3-3-2016

Tying Knots With Communities: Youth Involvement in Scouting and Civic Engagement in Adulthood

Young-Il Kim
George Fox University, ykim@georgefox.edu

Sung Joon Jang
Baylor University

Byron R. Johnson
Baylor University

Tying Knots With Communities: Youth Involvement in Scouting and Civic Engagement in Adulthood

Young-Il Kim[1], Sung Joon Jang[1], and Byron R. Johnson[1]

Abstract
Using data from a nationally representative sample of American adult males ($N = 2,512$), this study examines (a) whether duration of membership in the Boy Scouts of America is associated with adult civic engagement and (b) whether five characteristics of positive youth development (confidence, competence, connection, character, and caring) account for the relationship between duration of Scouting membership and adult civic engagement. The results from structural equation modeling indicate that duration of participation in Scouting is positively associated with four indicators of civic engagement: community involvement, community volunteering, community activism, and environmental activism. Among the five positive characteristics, confidence and competence were found to fully mediate the effects of Scouting on all four types of civic engagement, whereas the other three only to partly mediate the effects.

Are adults who were Boy Scouts in their youth more involved in the community compared with those who were not? If so, why? Regarding the first question, there is anecdotal (Wuthnow, 1991) and quantitative evidence (Polson, Kim, Jang, Johnson, & Smith, 2013), especially for Eagle Scouts—the highest rank in the Boy Scouts of

[1]Baylor University, Waco, TX, USA

Corresponding Author:
Young-Il Kim, Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97236, Waco, TX 76798, USA.
Email: Young-Il_Kim@baylor.edu

America (BSA). These studies are important because, although community-based youth organizations offer a rich environment for youth to become responsible citizens (Flanagan, 2003), relatively little research has been done assessing the role of community-based youth organizations in later citizenship engagement (e.g., Frisco, Muller, & Dodson, 2004; Ladewig & Thomas, 1987), compared with research examining the role of extracurricular school activities (e.g., Glanville, 1999; Hanks, 1981; Smith, 1999; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Studies considering the second question are even less common. Frisco et al. (2004) has made calls for such research, as the authors wondered why membership in a particular youth organization such as Scouting (measured in 1988) increased the likelihood of voting in the 1992 presidential election. The present study answers this call by exploring the mediating mechanisms underlying the association between youth membership in Scouting and adult civic engagement.

Our choice of mediators is based on the positive youth development (PYD) framework (Lerner et al., 2005), which highlights the importance of the so-called "5Cs" (Confidence, Competence, Connection, Character, and Caring) in promoting civic engagement. The Five Cs model of PYD is useful to frame the present study because it is widely used in community youth organization programs as well as youth development research (see, for example, 4-H research by Lerner et al., 2005).[1] We assume that Scouting serves as a venue for the cultivation of these five positive characteristics, which in turn foster lifelong civic engagement. Using data from a nationally representative sample of American adult males ($N = 2,512$), we examine whether the Five Cs mediate the relationship between youth involvement in the BSA and a wide range of civic engagement activities in adulthood.

In this study, civic engagement is defined as "non-remunerative, publicly spirited collective action that is not motivated by the desire to affect public policy" (Campbell, 2006, p. 30). Thus, political participation, whose activities directly aim at influencing public policy, is not included. Civic engagement can take many forms, from belonging to local voluntary associations (community involvement) to volunteering in the community (community volunteering), to taking a more active role in improving community life (community activism), and to conserving environment (environmental activism). Accordingly, we examine these four types of civic engagement.

Background

PYD

Beginning in the 1990s, practitioners, followed by scholars from various disciplines, including sociology (e.g., Elder & Shanahan, 1998), contributed to the emergence of a new approach to youth research and practice, referred to as PYD (for an overview, see Damon, 2004). This perspective emphasizes five developmental characteristics, called "Five Cs": (a) *confidence*—an internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy; (b) *competence*—a positive view of one's actions in domain-specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, and vocational areas; (c) *connection*—positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in bidirectional exchanges between

the individual and peers, family, school, and community, in which both parties contribute; (d) *character*—a respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, and a sense of right and wrong; and (e) *caring*—a sense of sympathy and empathy for others (Lerner et al., 2005).

Scouting and Five Positive Characteristics

The PYD perspective assumes that youth have a built-in motivational system with enormous potential to engage in positive development, especially when adults provide support and guidance (Damon, 2004). One way to activate the motivational system is to participate in *structured voluntary activities*, "that are voluntary (i.e., not required for school) and involve some structure, that is, where [youth] participation occurs within a system involving constraints, rules, and goals" (Larson, 2000, p. 174). Scouting is a youth organization providing such activities, where youth learn how to organize and lead a unit (*confidence* and *competence*), to inculcate them with moral integrity (*character*), and to train them in the responsibilities of citizenship (*connection* and *caring*). Scouting is done in the company of boys of different ages working together as a unit, while learning they are responsible not only for themselves but also for other Scouts. This process, for example, encourages youth to develop teamwork skills, learn essential life skills, and build and sustain character competencies. A reward system of "merit badges" provides extra motivation for Scouts to develop their skills. Scouts work to achieve their goals and ultimately advance to the rank of Eagle Scout—the highest designation, which only about 7% of all Scouts reach (BSA, 2013a).

Participation in Scouting activities is expected to help boys develop and sustain these characteristics after leaving adolescence, thereby assisting them to become contributing members of society in adulthood. Indeed, this is an outcome of PYD, a sixth C: *contribution*; that is, when the Five Cs are present in adolescents, they will contribute not only to the self and family but also to their communities (Lerner, Fisher, & Weinberg, 2000). It is reported that BSA provides "more than 36 million hours of community service (worth some $764 million)" every year (BSA, 2013b, p. 9). Among more than 100 possible merit badges, 16 badges are related to civic engagement, and of these, three citizenship merit badges (Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Citizenship in the World) must be earned to qualify for the rank of Eagle Scout. Considering civic engagement as an example of the sixth C, we examine whether the Five Cs are responsible for former Scouts' current civic life.

Five Positive Characteristics and Civic Engagement

The civic engagement literature suggests that each of the five characteristics is positively associated with civic engagement.

Confidence. Self-efficacy is known to be positively associated with political participation (Mondak & Halperin, 2008), and the same relationship with civic engagement is

expected with proper measurement of self-efficacy (e.g., Musick & Wilson, 2008). We expect a positive association between self-efficacy and civic engagement because our measure of self-efficacy taps an individual's confidence in community improvement.

Competence. Competence has been regarded as one of the most important conditions for both political and civic participation. For example, Verba et al. (1995) found adult civic skills (e.g., communication skills, planning skills) to be positively associated with political participation. The civic engagement literature also indicates that participation in structured voluntary activities enables youth to develop various civic skills such as communication, planning, organization, and decision making (Flanagan, 2003; Kirlin, 2002). In addition, Lerner et al. (2005) found that competence was significantly related to community contribution. Thus, competence, developed during adolescence, is expected to extend into later life, increasing civic engagement in adulthood.

Connection. Social networks are essential conduits of political participation (Campbell, 2013) and volunteering (Forbes & Zampelli, 2014; Paik & Navarre-Jackson, 2011). The youth civic engagement literature suggests that young people, through participation in youth organizations, have opportunities to connect with "pro-social reference groups," so they may develop a sense of collective identity early in life (Flanagan, 2003, p. 257). Hence, we expect people with greater social networks to be more civically engaged.

Character. Most civic engagement scholars agree that tolerance, among other character traits, is crucial for building a healthy democracy (Paxton, 2002). As most civic action requires collective decision making, tolerance (respect for diversity) has been identified as a critical attribute underpinning participatory democracy (Sullivan & Transue, 1999). Given that tolerance is not a natural proclivity, it is critical for youth to be exposed to environments where they encounter others whose viewpoints and backgrounds are different from their own. Youth organizations provide an opportunity to interact with people with different perspectives, to practice compromise, and to learn tolerance (Flanagan, 2004). Thus, we expect tolerance to be positively associated with civic engagement.

Caring. Sympathy or empathy for others is likely to motivate civic engagement (Musick & Wilson, 2008). Thus, concern for others and community is expected to increase civic engagement.

The Present Study

We propose that the five characteristics of positive development explain the relationship between youth involvement in Scouting and adult civic engagement as follows:

Hypothesis 1: The number of years of membership in Scouting is positively associated with the five characteristics of positive adult development.

Hypothesis 2: The five characteristics of positive adult development are positively associated with adult civic engagement.

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between the number of years of membership in Scouting and adult civic engagement is partly mediated by the five characteristics of positive adult development.

To test these hypotheses, we constructed a manifest-variable structural equation model presented in Figure 1, where we examine relationships among observed variables. The endogenous variables of civic engagement are modeled to be correlated via their residuals (i.e., e_1, e_2, e_3, and e_4), without which the model would be misspecified. Relationships among the endogenous variables of positive characteristics were specified in the same way, but their residual correlations as well as the structural paths from sociodemographic controls to all endogenous variables are not shown in the diagram to avoid visual clutter.

Method

Data

We used data from a nationally representative sample of U.S. male adults collected by the Gallup Organization in 2010. To identify men who were Scouts in their youth, two screening questions were added to the Gallup Daily tracking poll[2] from April 20, 2010, to October 4, 2010. During this period, a random sample of 81,434 male adults was selected. Respondents were first asked whether they had ever participated in Scouting. If they responded yes, they were asked whether they had achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. Through these questions, we identified 4,320 Eagle Scouts, 32,108 Boy Scouts, and 45,006 non-Scouts. Of those respondents, 3,871 Eagle Scouts (89.6%), 28,375 Boy Scouts (88.3%), and 35,911 non-Scouts (79.8%) agreed to be re-contacted. Of those who agreed to be re-contacted, 3,456 Eagle Scouts, 5,000 Boy Scouts, and 5,000 non-Scouts were randomly selected, resulting in an interim total sample of 13,456. Because this sample was intended to be large enough to achieve quotas for each group, only 7,069 (1,346 Eagle Scouts, 2,802 Boy Scouts, 2,921 non-Scouts) were used for survey, which was fielded between October 12 and November 20, 2010. The present data were collected from 2,512 male adults (134 Eagle Scouts, 853 Boy Scouts, 1,502 non-Scouts, 23 missing cases), yielding an overall response rate of 41.7% (calculation formulas and disposition codes are available on request).

Measures

Dependent variables. First, to measure community involvement, we used the total number of memberships in voluntary associations that respondents belong to (0 = *none*, 7 = *7 or more*; $M = 1.34$, $SD = 1.45$). Second, community volunteering was measured by whether respondents had volunteered at religious and/or nonreligious organizations in their community during the last month prior to survey. The two dichotomous variables were summed to indicate whether respondents volunteered and, if so, which organization (0 = *neither*, 1 = *either*, 2 = *both*; $M = .70$, $SD = 0.73$).
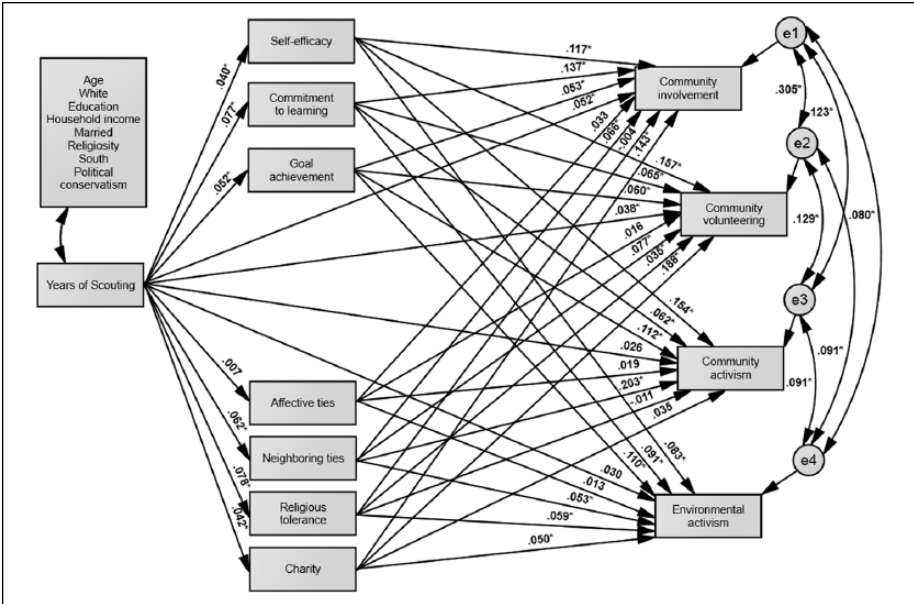
Figure 1. A structural equation model of youth involvement in Boy Scouting and civic engagement in adulthood.
Note. Standardized coefficients are presented. Residuals of the mediators were allowed to correlate with each other but not shown to avoid clutter.
*p < .05 (two-tailed test).

Third, community activism was a single-item measure asking whether respondents had worked with others to address a problem or to improve something in their neighborhood (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*; M = .50, SD = 0.50). Environmental activism was a four-item index of respondents' participation in environmental organizations and practice of environmental responsibility in their daily lives, such as avoiding the use of products harmful to the environment (M = 2.44, SD = 1.02).

Duration of membership in Scouting. Our key independent variable, *years of Scouting*, is duration of membership in Scouting measured by the number of years respondents had a BSA membership before they reached the age of 18 years (0 = *never a Scout*, 5 = *5 or more years;* M = 1.35, SD = 1.90).

Characteristics of positive development. We used seven variables to measure PYD's five positive characteristics. First, to measure confidence, we used a single item of *self-efficacy*, asking "Overall, how much impact do you think people like you can have in making your community a better place to live?" (1 = *no impact at all*, 4 = *a big impact;* M = 3.17, SD = 0.81).

Second, competence was measured using two indexes. One concerned how much respondents perceived and practiced lifelong learning, which we termed *commitment to*

learning. We summed standardized scores of three items concerning the perceived importance of learning (1 = *not at all important*, 5 = *extremely important*), regularly reading books (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*), and taking courses (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes*). The other was *goal achievement* constructed by averaging scores on three items, each of which combined two survey questions: whether respondents had a personal, professional, or financial goal in 2009 and, if so, whether it was achieved (0 = *no*, 1 = *yes; M* = 2.11, *SD* = 0.62).

Third, we used two composite measures of connection. First, *affective ties* were a six-item scale measuring respondents' perceived closeness to parents, siblings, children, neighbors, friends, and coworkers (1 = *not close at all*, 5 = *extremely close; M* = 3.79, *SD* = 0.62). The items had acceptable internal reliability (α = .621) and high factor loadings (.579, .662, .525, .489, .707, and .556). Second, *neighboring ties* measured how often respondents interacted with immediate neighbors (1 = *never*, 7 = *about every day; M* = 4.80, *SD* = 1.83).

Fourth, character was operationalized by *religious tolerance*. This construct was measured by five items asking about respondents' attitudes toward other religions than their own and people of different faiths (1 = *strongly agree*, 5 = *strongly disagree*). The items had moderately high factor loadings (.495, .522, .405, .356, and .565) and marginally acceptable reliability (α = .585) and thus were standardized and summed.[3]

Finally, we used two items of *charity* to measure caring. Respondents were asked whether they had donated money to religious and/or nonreligious organizations in their local community during the past month before the survey (0 = *neither*, 1 = *either*, 2 = *both; M* = 1.07, *SD* = 0.77). While prior research mostly focused on attitudinal measures of empathy, this behavioral measure is consistent with our focus on participatory civic engagement, being more construct-valid than its attitudinal counterpart.

Control variables. Respondents' sociodemographic characteristics were included in analysis to control for possible sources of spuriousness. Respondents' *age* at the time of the survey was calculated using their birthday and survey date (*M* = 47.67, *SD* = 17.40). Race was a dichotomous variable (1 = *White*; 78%). We employed two measures of socioeconomic status (SES): *education* (1 = *less than high school graduate*, 6 = *postgraduate work/degree; M* = 3.36, *SD* = 1.62) and *household income*, before taxes in 2009 (1 = *below US$15,000*, 8 = *US$100,000 or above; M* = 5.01, *SD* = 2.39). Dummy variables were created to measure marital status (1 = *married*; 58%) and region of residence (1 = *South*; 32%). We also controlled for *religiosity* and *political conservatism*, which tend to be related to civic engagement (e.g., Sherkat & Ellison, 2007). To measure the former, we used respondents' frequency of religious service attendance (1 = *never*, 5 = *more than once a week; M* = 2.27, *SD* = 1.72), whereas the latter was measured in terms of party affiliation (1 = *Democrat*, 5 = *Republican; M* = 3.13, *SD* = 1.66).

Analysis

Structural equation modeling was applied to simultaneously estimate multiple structural equations of civic engagement, using Mplus 7.31 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012). Missing cases accounted for less than 5% of all but household income (7.28%). We treated missing data, using full information maximum likelihood estimation. No model fit index for the model is reported because it is saturated (i.e., a perfect fit).

Results

The correlation matrix of all variables used in the structural equation model is presented in Appendix Table A2. Table 1 summarizes results from estimating the structural equation model (see Figure 1 for standardized coefficients). The first seven columns of the top panel present the unstandardized coefficients of the key and other exogenous variables for each endogenous variable of positive development with their correlations among the endogenous variables being presented in a box. The last four columns report the coefficients of the exogenous and mediating variables for each endogenous variable of civic engagement.

The results show that even after controlling for the sociodemographic variables, number of years of membership in Scouting is positively related to adult positive characteristics except affective ties, which is consistent with Hypothesis 1. That is, the longer a respondent had been involved in Scouting, the more likely he was to report confidence (self-efficacy), competence (commitment to learning and goal achievement), connection (neighboring ties), character (religious tolerance), and caring (charity),[4] which were all positively correlated with one another via residuals as shown in the box. Next, the last four columns show that those characteristics were positively associated with one or more measures of civic engagement, which supports Hypothesis 2.

These positive associations, taken together, imply indirect relationships between youth involvement in Scouting and civic engagement in adulthood with the positive characteristics mediating in-between. However, determining whether such relationships exist requires a separate test. Thus, each of the 28 indirect effects of seven positive characteristics on four civic engagement variables was tested for significance, and results are shown in Table 2, where the bottom panel shows results for total mediation effects.

We found indirect effects of confidence (self-efficacy) and competence (goal achievement) to be significant for all four measures of civic engagement, whereas other characteristics mediated two or more relationships between years of Scouting and civic engagement.[5] Because the coefficient of years of Scouting in Table 1 remained significant for community involvement (.038; $\beta = .052$) and community volunteering (.014; $\beta = .038$), the mediation of positive characteristics was found to be partial as stated in Hypothesis 3.

Turning to sociodemographic controls, respondents with high education tended to report more positive characteristics and greater civic engagement. Religiosity was found to have positive relationships with all variables but one (community activism), while being inversely related to environmental activism. In addition, politically conservative respondents and Southerners were less likely to report environmental activism than their liberal and non-Southern counterparts.

Discussion

This study intended to examine whether and how youth involvement in Scouting is associated with four types of adult civic engagement (community involvement, community volunteering, community activism, environmental activism). We hypothesized

Table 1. Estimated Structural Equation Model of Youth Involvement in Boy Scouting and Civic Engagement in Adulthood.

	Self-efficacy	Commitment to learning	Goal achievement	Affective ties	Neighboring ties	Religious tolerance	Charity	Community involvement	Community volunteering	Community activism	Environ activism
Age	−.004* (.001)	−.013* (.002)	−.009* (.001)	.000 (.001)	.016* (.002)	−.001 (.003)	.008* (.001)	.001 (.002)	−.001 (.001)	.002* (.001)	.005* (.001)
White	−.106* (.039)	−.289* (.093)	−.088* (.029)	.015 (.031)	−.183* (.093)	−.291 (.152)	−.080* (.033)	.087 (.072)	.059 (.033)	−.034 (.024)	.057 (.051)
Education	.061* (.010)	.211* (.024)	.064* (.008)	.001 (.008)	−.084* (.024)	.107* (.040)	.039* (.009)	.086* (.019)	.031* (.009)	−.001 (.007)	.044* (.014)
Household income	.013 (.008)	−.014 (.019)	.047* (.006)	.001 (.006)	−.022 (.019)	−.036 (.031)	.050* (.007)	.049* (.015)	−.006 (.007)	.010* (.005)	−.004 (.011)
Married	.103* (.036)	−.103 (.085)	−.002 (.027)	−.028 (.029)	.320* (.085)	.215 (.140)	.109* (.031)	−.177* (.066)	.040 (.030)	.018 (.022)	.078 (.047)
Religiosity	.092* (.009)	.130* (.022)	.028* (.007)	.058* (.007)	.080* (.021)	.387* (.035)	.176* (.008)	.117* (.019)	.124* (.009)	.004 (.006)	−.044* (.013)
South	−.028 (.032)	.014 (.075)	.001 (.024)	.026 (.025)	.007 (.075)	−.128 (.123)	−.027 (.027)	.000 (.058)	.050 (.027)	−.010 (.020)	−.092* (.041)
Political conservatism	−.014 (.010)	−.036 (.023)	.016* (.007)	.001 (.008)	.035 (.024)	−.178* (.039)	.000 (.008)	−.025 (.018)	.000 (.008)	−.006 (.006)	−.111* (.013)
Years of Scouting	.015* (.007)	.067* (.017)	.015* (.005)	.002 (.006)	.054* (.017)	.111* (.028)	.015* (.006)	.038* (.013)	.014* (.006)	.006 (.005)	.015 (.010)
Self-efficacy	1.000							.225 (.038*)	.151* (.017)	.098* (.013)	.109* (.027)
Commitment to learning	.171* (.019)	1.000						.112* (.016)	.027* (.007)	.017* (.005)	.051* (.011)
Goal achievement	.168* (.019)	.217* (.019)	1.000					.131* (.051)	.074* (.023)	.092* (.017)	.186* (.036)
Affective ties	.125* (.020)	.165* (.019)	.130* (.020)	1.000				.083 (.049)	.020 (.023)	.016 (.017)	.023 (.035)
Neighboring ties	.122* (.020)	.100* (.020)	.056* (.020)	.315* (.018)	1.000			.055* (.016)	.032* (.007)	.056* (.006)	.030* (.012)
Religious tolerance	.132* (.020)	.169* (.019)	.116* (.020)	.149* (.020)	.061* (.020)	1.000		−.002 (.010)	.009* (.004)	−.002 (.003)	.020* (.007)
Charity	.158* (.020)	.081* (.020)	.137* (.020)	.114* (.020)	.074* (.020)	.101* (.020)	1.000	.285* (.044)	.186* (.020)	.023 (.015)	.068* (.031)
R^2	.089*	.078*	.170*	.028*	.055*	.072*	.305*	.201*	.319*	.146*	.119*

Note. Unstandardized coefficients are shown, with standard errors in parentheses.

*$p < .05$ (two-tailed test).

Table 2. Indirect Effects of Years of Scouting on Civic Engagement via Characteristics of Positive Development.

Characteristics of positive development	Community involvement	Community volunteering	Community activism	Environmental activism
Self-efficacy	.020* (.004)	.002* (.001)	.001* (.000)	.013* (.003)
Commitment to learning	.003 (.002)	.002* (.001)	.001* (.000)	.002 (.001)
Goal achievement	.008* (.002)	.001* (.001)	.001* (.000)	.003* (.001)
Affective ties	.002 (.001)	.000 (.000)	.000 (.000)	.003* (.001)
Neighboring ties	.000 (.000)	.002* (.001)	.003* (.001)	.000 (.000)
Religious tolerance	.003* (.001)	.001 (.001)	.000 (.000)	.002* (.001)
Charity	.000 (.001)	.003* (.001)	.000 (.000)	.002* (.001)
Total indirect effects	.004* (.002)	.011* (.002)	.007* (.002)	.001 (.001)

Note. Unstandardized coefficients are shown, with standard errors in parentheses.
*$p < .05$ (two-tailed test).

that individuals who participated in Scouting over an extended period of time become active citizens, partly because Scouting helped to develop essential characteristics of active citizenship such as self-confidence, competencies, social ties, respect for diversity, and compassion for others. We found support for this hypothesis.

First, the duration of membership in Scouting was positively associated with all types of civic engagement, either directly or indirectly. This suggests that a young man who simply passes through youth organizations—participating occasionally or for a short period of time—is unlikely to benefit in the same way as youth involved in organizations for longer periods of time. This finding is in line with Polson et al.'s (2013), showing that individuals who earned the rank of Eagle Scout have more associational memberships and are more likely to participate in community problem-solving activities than those who never participated in Scouting.[6] Our study also confirms previous findings of a positive association between the duration of participation in extracurricular activities and both positive developmental characteristics and prosocial behavior in young adulthood (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003).

Another key finding is that individuals' positive characteristics—particularly, confidence and competence—are key contributors to civic engagement. This is consistent with Verba et al.'s (1995) civic voluntarism model as they found that psychological engagement in politics (e.g., political efficacy) and civic skills are important predictors of political participation. Although we did not hypothesize different positive characteristics to differentially mediate the effects of Scouting in adolescence on civic engagement in adulthood, we found a measure of confidence (self-efficacy) and competence (goal orientation) to intervene between Scouting and all the four indicators of civic engagement, whereas other measures mediated only for one or two types of civic engagement. Future research may further examine the observed differential mediation, but we speculate that these mediators are more instrumental in addressing community issues or organizing community activities than other characteristics, such as affective ties.

Although these findings extend our understanding of civic engagement among former Scouts, this study has several limitations. First, we were unable to control for self-selection

bias. For example, parents with more socioeconomic resources may be more likely than low-SES parents to provide tangible support for participating in Scouting. Because a supportive home environment is crucial for the development of civic engagement in adolescents (Mahatmya & Lohman, 2012), we acknowledge that family background variables such as parents' SES might have confounded the relationship we observed. Similarly, it is possible that certain people may be more likely to have positive characteristics regardless of Scout membership. Respondents who were never in Scouting might have participated in youth voluntary organizations other than BSA (e.g., faith-, school-, other community-based youth programs), which could have also contributed to their positive development in adolescence and in turn increased their level of civic engagement in adulthood (e.g., Larson, Hansen, & Moneta, 2006). Without taking these characteristics into account, we cannot conclude that Scouting promotes lasting civic engagement by itself.

Second, we were unable to make causal inferences between Scouting membership, positive characteristics, and civic engagement because we analyzed cross-sectional data. The retrospective study design did not allow us to determine whether developmental characteristics in youth are causally responsible for civic outcomes in adulthood. Although this study presumes the direction of causation runs from positive characteristics to civic engagement, it is possible that civic engagement may enhance such characteristics. Future research would benefit from longitudinal data to address whether the developmental characteristics measured during adolescence are related to civic engagement in adulthood.

Finally, although our measures of the Five Cs were largely in line with the definition of Lerner et al.'s (2005), many of them were operationalized in ways more tailored to the purpose of this study. For example, our measure of self-efficacy is focused on confidence related to community improvement. We were also able to use only religious tolerance items to measure the character concept. In order to more thoroughly examine the association between character and civic engagement, future research should include more character-related items that are emphasized in Scouting (e.g., trustworthiness, helpfulness, and thrift).

Conclusion and Implications

Despite these limitations, our study advances the civic engagement literature in several ways. First, it shows that duration of involvement in youth organizations is important to adult civic outcomes beyond young adulthood. Although Frisco et al.'s (2004) prospective study found evidence of Scouting's influence in early adulthood, our retrospective design allowed us to examine civic engagement of former Scouts up to 70 years after the completion of Scouting. Second, this study examines a wide range of civic engagement activities. Whereas Frisco et al. focused on voting behavior, this study shows the role of Scouting in promoting other civic activities than voting in adulthood. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study that shows a positive relationship between Scouting and adulthood environmental activism. It appears that Scouting's emphasis on outdoor adventure and environmental stewardship may encourage former Scouts to continue to be active in environmental conservation. Third, this study contributes to synthesizing research on youth civic engagement, which has been conducted largely in developmental psychology, with research on adult civic engagement that is primarily done in sociology and political science. By

applying the PYD model widely used in the youth development literature to adult civic engagement, we took a first step to address concerns that the two fields have in common—namely, cultivating active, responsible citizens.

Finally, we conclude by briefly discussing implications of our findings for BSA. The organization has recently experienced a decline in membership. Johnson and Clifton (2010) reported that fewer men in their 20s and 30s have been in the Boy Scouts than older men, suggesting younger generations are not joining at the same rate as older generations. This observation is consistent with other studies reporting similar results (Twenge, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012). The decline in civic engagement carries enormous consequences for individuals, organizations, and society at large. Character-building organizations such as BSA are designed to counter the loss of social capital and thus are critically needed in contemporary American society. Like Polson et al. (2013), the current study suggests the most committed Scouts, such as Eagle Scouts, are especially mindful of persisting in giving back to their communities in many prosocial ways.

Appendix

Table A1. Common Factor Models of Positive Development and Civic Engagement.

Indicator		Positive development	Civic engagement
1	Self-efficacy	.525* (.025)	
2	Commitment to learning	.418* (.026)	
3	Goal achievement	.386* (.026)	
4	Affective ties	.359* (.025)	
5	Neighboring ties	.211* (.027)	
6	Religious tolerance	.415* (.025)	
7	Charity	.442* (.025)	
	$e_2 \leftrightarrow e_3$	.140* (.023)	
	$e_4 \leftrightarrow e_5$	.264* (.020)	
1	Community involvement		.483* (.035)
2	Community volunteering		.548* (.035)
3	Community activism		.653* (.039)
4	Environmental activism		.307* (.025)
	$e_1 \leftrightarrow e_2$		.263* (.036)
	χ^2	69.976*	2.579
	df	12	1
	p value	.000	.108
	RMSEA	.044	.025
	95% CI	[.034, .054]	[.000, .065]
	CFI	.956	.999
	SRMR	.023	.006

Note. RMSEA = root mean square error approximation; CFI = comparative fit index; CI = confidence interval; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual.
*p < .05 (two-tailed test).

Table A2. Correlations Among Variables With Pairwise Deletion of Missing Values.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	1.000																			
2	.233*	1.000																		
3	.231*	.297*	1.000																	
4	.157*	.182*	.143*	1.000																
5	.127*	.076*	.025	.318*	1.000															
6	.166*	.225*	.124*	.186*	.080*	1.000														
7	.269*	.118*	.164*	.151*	.094*	.178*	1.000													
8	.234*	.149*	.173*	.116*	.229*	.077*	.147*	1.000												
9	.320*	.227*	.222*	.175*	.135*	.201*	.374*	.240*	1.000											
10	.241*	.242*	.205*	.158*	.123*	.121*	.295*	.210*	.438*	1.000										
11	.178*	.182*	.172*	.075*	.078*	.170*	.128*	.190*	.169*	.168*	1.000									
12	−.023	−.127*	−.237*	−.012	.143*	.013	.244*	.072*	.035	.032	.063*	1.000								
13	−.057*	−.106*	−.061*	−.049*	−.056*	−.091*	−.007	−.045*	−.017	.017	−.067*	.081*	1.000							
14	.170*	.205*	.252*	.026	−.067*	.072*	.222*	.071*	.189*	.233*	.160*	.022	.052*	1.000						
15	.116*	.057*	.229*	.000	−.007	−.017	.263*	.069*	.119*	.185*	.089*	.066*	.085*	.437*	1.000					
16	.127*	−.015	.044*	.004	.088*	.040*	.271*	.091*	.123*	.072*	.052*	.270*	.082*	.197*	.436*	1.000				
17	.202*	.114*	.090*	.157*	.067*	.208*	.415*	.100*	.424*	.234*	−.006	.094*	−.083*	.063*	.034	.148*	1.000			
18	−.005	.011	.006	.044*	.031	.020	.006	−.008	.063*	−.014	−.051*	−.001	−.063*	−.037	−.021	.008	.095*	1.000		
19	.012	−.024	.079*	.050*	.044*	−.067*	.073*	−.003	.087*	.046*	−.154*	−.005	.242*	.023	.123*	.146*	.163*	.091*	1.000	
20	.049*	.069*	.070*	.002	.031	.043*	.108*	.049*	.069*	.117*	.070*	.097*	.115*	.171*	.134*	.080*	.001	−.022	.066*	1.000

Note. 1 = self-efficacy; 2 = commitment to learning; 3 = goal achievement; 4 = affective ties; 5 = neighboring ties; 6 = religious tolerance; 7 = charity; 8 = community activism; 9 = community volunteering; 10 = community involvement; 11 = environmental activism; 12 = age; 13 = white; 14 = education; 15 = household income; 16 = married; 17 = religiosity; 18 = South; 19 = political conservatism; 20 = years of Scouting.

Notes

1. Perhaps a better known framework is Verba, Schlozman, and Brady's (1995) civic voluntarism model, which identifies three mediating factors—psychological engagement (motivation), recruitment (social network), and resources (time, money, civic skills). Although the civic voluntarism model may provide a useful lens for assessing mediators of the relationship between involvement in youth organization and adult civic outcomes, we frame our study using the positive youth development (PYD) model for the reason aforementioned.

2. For details of the Gallup Daily tracking survey, see http://www.gallup.com/poll/110380/how-does-gallup-daily-tracking-work.aspx.

3. We conducted confirmatory factor analysis separately for individual construct's multiple items and found most of them were not suitable for common factor modeling. Thus, using confirmatory factor analysis of those items is not relevant to our study. However, we did conduct confirmatory factor analysis for positive development and civic engagement indicators, and results from estimating the two common factor models are presented in Appendix Table A1.

4. We operationalized the concept of caring by using a behavioral measure of charitable giving to remain consistent with other measures of *participatory* civic engagement. In a supplemental analysis, we estimated the full model without this measure, because charitable giving could be an indicator of civic engagement. Supplementary results remained nearly the same: that is, regarding hypothesis testing, two non-significant coefficients (age and affective ties) became significant in the model of community involvement. The complete results are available on request.

5. It is interesting to find that affective ties have significant mediation effects between years of Scouting and environmental activism (.003, $p < .05$), although it was neither significantly related to years of Scouting nor environmental activism (see Table 1). If we have not tested the indirect effect, we would have mistakenly concluded that affective ties were not a significant mediator at all. This emphasizes the importance of a significance test of indirect effects.

6. In a supplemental analysis, we explored whether dichotomous variables indicating levels of Scout membership replicate the results we obtained. We replaced years of Scouting with two dummy variables, being Eagle and non-Eagle Scout, with non-Scout being the reference category. We found significant results for those who were Eagle Scout (results available on request). This finding is consistent with our main result because we found Eagle-Scout respondents to have participated in Scouting for a longer period of time (i.e., years of Scouting membership) than their non-Eagle-Scout counterparts (4.666 and 3.291, respectively, whose difference was significant at the .05 level).

References

Boy Scouts of America. (2013a). *Eagle Scouts*. Retrieved from http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/210-516.pdf

Boy Scouts of America. (2013b). *Invest in the future*. Retrieved from http://www.scouting.org/filestore/financeimpact/pdf/BSA_Case_Statement.pdf

Campbell, D. E. (2006). What is education's impact on civic and social engagement? In R. Desjardins & T. Schuller (Eds.), *Measuring the effects of education on health and civic engagement* (pp. 25-126). Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/edu/innovation-education/37425694.pdf

Campbell, D. E. (2013). Social networks and political participation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *16*, 33-48.

Damon, W. (2004). What is positive youth development? *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *591*, 13-24.

Elder, G. H., & Shanahan, M. J. (1998). The life course and human development. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Theoretical models of human development* (pp. 939-991). New York, NY: Wiley.

Flanagan, C. (2003). Developmental roots of political engagement. *Political Science & Politics*, *36*, 257-261.

Flanagan, C. (2004). Volunteerism, leadership, political socialization, and civic engagement. In R. M. Lerner & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (pp. 721-745). New York, NY: Wiley.

Forbes, K. F., & Zampelli, E. M. (2014). Volunteerism: The influence of social, religious, and human capital. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *43*, 227-253.

Fredricks, J. A., & Eccles, J. S. (2006). Extracurricular involvement and adolescent adjustment: Impact of duration, number of activities, and breadth of participation. *Applied Developmental Science*, *10*, 132-146.

Frisco, M. L., Muller, C., & Dodson, K. (2004). Participation in voluntary youth-serving associations and early adult voting behavior. *Social Science Quarterly*, *85*, 660-676.

Glanville, J. L. (1999). Political socialization or selection? Adolescent extracurricular participation and political activity in early adulthood. *Social Science Quarterly*, *80*, 279-290.

Hanks, M. (1981). Youth, voluntary associations and political socialization. *Social Forces*, *60*, 211-223.

Johnson, B. R., & Clifton, J. (2010). *Younger generations less likely to join Boy Scouts*. Retrieved from http://www.gallup.com/poll/145187/Younger-Generations-Less-Likely-Join-Boy-Scouts.aspx

Kirlin, M. (2002). Civic skill building: The missing component in service programs? *Political Science & Politics*, *35*, 571-575.

Ladewig, H., & Thomas, J. K. (1987). *Assessing the impact of 4-H on former member*. College Station: Texas A&M University System.

Larson, R. W. (2000). Toward a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist*, *55*, 170-183.

Larson, R. W., Hansen, D. M., & Moneta, G. (2006). Differing profiles of developmental experiences across types of organized youth activities. *Developmental Psychology*, *42*, 849-863.

Lerner, R. M., Fisher, C. B., & Weinberg, R. A. (2000). Toward a science for and of the people: Promoting civil society through the application of developmental science. *Child Development*, *71*, 11-20.

Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., Almerigi, J. B., Theokas, C., Phelps, E., Gestsdottir, S., . . . von Eye, A. (2005). Positive youth development, participation in community youth development programs, and community contributions of fifth-grade adolescents: Findings from the first wave of the 4-H study of positive youth development. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, *25*, 17-71.

Mahatmya, D., & Lohman, B. J. (2012). Predictors and pathways to civic involvement in emerging adulthood: Neighborhood, family, and school influences. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *41*, 1168-1183.

Mondak, J. J., & Halperin, K. D. (2008). A framework for the study of personality and political behaviour. *British Journal of Political Science*, *38*, 335-362.

Musick, M. A., & Wilson, J. (2008). *Volunteers: A social profile*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, B. O. (1998-2012). *Mplus user's guide* (7th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Author.

Paik, A., & Navarre-Jackson, L. (2011). Social networks, recruitment, and volunteering: Are social capital effects conditional on recruitment? *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, *40*, 476-496.

Paxton, P. (2002). Social capital and democracy: An interdependent relationship. *American Sociological Review*, *67*, 254-277.

Polson, E. C., Kim, Y.-I., Jang, S. J., Johnson, B. R., & Smith, B. (2013). Being prepared and staying connected: Scouting's influence on social capital and community involvement. *Social Science Quarterly*, *94*, 758-776.

Sherkat, D. E., & Ellison, C. G. (2007). Structuring the religion-environment connection: Identifying religious influences on environmental concern and activism. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *46*, 71-85.

Smith, E. S. (1999). The effects of investments in the social capital of youth on political and civic behavior in young adulthood: A longitudinal analysis. *Political Psychology*, *20*, 553-580.

Sullivan, J. L., & Transue, J. E. (1999). The psychological underpinnings of democracy: A selective review of research on political tolerance, interpersonal trust, and social capital. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *50*, 625-650.

Twenge, J. M., Campbell, W. K., & Freeman, E. C. (2012). Generational differences in young adults' life goals, concern for others, and civic orientation, 1966-2009. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *102*, 1045-1062.

Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., & Brady, H. E. (1995). *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wuthnow, R. (1991). *Acts of compassion: Caring for others and helping ourselves*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zaff, J. F., Moore, K. A., Papillo, A. R., & Williams, S. (2003). Implications of extracurricular activity participation during adolescence on positive outcomes. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *18*, 599-630.

Author Biographies

Young-Il Kim is research assistant professor at the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion. His research interests lie in the field of civic engagement, family, and religion.

Sung Joon Jang is research professor of criminology and co-director of the Program on Prosocial Behavior at the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion. His publications focus on the effects of family, school, peers, religiosity, and community on crime and delinquency.

Byron R. Johnson is distinguished professor of the social sciences at Baylor University. He is the founding director of the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion as well as director of the Program on Prosocial Behavior.