et al, 1996; Whitt et al., 2001) and the CIRP Freshman and Senior Surveys (Lott, 2013; Lott & Eagan, 2011 Pascarella et al., 1988). Another example of longitudinal assessment employed in a shorter period of time was the pre/post assessment measuring students' scores on an instrument before and after some intervention (Engberg, 2013; Moely et al. 2002).

Scholars do conduct assessment of civic learning using qualitative methods (Biddix, 2010). The Civic Minded Graduate scale, for example, developed by IUPUI used qualitative methods for validation purposes of their more quantitative assessment (Steinbert et al., 2008). However, this research into civic learning is usually not tied to direct assessment instruments and is largely absent from the literature review presented here.

Between Group Differences

Most assessment of civic learning is aggregated – meaning it addresses different pieces of learning as representative of the entire population. Methodologically and theoretically this is a sound approach. However, if all groups do not share civic learning equally, the inequality is not

reflected by the data presented above. It is common in many social sciences to, when possible, disaggregate the data and identify differences between groups. Finley (2012) suggested the disaggregation of data to examine underserved population is an area for future study. Some studies have begun to look at between group differences. In our review of these materials, when possible, the authors' original naming of groups was maintained.

Sex

Sex is often the first category used to divide a population into subgroups. In many studies sex is not the variable of interest but it is included as a predictor variable. This research demonstrates that generally women score significantly higher on a variety of civic learning assessment measures. Women report higher scores on assessment instruments related to civic skills (Moely, 2002) and values (Cabrera et al., 2002; Hurtado et al., 2002; Pascarella et al., 1996). These findings are not universally agreed upon, however. Lott (2013) found that women reported lower scores in civic values; Hu (2008), on the other hand, found no difference between men and women in civic values.

Hu (2008) identified differences in postgraduate behaviors and engagement, with women engaging in more civic behavior. Biddix (2010) found differences between genders in how technology is used for civic purposes. For example, male leaders used email as a mass solicitation tool whereas women used email as a communicative tool for gauging and building commitment. The effect of gender in civic learning is not settled. Women seem to have higher scores across the literature but that finding isn't universal. These findings might reflect the kinds of civic learning which are more commonly assessed.

Race

There is not a clear consensus on the effects of race on civic learning. In some quantitative work the sample sizes have not been appropriate to investigate race (Lott, 2013). Some authors have found race does not seem to broadly affect the development of civic values (Pascarella et al., 1988). Engberg and Hurtado (2011) found that significant precollege differences in pluralistic orientation (a civic values measure) were not present across four racial groups (White, Asian, Latino, Black). However effects associated with race have been found. For example, Dugan et al. (2008) found African American/Black students had significantly higher scores than White students on the citizenship scales of the SRLS and that Asian Americans scored significantly lower than all racial groups except Native Americans.

Engberg and Hurtado (2011), using a longitudinal sample, investigated racial differences in pluralistic orientation and found notable differences across racial groups in the development of pluralistic orientation at the end of the student's second year. Black, Latino, and White students all scored significantly higher than Asian students. Latino students were the only group to show significant effects from the direct influence of diversity courses. White students were the only group to show significant effects from the direct influence of the co-curriculum. For White and Asian students negative cross-racial interactions reduced their pluralistic orientation; negative cross-racial interaction did not affect pluralistic orientation for Black and Latino students however. Engberg and Hurtado found that for White students, higher levels of structural diversity increased the frequency of positive cross-racial interactions, but did not find a significant value for other racial groups. For Asian and Latino students, increased structural diversity resulted in a significant, positive indirect effect on pluralistic orientation at the end of the second year but no significant effect for White or Black students.

Cabrera et al. (2002) found that Hispanic students were more predisposed to tolerance of others at the end of the second year than White students. Kuh and Umbach (2004) found African American, Native American, and Latinos had greater gains than White and Asian Pacific American students in their civic responsibility behaviors. Hu (2008) found that African American and Hispanic students scored higher than Asian American students in their civic engagement behaviors. Race has some effect on civic learning, but it is not yet clear what those effects of race are. It is also not clear if the effects vary in the domains of knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors.

Recommendations for Future Research

Civic learning is any learning which contributes to active civic engagement (Howard, 2001). It is an unwieldy construct made up of many distinct pieces. As a result of the wide scope of civic learning, there is still work to be done in researching and understanding how individuals acquire civic knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors. Our review utilized strict guidelines and included only material published in peer-review journals. Additionally we excluded literature concerned with service-learning. From our review we identified key recommendations, some of which are shared by others, for the future of civic learning research.

First, the populations of inquiry need to be diversified. Keen (2009) suggestsed civic learning research is primarily concerned with undergraduate students as a whole, with some focus on graduate students and faculty. More work should be done investigating civic learning regarding family, the community, and non-college students (Keen, 2009). Additionally, more data and research about underserved student populations (students of color, first-generation, transfer, and low-income) is important (Finley, 2012), especially as current research is inconclusive about the effects of social group membership on many civic outcomes. We also

recommend investigating special populations for which civic learning may manifest itself differently from the traditional undergraduate students, such as veterans and non-traditional age students, who are generally absent from the current literature.

Civic learning research has predominately been based on student self-report and cross-sectional in design. The addition of more direct measures of civic learning, especially those that can be applied longitudinally, would strengthen the current understanding of how college experiences affect civic learning. The recent release of AAC&U's VALUE rubrics is a promising development in this area. The VALUE rubrics provide a widely used resource for examining direct student learning through the work students generate through their collegiate curriculum and co-curriculum. The VALUE rubrics can provide both developmental and longitudinal data that can be disaggregated for different student populations.

Civic learning researchers should continue to expand its use of longitudinal data, take multi- and cross-disciplinary approaches, and improve the research of the developmental trajectory of civic learning (Finley, 2012; Kirlin, 2003). This is especially true in light of Bowman's (2011) finding that effect sizes for self-reported gains are approximately three times larger than the effect sizes for longitudinal studies, indicating a possible problem with the accuracy of findings from cross-sectional designs.

Civic learning research should also be tied directly to academic coursework assessment (Keen, 2009), especially the void in direct assessment of civic learning. Civic learning research should be tied more closely to common research outcomes in higher education. Like much of the student engagement work, civic learning research should be tied to student success measures such as retention and graduation (Finley, 2012). It would also be wise to investigate the capacity building of civic learning and the transferability of civic skills to multiple contexts (Kirlin,

2003). Finally, as education is ultimately a field of practice, it is important to continue to make practical recommendations from this research. The teaching of civic engagement and assessment of civic learning cannot occur within the bubble of higher education – applications and research must ultimately lead to tangible results which manifest themselves in those who depart from colleges and universities.

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