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**THE IMPACT OF HIGH SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULARS:
SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN SENSE OF COMMUNITY
AMONG COMPETITIVE, PERFORMANCE, AND PARTICIPATORY
ACTIVITIES**

by

Erica M. Hawvermale

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree**

of

**UNIVERSITY HONORS
WITH DEPARTMENTAL HONORS**

in

**Cultural Anthropology
in the Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Anthropology**

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ABSTRACT

The impact of high school extracurriculars: Similarities and
differences in sense of community among competitive,
performance, and participatory activities

by

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Utah State University, 2017

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Department: Family, Consumer, and Human Development

Extant research links high sense of community in adolescence to adaptive outcomes such as enhanced motivation, self-efficacy, and coping ability (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997; Vieno, Perkins, Smith, & Santinello, 2005; Henry & Slater, 2007), as well as reduced stress, anxiety, and depression (Chipuer, Bramston, & Pretty, 2002). In light of these findings, the present study was designed to assess the relationship between high school students' participation in extracurricular activities and their perceptions of sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment, as well as the aspects of these organizations that help to facilitate feelings of community. Study 1 participants ($N = 701$) were 276 males and 425 females ($M_{\text{age}} = 16.51$) actively engaged in competitive (e.g., sports; $n = 218$), performance (e.g., music; $n = 370$), and participatory (e.g., clubs; $n = 113$) activities in high school. Students responded to survey items assessing perceived sense of community, as well as enjoyment and commitment. Study 2 participants ($N = 20$) were three males and 17 females who participated in Study 1.

MANOVAs and follow-up tests revealed significantly lower perceptions of sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment among students in performance groups than competitive and participatory groups. Comments from participants in Study 2 suggest that students in performance groups may experience lower enjoyment, commitment, and sense of community due to the compulsory nature of performance activities in high school. These findings suggest that there is a tension between the needs of the individual and the group, and that psychological sense of community may act as a buffer to reduce this tension. This study proposes that the purposeful facilitation of psychological sense of community by group leaders could potentially be utilized to help improve group outcomes. For anthropologists engaging in applied work, working to facilitate psychological sense of community among the populations they work with could also have a positive impact on program outcomes. In a broader application than the study population, grassroots communities may find that purposefully facilitating psychological sense of community within their programs will help them achieve their goals. Additionally, the present study presents one potential model for the purposeful facilitation of sense of community.

(144 pages)

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CHAPTER I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Psychological sense of community is defined as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (McMillan & Chavis 1986, p. 9). These groups can be based upon a geographic location, such as a neighborhood, or a shared interest, such as a club or team. While much research has been designed to examine the role that a psychological sense of community plays on high school adolescents, there is a large gap in the literature focusing on the *specific* aspects of high school that facilitate sense of community. Additionally, there is a lack of knowledge regarding what methods may be used to develop specialized programs to make the most out of these benefits. There has been research to date focusing on younger children and adults, but very little dealing with adolescents in the high school setting. Because extracurricular activities such as sports teams, music ensembles, and clubs represent popular sub-communities within the high school setting, the present two studies were designed to assess the relationship between high school students' participation in extracurricular activities and their perceptions of sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment.

Specifically, I sought to identify whether there were differences in the sense of community experienced by participants in their different types of extracurricular groups: (a) *competitive* groups (e.g., athletics), where competition is the primary purpose of the community; (b) *performance* groups (e.g., band), which do compete but where the primary purpose of the community is the presentation of skill rather than competition itself; and (c) *participatory* groups

(e.g., language clubs), where participation in the activity is the primary purpose of the community. The broad question I sought to address across the two studies was how each of these types of extracurricular activities facilitates sense of community among its members. Because extracurricular activities emphasize all aspects of sense of community (membership, influence, fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection), it was expected that involvement in one or more high school extracurriculars would increase the sense of community perceived by students. However, I also thought it plausible that involvement in multiple groups may afford less time spent with each group, thus creating a more superficial, and perhaps less strong, sense of community with fellow members for the individuals participating in more than one group on a regular basis.

Specifically, I hypothesized that (H1) students who participate in competitive and performance groups will report a higher sense of community than those who participate in participatory groups because participatory groups often lack characteristics that emphasize shared emotional connection, such as those found in winning or losing a competition and the shared goals of performance. Next, I hypothesized that (H2) students who report higher enjoyment and commitment to their group will show a higher sense of community than those who do not because these scores reflect the importance of the group in the individual's life. I also hypothesized that (H3) students who participate in a singular extracurricular activity will have a higher psychological sense of community than those who participate in several groups because they will have more meaningful interactions and more time spent among a single group, thus allowing them to engage more fully in the four components of sense of community. I hypothesized that (H4) individuals who have a strong sense of pride in their groups will have a much stronger level of shared emotional connection than those who do not. Lastly, I

hypothesized that (H5) instructors/faculty advisors/coaches who allow students to be actively involved in group leadership, instill values of pride, integrity, and hard work in their groups, and who help/encourage students to plan activities outside of normal group meeting times will help to facilitate stronger sense of community than those who do not because each of these activities helps to promote a different component of sense of community theory.

In the second chapter, I will discuss broadly the mechanisms by which human communities have evolved within evolutionary theory. It will also discuss the advantages and disadvantages for group living, and how the evolutionary adaptation of group living may have led to a system of internal mechanisms that influence individuals to self-select into groups.

The third chapter will cover the extant literature surrounding psychological sense of community and the benefits that it provides. This discussion will include how sense of community has changed over the past few decades, from a focus on geographical communities based in neighborhoods to relational communities based on shared interests and finally to virtual communities connected through online. It will also review the benefits of psychological sense of community on individuals.

The fourth chapter will present the research, which employs a two part, mixed methodological study design. Part one utilizes a quantitative survey to measure the differences in psychological sense of community between three different types of extracurricular activities in the high school level. It includes 701 participants from two North-central Utah high schools. Part two encompasses a qualitative one-on-one interview protocol that was intended to supplement the extant literature on the actual methods for the facilitation of psychological sense of community. These interviews help to illustrate what causes the differences between the groups in Study 1. While the goals of the two studies are very different, the resulting data complements

one another. Together, they suggest that individuals who participate in a goal-oriented extracurricular activity and have a strong personal desire and commitment to be there will have a higher sense of community with other members than those who either do not have a strong desire to be in the group or who join a group without defined goals. This helps act as a mediating factor between the inherent tensions between group and individual interests.

Chapter five will present a case study of how Owl & Panther, a community and art based program for refugee survivors of torture, utilize the same aspects of community found in Study 2 to facilitate the recovery of their participants. This helps illustrate the application of sense of community in more than just high school extracurriculars. Finally, chapter six will place the two studies presented here in the larger context of the extant sense of community literature. Here, I will also present a potential model for the purposeful facilitation of sense of community.

The present research has implications for any individual involved in or in charge of a community group; this can include high school coaches, teachers, and program directors. Because sense of community increases group cohesion and participants' commitment and enjoyment of group activities, the purposeful facilitation of psychological sense of community by group leaders could potentially be utilized to help improve group outcomes. For anthropologists engaging in applied work, working to facilitate psychological sense of community among the populations they work with could also have a positive impact on program outcomes. In a broader application than the study population, grassroots communities may find that purposefully facilitating psychological sense of community within their programs will help them achieve their goals.

CHAPTER II

EVOLUTION OF COMMUNITY

Group living and the psychological “need to belong” are two cultural universals, along with marriage, language, technology, and myth/ritual (Coon, 1946; Mann, 1980; van der Dennen, 1985; Foley, 1987; Brown, 1991). Indeed, Maslow (1943) identified the need to belong to groups as one of the five human needs, ranked third in his hierarchy above physiological needs and safety. Thus it is odd that many contemporary scholars assume humans are “largely selfish and individualistic” despite the fact that our species is defined by group living and cooperation (Caporael, Dawes, Orbelt, & van de Kragt, 1989). The size and complexity of social groups has varied over the course of human history, ranging from small bands to large nation states, including multiple descent systems and encompassing a variety of governing bodies. Importantly, group living is not unique to *Homo sapiens*; we see social characteristics in many other species as well. Not all primates, however, seem to share this need to congregate or live in groups: orangutans usually live as hermits. The *Homo* line has been involved in-group living at least as far back as *Homo erectus* (Caporael et al., 1989). If humans do in fact have a set of psychological characteristics that predispose them for group living, it is consequential to understand why, as well as how these traits evolved.

Evolutionary biologists and anthropologists have been in contention for years over the pathways of evolution in human culture. In the technical definition, in order for natural selection to occur, there must be a genetic component to the trait, which is an aspect stressed by sociobiologists. How then, can traits that appear to be purely behavioral be selected for in societies? “Sociobiologists ... systematically underplay the importance of cultural evolution,

which is partly channeled by biological evolutionary constraints and biases, but has its own autonomous tendencies” (Smith, 1992, p. 83). According to Fuentes (2013), “many organisms transmit information via behavior, thus acquisition of evolutionarily relevant behavioral patterns can occur through socially mediated learning. This transmission of information occurs without having any linkage to genetic systems that natural selection...can target” (p. 79). This view is supported by others contemporary scholars as well (e.g., Dawson, 2002; Kendal, Tehrani, & Oldling-Smee, 2011). Dawson (2002) even goes so far as to liken a social trait to a genotype as an aspect of “cultural selection.”

The more popular theory, though, is kin selection and niche construction. Niche construction is the ability for organisms to construct changes on their environmental and social surroundings to improve survivability. Behaviors, such as the formation of groups, which enhance inclusive fitness, are then passed down through social transmission. Despite this, it should be noted that all these theories, in fact, work together; “the issue is not one of heredity versus environment or nature versus culture, but one of specifying the complex feedback mechanisms between genetics, the physical and biotic environment, and the man-made part of our environment we call ‘culture’” (van den Berghe, 1979).

Socio-Biology

Sociobiological theory rests upon the theories of inclusive fitness and reproductive success (Brewer & Caporael, 1990). In this way, it is intrinsically linked with kin selection. The difference lies in the mechanism of transition: sociocultural traits must, by definition, be retained only through social means, not genetic means. The retention system for biological traits is obviously the genetic code. The pertinent question becomes, then, what is the vehicle for the evolution of social traits such as group living? Social mechanisms such as “child socialization,

reward and punishment, socially restricted learning opportunities, identification, imitation, emulation, indoctrination into tribal ideologies, language and linguistic meaning systems, conformity pressures, social authority systems and the like” makes it reasonable to assume “that sufficient retention machinery exists for a social evolution of adaptive social belief systems and organizational principles to have taken place” (Campbell, 1975, p. 1107). This is what we call the “social retention system” (Campbell, 1975). Social and biological evolution are connected in that biological evolution allowed for the structures that made language possible, and social groups provided the environment for further genetic evolution (Campbell, 1975).

Niche Construction

Human society is an environment for “fitness-enhancing genetic changes in individuals” (Gintis, 2011). This occurs because culture evolves faster than genes, creating new environments for the selection of genes (Richerson, Boyd, & Henrich, 2010). Fundamentally, Niche Construction Theory (NCT) recognizes that the “evolution of organisms is co-directed by both natural selection and niche construction [with the] selective environments themselves...partly determined by modifications made by niche-constructing organisms” (Kendal, Tehrani & Odling-Smee, 2011, p. 785). Essentially this represents a mechanism for environment and organisms to interact, resulting in different selective pressures than would otherwise exist. In this model, “offspring inherit not only genes, but an *ecological inheritance*, in the form of modified local selective environments relative to genetic fitness (Kendal, Tehrani & Odling-Smee, 2011, p. 786, emphasis theirs). This ecological inheritance includes both physical resources and semantic information, with semantic information being “anything that reduces uncertainty about selective environments, relative to the fitness interest of organisms” (Odling-Smee, 2010, p. 184). Thus since group living can reduce the uncertainty of an environment,

groups act as a niche. Other forms of semantic information are behavior and social norms (which could feasibly incorporate “norms” of group participation and cooperation).

Fuentes and colleagues assert that niche construction theory (NCT) is an important rubric for understanding the full range of mechanisms that contribute to human pro-sociality because logistic models don’t account for the effects of niche construction on a population (Fuentes, Wyczalkowski, & MacKinnon, 2010). As such, they developed the model

$$\frac{dH}{dt} = r(1 - \frac{H}{k} + sH^2)$$

Where s is the degree of cooperation in a population, k is a constant carrying capacity, H is the population, and r is a fixed growth rate. With this model it is actually possible for a population to grow above the carrying capacity of their environment (Fuentes, Wyczalkowski, & MacKinnon, 2010). This illustrates how cooperation, and thus *groups*, serve as an environment or “niche”. Additionally, they include the mathematical model $\beta = sk^2$, where β controls the degree of a population’s cooperation. According to these mathematical models, a small population with moderate cooperation will result in a carrying capacity larger than logistic model. With a large population or large cooperation, the population will grow without bound (Fuentes, Wyczalkowski, & MacKinnon, 2010).

With two species, the benefits of cooperation for one group result in an equivalent detriment in the other. This model underscores why the boom of one species and the extinction of another can occur (Fuentes, Wyczalkowski, & MacKinnon, 2010). If the group is the environment, or niche, then natural selection would select for individuals that are more suited to group living (Brewer & Caporael, 1990), and groups with larger cooperation would outcompete those that do not cooperate. “With increased cooperative interactions between members of *Homo* groups..., foraging efficiency, predator avoidance, and care for offspring further increase in

effectiveness (positive feedback), facilitating the observed range of habitat expansion in the period 1.8-1.0 mya” (Fuentes, Wyczalkowski, & MacKinnon, 2010, p. 437). Selection for cooperative groups is both stable and adaptive when

$$\frac{B}{C} > 1 + \frac{N}{M}$$

Where B is the benefit given to other group members, C is the cost incurred through the altruistic action, N is the maximum group size and m is the number of groups in existence around a population. “Pure cooperator groups grow faster than pure defector groups, whereas in any mixed group, defectors reproduce faster than cooperators. Therefore, selection on the lower level (within groups) favors defectors, whereas selection on the higher level (between groups) favors cooperators” (Nowark, 2006, p. 1361).

Evolutionary Benefit

The benefits to individuals when engaged in group living have been researched extensively over the past 50 years (Alexander, 1974; Rofe, 1984; Barchas, 1986; Hogan, Jones, & Cheek, 1985; Richerson, Boyd, & Henrich, 2010). Generally these specifically focus on the advantages imparted to members of a group that allow them to out-compete individuals. The gains from group living are in reference to living alone, living in a different group type or the risk of changing groups (Alexander, 1974). Different types of groups include dyads, two entities where one may be non-human; family/workgroups that share a common task; demes or bands; and macrodemes, a group level larger than a band (Caporael, 1996). Such groups can be composed of unrelated individuals, uniformly related individuals that are *not* siblings, variously related individuals that may include siblings, siblings that may include parents, or genetically identical individuals (Alexander, 1974).

Over the course of pre-modern history, social groups and group living may have helped individuals better obtain resources in their environment. An individual cannot maximize resource potential like a group, which would require a dependence on food sharing and a dependence on the group has a whole acquiring resources. Groups are indeed better able to leverage scattered resources because they can send different parties in different directions while still maintaining a group at the base to work on food processing and preparation (Alexander, 1974). Similarly, it is both easier and safer for a group of humans to take down large prey than it is for a single individual (Alexander, 1974; Washburn & Lancaster, 1968; Ports, 1984; Campbell, 1983; Richerson, Boyd & Henrich 2010; Clark & Mangel, 1986).

Groups also offer protection against outside threats. This occurs because of safety in numbers as a deterrent against predators and because of a group's increased capacity to fight off external threats (Ports, 1984; Campbell, 1983; Alexander, 1974; Clark & Mangel, 1986; Fuentes, Wyczalkowski, & mackinnon, 2010; Kendal, Tehrani, & Odling-Smee, 2011; Fuentes, 2013). At the outset of human evolution, these threats likely were predominantly from non-human predators. However, once predation was removed as a threat through group living, a new threat was created: *other groups* (Alexander, 1974). Other evolutionary beneficial reasons for group formation include information and resource sharing, and the nutritional benefit of cooperative breeding, which may have been necessary to maintain the species' large brains (Richerson, Boyd & Henrich, 2010).

Despite these advantages, there are also detriments to living in groups. The most important of these is that groups deplete their food faster. Other detriments include: increased competition for resources (such as mates), increased likelihood of disease and parasite transmission, and conspicuousness, both when looking for prey and when being preyed upon.

However, bigger group size also increases a group's level of protection and increases its aggression, while maintaining the ability to send out smaller, less exposed hunting and foraging groups (Alexander, 1974). And in the case of increased competition for mates as a resource, "if investment in childbearing occurs at the level of the community or extended family rather than the individual pair, the assumptions to be made about the relationship between mate selection and offspring survival are altered considerably" (Brewer & Caporael, 1990, p. 239). This, in turn, lessens the in-group competition over resources. In the case of competition over resources such as food, Alexander (1974) asserts that the increased capacity to hunt and forage overcomes the potential detriments associated with group living. Similarly, Clark and Mangel (1986) propose that the competitive interface among individual group members over resources is mitigated by the natural selection of groups towards an "optimal" group size. They explain that the optimal group size maximizes individual fitness, but allows the optimal size to vary depending on the type of group (Clark & Mangel, 1986). Therefore, kinship groups have an optimal group size that is larger than non-kinship or mixed groups (Rodman, 1981). Importantly, this model only takes into account the optimal group size in relation to foraging and food acquisition. A more comprehensive model would have to balance the size needed for adequate group protection with the optimal size for food distribution.

Kin Selection

Altruism towards other individuals – or incurring a cost to benefit someone else – is the foundation of cooperative behavior. Common forms of altruism include helping in times of danger, sickness, or injury, sharing food, implements, and tools, and sharing knowledge (Trivers, 1971).

Kinship groups are most likely one of the first variations of group level, and parental care is one of the conditions that can lead to group formation (Lovejoy, 1981). In terms of inclusive fitness, anything that aids in the survival of an individual's offspring is regarded as beneficial. There are different ways that people recognize individuals as "kin". This can be considered the way that humans act against "cheaters" within this system. There are phenotypic markers (e.g., skin pigmentation), man-made markers (e.g., body adornment, clothing, piercings, tattoos), and behavioral markers (e.g., language, demeanor, manners, rituals) (van der Dennen, 1985). Markers are more effective if they are costly or hard to fake (Sosis & Bressler, 2003; Sosis, 2004; Alcorta & Sosis, 2005); therefore, skin pigmentation, which individuals cannot fake, tattoos, and other permanent markers are very effective means of determining relatedness. Ethnographically similar groups, especially kinship groups, share similar genetic codes, and as such altruistic behavior towards kin leads to the increased probability of an individual's genes surviving through either their offspring or their kin.

Most altruistic explanations involve natural selection favoring the most stable and cooperative groups; however, there were no mathematical models to support this when Hamilton wrote his study. He therefore asserted that evolution works too slowly for altruism to occur reliably as a mechanism for group formation (Hamilton, 1963). He proposed an equation that we still use today:

$$K > \frac{1}{R}$$

Where the cost of the altruistic behavior is related to the relatedness of the individual being helped. For helping distant relatives, the cost must be very small (Hamilton, 1963). An example commonly used in the anthropological literature is that of the ultimate sacrifice: You would die to save one child, or to save three siblings, or only to save nine cousins. I think it is important to

note that while most examples illustrating this concept utilize the “ultimate cost” by assuming the altruist dies, one must consider that most altruistic acts are less disadvantageous to the contributor and result in less benefit to the recipient than their life being saved (This is also pointed out in (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1974)). In order for kin selection to work within the framework of natural selection, it must follow the formula

$$R > \frac{C}{B}$$

Where the ratio of cost incurred to benefit given must be smaller than the degree of relatedness between the two interactants (Nowark, 2006). Kin selection cannot explain discrimination against cheaters (Trivers, 1971), but scholars propose that kin selection does help prevent free riders (Van der dennen, 1985).

Reciprocity: Direct, Indirect, and Network

Collective parenting as a form of group cooperation -- which is common across cultures and historical time -- changes the game when it comes to mate selection and offspring survival (Brewer & Caporael, 1990). This becomes particularly interesting when viewed through a lens of reciprocal altruism. In other words, an individual does something that benefits another with the expectation that the deed will be reciprocated. Thus, if an individual incurs a cost to care for someone else’s young, which is considered a high cost under the parameters of kin selection, the cost and willingness to be altruistic changes if the benefit is reciprocated for that individual’s young later on.

Axelrod (1984) proposed that cooperation in human groups emerged because of reciprocity or reciprocal altruism, and then later (1987) proposed that cooperation emerged through kin selection (Caporael et al., 1989). In both cases, reciprocity resulting in cooperation is a selfish choice; individuals are giving up something in order to receive some benefit later on

(Rapaport, 1967; Axelrod, 1987; Caporael et al., 1989). In the case of kin selection, incurring a present cost promotes the survival of your genes in the next generation. With the multiple forms of reciprocity (direct, indirect, and network), an individual incurs a cost in the present in order to have someone repay the cost in the future. However, in terms altruism is defined as actions towards *kin*, but by helping kin an individual helps their own genes. This is the foundation to the argument that while there is ample evidence for the various forms of *reciprocity*, there is no true form of altruism (Trivers, 1971).

One of the most commonly used models for understanding direct reciprocity is the Prisoner's Dilemma Game (PDG). In this model there are two players who each make a choice simultaneously, in a series of interactions, between cooperating with the other player while incurring a cost on themselves to the other player's benefit, or defecting against the other player. If both players cooperate they each receive a payoff; however, if one player cooperates and one player defects, the defector receives a larger payoff, and the cooperator a greater cost, than if both had cooperated. If both players defect, neither receives a payoff (and in some cases each receives a penalty). Thus:

A cooperator is someone who pays a cost, c , for another individual to receive a benefit, b . A defector has no cost and does not deal out benefits. Cost and benefit are measured in terms of fitness. Reproduction can be genetic or culture. In mixed populations, defectors have a higher average fitness than cooperators. Therefore, selection acts to increase the relative abundance of defectors. After some time, cooperators vanish from the population. Remarkably, however, a population of only cooperators has the highest average fitness, whereas a population of only defectors has the lowest. Thus, natural selection constantly reduces the average fitness of the population (Nowark, 2006, p. 1560).

Interestingly, in this model of the PDG, defection is always the dominant strategy (Andreoni & Miller, 1993).

While strategies to the PDG naturally include always cooperating and always defecting, there is a multitude of possible ways to play the game. These include tactics of deception, where “it could be in each player’s best interest to pretend, at least for some time, to be an altruistic player in order to build a reputation for cooperation until the game eventually unravels to mutual defection” (Andreoni & Miller, 1993 p. 570). However, one of the more commonly reviewed strategies is called tit-for-tat. The “strategy always starts with a cooperation, then it does whatever the other player has done in the previous round” (Nowark, 2006, p. 1560). Tit-for-tat as a reciprocity strategy is both robust and stable, though it is stable if and only if the interactants have a large probability of continued interaction. Thus “when the probability of two individuals meeting each other again is sufficiently high, cooperation based on reciprocity can thrive and be evolutionarily stable in a population with no relatedness at all” (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981, p. 1894).

Direct Reciprocity is considered a stable mechanism for the evolution of group cooperation within the framework of natural selection when

$$W > \frac{C}{B}$$

Where w is the probability of another encounter (Nowark, 2006).

Indirect reciprocity occurs when benevolence towards one agent increases the likelihood of receiving help from others, generally through reputation (Riolo, Cohen, & Axelrod, 2001). It is stable as an evolutionary strategy for group cooperation when

$$Q > \frac{C}{B}$$

With Q the probability of knowing someone's reputation (Nowark, 2006). Indirect reciprocity can lead to network reciprocity, where an individual interacts with a set network of peers. This strategy mimics small-scale societies, and according to Yamauchi and colleagues (2011), hundreds of studies illustrate “how network reciprocity functions as one of the key protocols for evolving cooperation” (Yamauchi, Tanimoto, & Hagishima, 2011, p. 85). Like in indirect reciprocity, network reciprocity depends upon the reputation that an individual builds within a network through a series of repeated rounds of the PDG. Depending on the study, networks are set up in different frameworks, with the lattice framework being both the most common and the most simple (Nowark & May, 1992). These lattices help link individuals together while determining which individuals are going to interact with one another. Therefore, “cooperators can shape compact clusters to prevent the invasion of defectors” (Zhang, Sun, & Wang, 2013 p. 31). Neighbors can both learn strategies from each other (learning models) or they can try to impose their own strategy on others (teaching models). Then, depending on the size of the network, teaching can either degrade or enhance cooperation (Tanimoto, Brede, & Yamauchi, 2012).

For network reciprocity to be evolutionary effective for group cooperation

$$\frac{B}{C} > k$$

With k the average number of neighbors per individual (Nowark, 2006). In this case, cheaters would be selected out if, by cheating, they eliminated themselves as the recipients of any future altruistic acts. Individuals that reciprocate many times would out-compete them as well (Trivers, 1971). These computer models, however, assume rational choice making. Since humans rarely make perfectly rational decisions (mistakes happen, they might not have all of the necessarily information, etc.), Zhang and colleagues (2013) introduced confounding “noise” into their

theoretical model to simulate imperfect rationality. This noise interferes with a player's ability to observe, and thus could cause changes in payoff or strategy independent of rationality. They found that noise actually enhanced the emergence of cooperation in a population (Zhang et al., 2013). Despite this finding, it is important to note that actual human behavior outside of computer modeling may actually inhibit cooperation (Gracia-Lázaro et al., 2012).

Trivers (1971) predicts that altruism – as well as perhaps other systems for human cooperation – have a complex regulating system. The regulating system proposed by Trivers suggests that altruism leads to friendship and liking/disliking, thus humans show more altruism towards friends than neutral parties. These strong emotions evolve to act as motivators for altruistic behavior. Moralistic aggression, then, may have evolved to protect altruists from cheaters. Mimicry evolves to help cheaters mimic the regulating psychological norms of friendship, moralistic aggression, guilt, sympathy, and gratitude (Trivers, 1971). Cooperation thus depends on the presence of regulating morals and norms such as punishment, reputation, conformist cultural transmission, and other learning biases (Boyd, Richerson, & Henrich, 2011).

Preconditions for reciprocal altruism, according to the model proposed by Trivers (1971), are long lifespan; low dispersal rate; life in small, mutually dependent, stable social groups; and long period of parental care. It is important to note that we cannot use reciprocal altruism to explain the universal human propensity to form groups if group formation is a precondition for the model. Indeed, this creates a tautological argument and does not highlight the true mechanism of group formation.

As a counter-argument for reciprocity based group selection theory, Riolo and colleagues (2001) proposed a model without reciprocity as a factor. Unlike the prisoner's dilemma, this is a tag-based model where participants are randomly paired and are assigned arbitrary yet similar

characteristics (tags). They do not have the possibility of future encounters, so their interaction cannot be based upon any reciprocity theory. The agent only chooses to cooperate if the tags (arbitrary characteristics) of the pairing are sufficiently similar, and the degree of similarity required for cooperation is dependent upon how willing an agent is to ignore differences in tags; this is called the tolerance of the agent. Whether they act in an altruistic manner has no impact on whether they are helped in return, so both direct and indirect reciprocity are eliminated from the game. The model takes into account both social learning and mutation, as it allows the agents to randomly reproduce, creating “generations.” Each new generation of agents can learn from the past generation and each other, and each generation has a small amount of allowed difference from the parent generation, simulating mutations within the population. They found that groups do, in fact, cooperate without reciprocity as a mechanism. With 100 agents over 30,000 generations with $P=3$ pairings, $C=.1$, $b=1$, the average rate of altruism was 73.6% (Riolo, Cohen & Axelrod, 2001).

“By chance there are some small groups of agents with similar tags and relatively low tolerances. As these agents prosper and reproduce, their offspring begin to spread through the population. Soon, about 75-80% of the agents have tags that are so similar that they are within each other’s tolerance range. The agents in the resulting ‘dominant tag cluster’ have an advantage as there are more of them to help each other. The formation of a dominant tag cluster leads to high donation rates even when averaged over the whole population. This establishes the evolution of cooperation without reciprocity” (Riolo, Cohen, & Axelrod, 2001p. 442).

In sum, there are many mechanisms for the potential evolution of cooperation in humans: niche construction, evolutionary advantage, kin selection, direct reciprocity and indirect

reciprocity. Despite the potential for each of these to make a partial contribution to our understanding, scholars tend to marry themselves to a single mechanism and use it exclusively. Indeed, these theoretical models are not incommensurate, and can work together eclectically. I therefore caution against the tendency to view theories as mutually exclusive. While theoretical models are good for testing, the real world is more complicated. It is likely that a combination of these theories best explains the psychological tendency of humans to form groups. Social groups likely started in humans because group formation allowed the species to effectively defend against predators *and* take down large game. But this likely didn't *keep* humans in groups -- culture would have done that (Alexander, 1974). Why cooperation is advantageous and the mechanisms by which the species actually maintains it might be different, such as in a case of ultimate versus proximate causation.

Close relatedness promotes true altruism because individuals cooperate in order to ensure the survivability of their genes. Because this is a direct and tangible payoff, cooperation within closely related groups likely is how the genes for altruism began to express themselves across the population. This is how we see initial viability of cooperating over always defecting. "Once the genes for cooperation exist, selection will promote strategies that base cooperative behavior on cues in the environment" (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981, p. 1394). This not only relates back to NCT, but also shows how cooperation would be sustainable independent of relatedness coefficients. Social mechanisms would have served to increase group solidarity, because "those groups that provided the greatest mutual support of their members were more likely to prevail over those that suffered from internal divisions and conflict" (Perry, 2003, p. 106). Indeed, culture evolves faster than genes, so group living as a niche could also have evolved first, with the genes for psychosocial need to belong evolving later (Richerson, Boyd & Henrich, 2010).

As groups formed, it would have become more and more imperative for *all* individuals to join a group, because there is a “severe competitive disadvantage of the lone individual confronting a group when both want the same resource ... the likely result of this evolutionary selection would be a set of internal mechanisms that guide individual human beings into social groups” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 499). This set of internal mechanisms manifest, in part, as a psychological sense of community with other individuals in the group.

Humans have a dual nature: we are both social and selfish. While individuals tend to self-select into groups, the temptation to free-ride or cheat is always there. This creates an inherent tension within groups between the needs of the individual and the needs of the group. Psychological sense of community may act as a buffer to reduce this tension by promoting greater group cohesion and helping to more closely align the needs and goals of the groups with the needs of the individual.

CHAPTER III

PSYCHOLOGICAL SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Psychological sense of community is defined as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (McMillan & Chavis 1986, p. 9). Sense of community is generally built upon the foundation of four main concepts: membership, influence, fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. Membership is "the feeling that one has invested part of oneself to become a member and therefore has the right to belong" (McMillan & Chavis 1986, p. 9). It is characterized by feelings of belongingness to the group as well as things such as common symbols, participation, and emotional safety. Influence is "whether or not individuals believe they can affect the community" and the pressures the community puts on the individual (McCarthy, Pretty, & Catano 1990, p. 212). Fulfillment of needs encompasses both the individual's needs being met by the community and the individual fulfilling the community's needs, as well as feelings of pride in the community. Finally, shared emotional connection is represented by a "shared history of struggles and successes" (McCarthy et al., 1990, p. 212).

The term "community" has been referenced in a territorial sense (e.g., one's neighborhood, city, or town) and in a relational sense (e.g., one's spiritual community, a volunteer group, a classroom) (Gusfield, 1975; Prezza & Costantini, 1998). The majority of extant research has focused on territorial sense of community (Prezza & Costantini, 1998; Prezza & Pacili, 2007). Psychological sense of community varies widely between different types of geographic communities. Heterogeneous communities, such as those found in poor urban

communities, differ in levels of community from homogenous ones (Brodsky, O'Campo, & Aronson, 1999). Generally speaking, rural communities experience higher levels of community than urban ones do (Obst, Smith, & Zinkiewicz, 2002). This may be because geographically isolated communities are more able to promote social bonds, place affiliation, and language dialects (Wilkinson, 2007). In particular, social bonds and place affiliation are strong predictors of geographic communities to promote feelings of community (Nasar & Julian, 1995; Obst & White, 2005; Perkins & Long, 2002; Obst, Smith, & Zinkiewicz, 2002).

Geographic communities are unique in that they are organized specifically in space, so interactions are influenced by the layout of the community. Large, open spaces facilitate more social interaction, and so feelings of community are stronger where geographic positioning allows for courtyards, parks, and walking trails (Nasar & Julian, 1995; Kim & Kaplan, 2004). Geographic communities are also unique as compared to relational communities in that occupants do not always have a choice in residing where they do, either because of geographic or socioeconomic constraints (Brodsky, O'Campo, & Aronson, 1999). The emotional climate of a community, be it geographic or relational, matters (Brodsky, 1996; Battistich & Himm, 1997; Henry & Slater, 2007), and thus a *lack* of sense of community could become adaptive in neighborhoods that are deemed detrimental to the goals of the individual (Brodsky, 1996). Individuals who have strong sense of community with each other are more likely to share the same goals and values. If the goals or values of the neighborhood are detrimental to the individual, then sense of community could actually become harmful. This could be why students have been found to identify least with their neighborhood, next with their cohort, and the most with their interest group.

Putnam (1995) notes that the rates of socializing with neighbors are going down, and instead people are socializing more with their out-of-neighborhood friends. This is linked to the reduction of the importance of third places. Third places are conceptualized as locations where individuals can socialize outside of the home (first place) or workplace (second place). Third places must be neutral, wherein everyone is there out of choice rather than obligation; act as a leveler between people of different social and economic classes; be accessible to everyone; maintain a base of regular attendees; and have a friendly, home-like atmosphere where conversation is the main activity (Oldenburg, 1989). Putnam argues that the prominence of these locations is declining (Putnam, 1995).

Similarly, Durkheim (2014) asserts that, contrary to the large majority of human history, communities tend to form around interests rather than geographic location. This trend seems to be continuing today, including a now modern shift towards virtual communities, which will be discussed later. Other authors have noted this general shift to relational communities built around shared goals and values as well (e.g., Gusfield, 1975), although it is important to note that geographic and relational communities may overlap for some individuals (Wellman, 1996). Putnam (1995) also states that people are leaving established communities, and moving towards organizations where people never actually meet (e.g. Political or professional affiliations), thus "membership" consists of paying monthly dues.

These assertions represent two important trends in psychological sense of community theory. Imagined communities, or those where people never meet and are united only in a relative sense, encompass the latter group of people, where membership dues are the mark of sustained membership (Anderson, 1983). Nations also fall under this category. In imagined communities, members will likely never meet one another, or interact in any way, however they

are aware of the existence of a community, even if they have no tangible evidence of it. Unifying themes such as motifs, anthems, and symbols serve as the foundation for community in these cases (Anderson, 1983). One might argue that imagined communities don't fully count within the context of this paper because they lack firm adherence to the model outlined by Chavis and McMillan (1986), which is commonly adopted in papers, including this one, as the foundational model for study. However, it is my belief that they are nonetheless an important category of group to bring up in the context of psychological sense of community discussion, because they illustrate the lack of perfect consensus on the validity of any one model for studying sense of community.

The other assertion - that involvement in established communities is declining – also needs to be addressed. Participation in communities is not declining on a national scale, however the nature of the communities that people participate in is changing. Similar to the shift from geographic to relational communities (Gusfield, 1975), relational communities with physical locations are beginning to shift towards relational communities that use online platforms for communication and interaction (Obst, Zinkiewicz, & Smith, 2002a; Obst, Zinkiewicz, & Smith, 2002b; Koh, Kim, & Kim, 2003; Blanchard & Markus, 2002). Just as relational communities don't require people to live in a common, shared geographic region, virtual communities don't require face-to-face interaction, though it can be useful at facilitating deeper relational bonds (Koh, Kim, & Kim, 2003; Blanchard & Markus, 2002). These virtual communities can include people from all over the world who would not usually meet under other circumstances. And because virtual spaces are always “open 24/7”, members are able to interact at any time to offer a community base for people who would otherwise be unable to engage in community participation. This is especially important for individuals who are marginalized from their

geographic based communities due to conflicting beliefs or lifestyles, and those who would be unable to participate in physical relational communities due to severe social anxiety (McKenna & Green, 2002).

The formats for virtual communities are very broad - they can incorporate blogs, online video games, listserves, discussion forums, and other forms of computer mediated communication (CMC) groups (Tonteri, Kosonen, Ellonen, & Tarkiainen, 2011) - with the only absolute requirement being that cyberspace is the default or mandatory space in which members interact (Koh, Kim, & Kim, 2003). Like with imagined communities, there remains some discrepancy over whether virtual communities "count" as communities (Jones, 1997; Reich, 2010; Forster 2001; Forster 2004; Blanchard, 2004). Indeed, Forster (2004) found significant differences between members' psychological sense of community in physical and virtual communities using the Sense of Community Index (SCI) for both groups. However, Blanchard (2007) produced a measure of Sense of Virtual Community (SOVC) with stronger content validity for virtual communities than the more standard SCI, suggesting that virtual communities do produce sense of community among their members, just with different dimensions than those outlined for physical, relational, and geographic communities. SOVC dimensions include: Recognition of members, exchange of support, attachment, obligation, identity/identification, relationships between members, influence, immersion, and shared emotional connection (Tonteri, Kosonen, Ellonen, & Tarkiainen, 2001; Blanchard & Marcus, 2002; Koh, Kim, & Kim, 2003). Additionally, multiple studies have shown that virtual communities can exhibit strong SOVC among members (Obst, Zinkiewicz, & Smith, 2002a; Nonnecke, Andrews & Preece, 2006; Blanchard and Markus 2002; Koh, Kim, & Kim, 2003). In a study of science fiction fans, researchers discovered that participants' sense of community among their fandom - a relational

community with a large amount of interaction occurring online - was significantly higher than their sense of community within their respective geographic communities (Obst, Zinkiewicz, & Smith, 2002b).

It is important to note, however, that not all CMC groups exhibit enough of the dimensions to facilitate SOVC among their members. Blogs show minimal SOVC (Blanchard, 2004), and social networking sites such as Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram represent "networked individualism" rather than online communicators (Reich, 2010).

While the shift towards virtual communities has a large impact on participants -- especially millennials -- physical, relational, and geographic communities are not extinct, despite the rather dreary outlook proposed in *Bowling Alone* (Putnam, 1995). One ubiquitous relational community is the school, where students come together - willingly or not - to pursue an education. During childhood, the neighborhood can satisfy the need to belong to a group; however, as the amount of time spent in school (and its related activities) increases, the school becomes the center of life and social networks during adolescence (Chipuer, 2001; Chipuer, Bramston, & Pretty, 2002). While younger teenagers have more kin-based social networks, during this transition into older adolescence networks shift to non-kin (Vondra & Garbarino, 1988).

The presence of sense of community is linked to enhanced perceptions of personal well-being (Vieno, Perkins, Smith, & Santinello, 2005; Henry & Slater, 2007) and decreased feelings of loneliness in adolescents (Pretty, Andrewes, & Collett 1994), both of which help reduce the risk of mental health problems via increases in perceived support networks (Chipuer et al., 2002). It should be noted that there does not need to be any *actual* support, just an individual's perception that they could obtain support if needed (Cohen & Willis, 1985; Antonucci & Israel,

1986; Baumeister & Leary, 2014). Mental health problems such as depression, suicidal thoughts or tendencies, anxiety, and high stress - as in the case of student burnout – often manifest in adolescence due to the high stress environment in which students exist (McCarthy et al., 1990). Feeling a sense of community with other students has been shown to reduce these traits, especially during major life transitions, such as the transition from middle school to high school, and again from high school to college (Compas, Wagoner, Slavin, & Vannatta, 2005; Henry & Slater, 2007). Importantly, psychological sense of community may act as a buffer against suicide, "if only because [social] ties help restrain people from killing themselves" (Baumeister & Leary, 2014 p. 509).

Supportive school environments are linked with emphasizing individual effort and improvement, and successful schools focus on building community among their students (Wehlage, Rutter, & Smith, 1989). There is a concern that loss of interest in school with age is linked to a loss of sense of community in school (Vieno, Santinello, Pastore, & Perkins, 2007). Thus, fostering a strong sense of community may be a factor for not only motivating students and improving grades (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Wentzel, 1998), but also for keeping them in school. Indeed, it has been shown that students who form some sort of identification with their school are less likely to drop out because they feel as if they are "part of the school environment" (Finn, 1989; p. 123). This is not only the case in high school students, but in adult students as well (Vann & Hinton, 1994; Asher & Skeens, 1993). Because sense of community helps to mediate stressful life events, and student burnout can be seen as a consequence of chronic stress, studies have also sought to correlate student burnout and a lowered sense of community (McCarthy et al., 1990), further supporting the work done by Vieno and colleagues.

Because a great deal of time is spent around friends and teachers at school, students rely upon these resources for adjustment and support. Being a part of a larger whole (i.e., a community) helps to facilitate feelings of self worth and esteem (Maton, 1990; Grolnick, Ryan, & Deci, 1991; Garcia-Reid, Peterson, Reid, & Peterson, 2013; Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994). Thus, the support adolescents feel at school may help make up for a lack of family support or negative social interactions at home (Dubois, Felner, Brand, Adan, & Evans, 1992; Greenfield & Marks, 2010). Positive support and feeling a sense of belonging to groups with positive values has been shown to reduce the risk for gang involvement, crime, and youth risk behaviors such as violence, early sexual activity, and illicit drug and alcohol use (Henry & Slater, 2007; Pretty, Conroy, Dugay, Fowler, & Williams, 1996; Royal & Rossi 1996; Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997; Battistich & Hom, 1997; Baumeister & Leary, 2014). This finding also comes during a developmental epoch when, as Chipuer (2001) suggests, peers and trusted mentors such as teachers and coaches begin to have a greater impact on the actions of high school adolescents than the family. Thus, a sense of community may indeed have a buffering effect on students' perceptions of negative high school outcomes.

Aspects of the broader social setting may also impact how individuals in that setting experience sense of community. A study by Royal and Rossi (1996) found that as school size increased, perceived sense of community decreased. In response to this, adolescents often create sub-units in schools, building close-knit friendships through the formation of sub-communities; students who are involved in these sub-communities often experience higher sense of community than those who are not (Albanesi, Cicognani, & Zani, 2007). Importantly, these sub-communities are not destructive to the broader sense of community that exists at the school level (Royal & Rossi, 1996). Extracurricular activities such as performing groups have been found to facilitate

sense of community among members in this way, and are an important facet of school sense of belonging, a facet of the membership domain as described by McMillan and Chavis (1986) (Finn, 1989; Faircloth & Hamm, 2005; Cohen, 2012; Miller, Leinhardt, & Zigmond, 1987; Rutter et al., 1979; Schater, 1972; Spady, 1971). They also could remain as the sole point of attachment to the school if students don't perform well academically (Finn, 1989). In fact, in a sample of advanced youth music ensembles, social aspects were the most frequently mentioned reason for participation (Hewitt & Allan, 2012). This shows that having a strong sense of community is a huge factor in deciding to participate in at least one form of high school extracurricular. To this end, the following studies determine the differences in sense of community experienced by students in different types of extracurricular activities and what aspects of these communities facilitate sense of community among their members.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH STUDIES

Study 1-Method

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a difference in the levels of psychological sense of community between different types of extracurricular activities (performance, participatory, and competitive) in high schools.

Participants

Seven hundred one high school students aged 15 to 18 years ($M = 16.51$; $SD = 1.23$) who were actively involved in extracurricular activities at the time of data collection took part in the present research. Participants were drawn from competitive (e.g., athletics), performance (e.g., band), and participatory (e.g., language clubs) groups that operated at two high schools in Utah. Respondents were 268 males and 425 females, with eight participants not disclosing their genders (Table 1). In total, members of competitive groups completed 218 surveys, members of participatory groups completed 113 surveys, and members of performance groups completed 370 surveys. Competitive groups included marching band ($n = 150$), drill team ($n = 14$), and a range of sports teams ($n = 54$). Performance groups included dance ($n = 24$), choir ($n = 238$), band ($n = 49$), and orchestra ($n = 67$). Participatory groups included student council ($n = 65$), physics club ($n = 4$), book club ($n = 13$), and “Be the Change” club ($n = 31$). The sample was predominantly white (89.0%), and 87% of students reported living in homes with two married parents, and students reported having between 0 and 19 siblings ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 2.02$). On average, students reported a cumulative high school GPA of 3.69 ($SD = .367$).

Table 1		
<i>Demographics of Participants*</i>		
<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Gender		
Male	268	38.67
Female	425	61.33
Race		
Non-Hispanic/Latino	646	94.30
Hispanic/Latino	39	5.70
Grade		
9 th	22	3.17
10 th	243	35.06
11 th	236	34.05
12 th	192	27.71

*Participants who did not disclose demographic information are not included

Procedures

Subsequent to Utah State University Institutional Review Board approval, a school district in North-central Utah was contacted to obtain permission to conduct the research. Subsequent to district approval, principals of each high school within the district were contacted. Ultimately, two principals granted permission to conduct the study at their respective schools. Subsequently, I contacted advisors, coaches, and teachers of various groups via email to gain explicit permission to work with existing extracurricular groups at the respective schools. Students participating in extracurricular groups were then given letters of information to take home to their parents. Letters included an option for parents/guardians and/or students to opt out of the study. Students were given two days to return the letter if they or their parents chose for them not to participate. Students who participated were asked to respond to a standardized questionnaire assessing their sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment to their extracurricular activity. A total of 710 questionnaires were distributed, and from these 701 valid questionnaires were returned.

Measures

Sense of community. High School students' sense of community was measured by applying all 24-items of the Sense of Community Index, Version 2 (SCI-2) (Chavis, Lee, & Acosta, 2008). Research conducted by McMillan and Chavis (1986) resulted in the creation of a Sense of Community Index (SCI). Their original model outlined four components of sense of community: (1) membership; (2) influence; (3) shared emotional connection; and (4) fulfillment of needs. The SCI-2 was created in response to criticisms (e.g., Hughey, Speer, & Peterson, 1999, Long & Perkins, 2003) that the original scale was too narrow and difficult to apply cross-culturally. The instrument is designed to be used in any community, and past use of the subscales have shown internal consistency of scores ranging from .79 to .86. In the present study, survey items were modified to reflect students' perceptions of sense of community in high school extracurriculars (e.g. "I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them." Students were asked to relate each item to their perceptions of their current participation, and items were rated on a four-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*completely*). Internal consistency of scores in the present study was .91 in the competitive group, .93 in the performance group, and .92 in the participation group.

Enjoyment. High school students' enjoyment was measured using an adapted version of the enjoyment subscale of the Sport Commitment Model (Carpenter, Scanlan, Simons, & Lobel, 1993), which originally showed internal consistency scores of .94. In the present study, survey items were modified to reflect students' participation in high school extracurriculars rather than "sport" groups (e.g. "Do you have fun participating in the activities of this group?"). Students were asked to relate each item to their perceptions of their current participation, and items were rated on a four-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very much*). Internal consistency of scores in

the present study was .92 in the competitive group, .95 in the performance group, and .89 in the participation group.

Commitment. High school students' commitment was measured using an adapted version of the commitment subscale of the Sport Commitment Model (Carpenter et al., 1993), which previously showed an internal consistency of .87. In the present study, survey items were modified to reflect students' participation in high school extracurriculars rather than "sport" groups (e.g. "Barring academic requirements or family obligations, how hard would it be for you to quit this year?"). Students were asked to relate each item to their perceptions of their current participation, and items were rated on a four-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 4 (*very much*). Internal consistency of scores in the present study was .82 in the competitive group, .85 in the performance group, and .78 in the participation group.

Open ended measures. In order to control for amount of participation in each group, students were also be asked how many other groups such as religious youth groups, volunteer organizations, sports teams outside of school, or gangs they participate in on a regular basis. In addition, basic individual- and family-level demographics (age, grade in school, race, parents' marital status) were asked of each participant to help control for variation that could be attributed to these variables.

Data Analysis

Data were screened based on the recommendations of Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), and descriptive statistics were calculated on the sample of 701 participants. Graphical representations of each variable were inspected to ensure normal distributions across the study sample. Prior to conducting our primary analysis, a series of Pearson correlations were performed among the dependent variables in order to test the assumption that our dependent variables would be

correlated with each other in the moderate range (Meyers, Gampst, & Guarino, 2006).

Correlations existed among all of the dependent variables, suggesting the appropriateness of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). A Box's *M* test was conducted to test the assumption that the covariance matrices of sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment were similar across competitive, performance, and participatory groups. A one-way MANOVA was used to examine the equality of variable means for participants across each of the three conditions. Follow-up ANOVAs incorporating Bonferroni corrections were conducted for each dependent variable.

Study 1-Results

Descriptive Statistics

In competitive groups, the average score for sense of community was 2.28 ($SD = .37$), the average score for enjoyment was 2.72 ($SD = .44$), and the average score for commitment was 2.64 ($SD = .50$). In performance groups, the average score for sense of community was 2.02 ($SD = .57$), the average score for enjoyment was 2.42 ($SD = .73$), and the average score for commitment was 2.07 ($SD = .92$). In participatory groups, the average score for sense of community was 2.24 ($SD = .48$), the average score for enjoyment was 2.80 ($SD = .38$), and the average score for commitment was 2.32 ($SD = .71$) (see Table 2).

Group Differences

A one-way MANOVA revealed a significant main effect of group Wilks' $\lambda = .30$, $F(6, 1288) = 24.30$, $p < .001$. The multivariate effect size was estimated at .102, which implies that 10.2% of the variance in the dependent variables was accounted for by group membership. The Box's M statistical test was significant $F(18, 4805) = 2.88$, $p < .001$, indicating an increased probability of Type I error; however, given the high power and p -value $< .001$, this result was not interpreted as impacting the results.

Given the significant MANOVA, Bonferroni adjusted ($.05 / 3 = .0167$) anovas with Tukey post-hoc examinations were conducted for each dependent variable. Results yielded a significant main effect of group on sense of community $F(2, 653) = 65.42$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .167$, indicating that 16.7% of the variance in sense of community was accounted for by group membership. Tukey post-hoc test revealed significant differences in sense of community scores between performance and competitive groups ($p < .01$) and performance and participatory groups ($p < .001$), but not between participatory and competitive groups.

Table 2a					
List of summary statistics by group					
Name	Item	Average Score	Name	Item	Average Score
A capella Choir	Sense of Community Index	46.8	Chamber Choir	Sense of Community Index	54.26
	Needs	11.43		Needs	13.08
	Membership	12.37		Membership	14.22
	Influence	11.46		Influence	13.08
	Emotional Connection	11.73		Emotional Connection	14.17
Be the Change Club	Commitment Scale	9.9	Chamber Orchestra	Commitment Scale	11.10
	Enjoyment Scale	5.5		Enjoyment Scale	7.66
	Sense of Community Index	53.50		Sense of Community Index	58.90
	Needs	14.40		Needs	14.25
	Membership	12.74		Membership	14.55
Book Club	Influence	13.30	Concert Band	Influence	14.33
	Emotional Connection	13.35		Emotional Connection	14.42
	Commitment Scale	11.33		Commitment Scale	11.25
	Enjoyment Scale	6.90		Enjoyment Scale	7.50
	Sense of Community Index	45.60		Sense of Community Index	44.18
Brass	Needs	11.77	Dance 2	Needs	10.82
	Membership	11.46		Membership	11.09
	Influence	11.15		Influence	10.82
	Emotional Connection	11.23		Emotional Connection	11.45
	Commitment Scale	11.46		Commitment Scale	7.72
	Enjoyment Scale	5.15		Enjoyment Scale	4.27
	Sense of Community Index	31.60		Sense of Community Index	45.6
	Needs	9.00		Needs	11.9
	Membership	8.67		Membership	10.82
	Influence	6.17		Influence	11.55
	Emotional Connection	7.83		Emotional Connection	10
	Commitment Scale	6.80		Commitment Scale	9.9
	Enjoyment Scale	5.00		Enjoyment Scale	5.9

Table 2b

List of summary statistics by group, continued

<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Average Score</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Average Score</u>
Dance 3	Sense of Community Index	48.1	Men's Choir	Sense of Community Index	35.34
	Needs	11.62		Needs	8.8
	Membership	1.4		Membership	10
	Influence	11.69		Influence	8.5
	Emotional Connection	11.25		Emotional Connection	8.1
Drill Team	Commitment Scale	9.7	Orchestra	Commitment Scale	7.71
	Enjoyment Scale	5.4		Enjoyment Scale	4.88
	Sense of Community Index	62.23		Sense of Community Index	42.40
	Needs	15.21		Needs	9.98
	Membership	18.86		Membership	11.19
Marching Band 1	Influence	14.50	Physics Club	Influence	10.24
	Emotional Connection	16.08		Emotional Connection	10.65
	Commitment Scale	11.78		Commitment Scale	8.74
	Enjoyment Scale	8.78		Enjoyment Scale	4.92
	Sense of Community Index	56.56		Sense of Community Index	37.75
Marching Band 2	Needs	13.19	Soccer	Needs	10.25
	Membership	15.09		Membership	8.50
	Influence	13.04		Influence	9.50
	Emotional Connection	14.91		Emotional Connection	9.50
	Commitment Scale	10.26		Commitment Scale	8.75
Marching Band 2	Enjoyment Scale	7.09		Enjoyment Scale	5.75
	Sense of Community Index	55.18		Sense of Community Index	54.10
	Needs	13.32		Needs	13.24
	Membership	15.03		Membership	13.27
	Influence	12.18		Influence	13.2
Marching Band 2	Emotional Connection	14.66		Emotional Connection	14.49
	Commitment Scale	11.13		Commitment Scale	10.80
	Enjoyment Scale	7.07		Enjoyment Scale	8.05

Table 2c				
List of summary statistics by group, continued				
<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Average Score</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>
Softball	Sense of Community Index	56.00	Symphonic Band 2	Sense of Community Index
	Needs	12.31		Needs
	Membership	16.15		Membership
	Influence	13.46		Influence
	Emotional Connection	14.08		Emotional Connection
	Commitment Scale	11.10		Commitment Scale
	Enjoyment Scale	7.53		Enjoyment Scale
Student Council 1	Sense of Community Index	55.85	Winds	Sense of Community Index
	Needs	13.23		Needs
	Membership	15.45		Membership
	Influence	13.67		Influence
	Emotional Connection	13.43		Emotional Connection
	Commitment Scale	11.09		Commitment Scale
	Enjoyment Scale	7.26		Enjoyment Scale
Student Council 2	Sense of Community Index	57.51	Wind Symphony	Sense of Community Index
	Needs	13.68		Needs
	Membership	15.94		Membership
	Influence	13.97		Influence
	Emotional Connection	14.06		Emotional Connection
	Commitment Scale	11.41		Commitment Scale
	Enjoyment Scale	7.50		Enjoyment Scale
Symphonic Band 1	Sense of Community Index	33.00	Women's Choir	Sense of Community Index
	Needs	7.33		Needs
	Membership	9.17		Membership
	Influence	8.00		Influence
	Emotional Connection	8.50		Emotional Connection
	Commitment Scale	5.16		Commitment Scale
	Enjoyment Scale	4.66		Enjoyment Scale

Results also yielded a significant main effect of group on enjoyment $F(2, 693) = 33.67, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .089$, indicating that 8.9% of the variance in enjoyment was accounted for by group membership. Tukey post-hoc tests revealed significant differences in enjoyment between participatory and performance groups ($p < .001$) and performance and competitive groups ($p < .01$), but not competitive and participatory groups (see Table 3).

Table 3									
<i>Bivariate correlations and descriptive statistics for sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment across competitive, performance, and participatory groups</i>									
	<u>Competitive</u>			<u>Performance</u>			<u>Participatory</u>		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
1. Sense of community	(.91)			(.93)			(.92)		
2. Enjoyment	.65**	(.92)		.74**	(.95)		.58**	(.89)	
3. Commitment	.58**	.66**	(.82)	.65**	.67**	(.85)	.64**	.46**	(.78)
Range	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4	1-4
<i>M</i>	2.28	2.72	2.64	2.02	2.42	2.07	2.24	2.80	2.32
<i>SD</i>	.37	.44	.50	.57	.73	.92	.48	.38	.71

Note. Internal consistency reliability of scores is displayed across the diagonal for each group.

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

Finally, results yielded a significant main effect of group on commitment $F(2, 690) = 31.54, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .084$, indicating that 8.4% of the variance in commitment was accounted for by group membership. Tukey post-hoc tests revealed significant differences in commitment between performance and competitive groups ($p < .001$), but not between participatory and competitive groups, or participatory and performance groups.

A closer inspection of the four subscales of the SCI-2 indicated that the performance and participatory groups differed significantly ($p < .001$) on *reinforcement of needs*, as did the

competitive and performance groups ($p < .05$). On the *membership* subscale, significant differences emerged only between the performance and participatory groups ($p < .01$). Performance and participatory groups also exhibited significant differences ($p < .001$) on the *influence* subscale, as did competitive and performance groups ($p < .01$). Finally, on the *shared emotional connection* subscale, significant differences only emerged between competitive and performance groups ($p < .01$) (see Figure 1).

The number of groups a participant was part of, their parents' marital status, their number of siblings, their race, their gender, and the number of years they had participated in the group had no correlation to any of the measures.

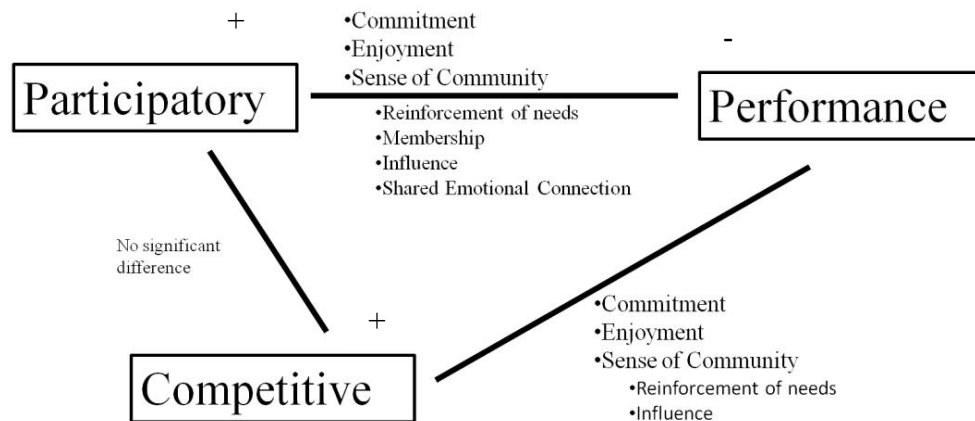


Figure 1. Significant differences between types of groups in the average scores of the measures and subscales.

Study 2-Methods

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine what specific aspects of extracurricular activities help members to feel a sense of community with their group to determine if these aspects could help explain the differences in sense of community seen in Study 1. This supplements both the results from Study 1 and the extant literature on the facilitation of sense of community.

Participants

Twenty students who were actively involved in extracurricular activities and had participated in Study 1 took part in this phase of the research. Respondents were three males and 17 females. In total, 18 interviews were conducted (in two interviews students requested to be interviewed together), involving 14 of the 24 groups that had members participate in Study 1. Competitive groups included marching band ($n = 1$), drill team ($n = 1$), and girls' softball ($n = 1$). Performance groups included dance (levels two and three; $n = 3$), choir (women's, chamber, a capella, and combined; $n = 6$), band ($n = 1$), and orchestra ($n = 1$). Participatory groups included student council ($n = 4$) and book club ($n = 2$). All of the students who participated in this phase of the research identified as white.

Procedure

The second phase of this research was designed to provide a more in depth understanding of what aspects of high school extracurriculars result in differences in sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment. Subsequent to the administration of the Study 1 survey, the researcher recruited randomly selected students from each group to participate in a follow-up interview. These semi-structured interviews ranged from five to 15 minutes and were recorded

digitally. Recordings were then transcribed verbatim, cross-checked for accuracy, and coded for common themes using MAXQDA software. In some instances the teacher, coach, or faculty advisor declined to allow students to participate in this portion of the research due to time constraints.

Measures

Questions on the interview guide were designed to glean student perceptions of the potential mechanisms for facilitation of sense of community in each of the four sub-fields designated by McMillan and Chavis (i.e., membership, influence, fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection). Questions about student leadership and how much students felt their teacher, coach, or advisor listened to and took into consideration student concerns comprised the questions about influence, because influence is the feeling that participants can influence their community. Fulfillment of needs was addressed through questions investigating whether students felt supported in times of difficulty by both their peers and their coach/teacher/advisor. Questions about the types of activities members of the group participated in together were geared towards assessing facilitation of membership, as well as questions about when students felt the most proud to be a part of their group. The questions about pride also informed the sub-field of shared emotional connection, as did questions about common values. Additionally, participants were asked what they felt contributed most to their sense of community within the context of the extracurricular activity. The semi-structured interview guide is included in Appendix A.

Study 2- Results

Themes experienced by students

Table 4 documents 10 themes of participants' experiences of sense of community within the four categories of McMillan and Chavis' sense of community model. *Membership*, consisted of mainly subcategories of "doing things together", environment, feelings of kinship/family with other members, and social support. *Influence* included mainly subcategories of advisors and values. *Fulfillment of needs* included subcategories of support from advisors and social support from peers. *Shared emotional connection* included subcategories of working together/goals, performing, and service.

Table 4	
<i>Themes of participants' experiences</i>	
<u>Themes</u>	<u>Number</u>
Membership	
Environment	7
Doing things together	27
Working together/goals	5
Family/Kinship	7
Service	2
Values	3
Social Support	7
Influence	
Advisors	15
Doing things together	2
Service	1
Values	5
Fulfillment of Needs	
Advisors	15
Family/Kinship	3
Service	2
Social Support	13
Shared Emotional Connection	
Experienced hardships	1
Working together/goals	9

Family/Kinship	2
Performing	9
Service	6
Values	3

Membership. Many of the participants indicated feelings of family toward the other members of their group, exemplified by the following quote: "We have a definite sense of family, like, in the choir, which I have always loved." Five students specifically talked about how they viewed their group like a family. Many went so far as to use kinship terms as well. This added to the closeness that participants felt with their peers.

We do try our hardest to get together to build strength, but we feel like sisters. Everyone feels like sisters to each other, because we're so close.

We've kind of made it so we're a little family. And some of the girls aren't as close, but most of us are pretty close. Yeah. I've made lots of friends through it.

Even though we're not all like, we haven't grown up together and so we're not like the closest of friends, we have a definite sense of family, like in the choir, which I have always loved.

The likening of students participating in the group to siblings, as well as the coach/teacher/advisor to a parent was a common theme among the participants who talked about how their group was like a family:

I don't know if we necessarily have set traditions, but we all have little inside jokes that everybody knows about, and we all just kind of make fun of each other, but not in a mean way, but just because it's like we're bickering siblings. It's really fun. Um, let me think, um, every year at the end of the year we'll have a big party together and we'll eat doughnuts um and we'll just talk about the different things that we loved about the year. Um, we have a lot of like, not necessarily traditions, but just a lot of little things that we do to kind of make our family.

[Mrs. W's] like our mother. That's fantastic.

[Our advisors are] like my parents, like my second parents, and I really love them, and cherish their - cherish what they have to offer.

One student proposed that it is the affinal kinship bonds that arise through likening membership in the group to a family that help promote and increase commitment to the group. When asked what contributed most to her sense of community with the marching band, this participant stated:

I think, the love and the kind of the, like the I think the love and it's like we're a family. Because we always tell them, like if you don't want to be here you don't have to. You're choosing to be here. We just tell them like, if you want to leave, then leave. And they never end up leaving. And I think it's because they can feel the love that we all have for each other, so yeah.

Influence. This domain consists of the ability for members to influence the community and the influence the community has on other communities. While it was hypothesized that groups with strong student leadership positions would have stronger sense of community, this does not seem to be the case. There were only two groups (Dance 2 and Dance 3) that did not have student leadership positions as a part of the group. However, these two groups both showed high influence sub-scores on the SCI-2 as compared to other performing groups. Students did reflect on the importance of their teachers listening to what students had to say. Almost every participant agreed that their faculty advisor/teacher/coach was willing to listen to and incorporate student suggestions into their plans for the group.

They always were telling us that their main thing, like they just make sure that things get done, but it's our ideas that happen. You know, they just like organize the planning of it but we plan it, you know? And they'll listen to us and our concerns.

Oh yeah, she totally hears us out and like if she wants us to be very dedicated to sport, but she understands that if we need to miss practice for something that's very important to us, then she's so lenient towards it. She'll support you 100%.

One student mentioned that while she felt that her advisors didn't always incorporate student ideas, they analyzed them critically and didn't discourage student discourse:

[Our advisors] want us to achieve what we want to do, but they also are there to say okay, did you think about this, let's try to work you through this problem. So I guess they bring kind of more of a reality to our ideas, while they still allow us to do what we want to.

There was also some disagreement on the perceptions of advisors, although this didn't seem to negatively impact overall influence sub-scale scores.

I feel like she has her own idea of stuff, like um, a couple weeks ago we were talking to her like we were wondering if we could do two dances because we have our first dance down and we're wondering if we could do two dances because the other groups have more than one, and she kind of, I don't know if she even took it into consideration so that's the only thing. Or we'll recommend something for the warm up but she already knows what she's doing so she doesn't really consider doing anything else.

Yet in separate interviews, two other participants noted about the same coach:

She's really open minded about what we want to do so she kind of will build our exercises and our activities that we do in class around that. Around what we like and what will help us at the same time.

There are some times when she'll give us choreography where we don't think works with us, and we'll give her our opinion and she definitely takes that and modifies it.

The values that a group holds together also, as noted by several of the participants, can help members hold influence with the larger community *outside* their group. This can be related to the reputation surrounding the work ethic of students in the group, sportsmanship, or group goals directed at serving the larger community.

We like to be known for winning, but we also like to be known for being like a very good team, like we're very supportive and very nice girls.

I feel like people, like in the other choirs, or even people that I'm talking to in another class, if they hear that I'm in chamber all of a sudden it's like a big deal, I don't know, people already have like this set view of someone who's hardworking, and really friendly, and really talented, just because I'm in this group, and so that's pretty cool... To be in the group you have to like, there's already like a stigma of the kind of people who are in there, and so people, we're just like known for being those types of people.

Fulfillment of Needs. Most students reflected on the large social support structure that existed among members of their group and between the students and their coach/teacher/adviser. For some students, how well they knew their peers played a role in how much social support they perceived within the group

There's a few girls that I've become friends with and definitely feel like I could go to them. Obviously I haven't become as close to some of the girls, so probably not them, but there's a few.

While for others, the mere fact that that the other students were part of the same group as them was enough to warrant feeling a strong sense of social support.

We also respect each other and those values, and I also know that if something happened, that even if I didn't know the person very well that they would be there for me. That they would be willing to participate in something for someone they didn't even know.

Participants' reactions to being asked whether or not they felt like they could go to their teacher/coach/advisor if they had problems in their personal life were similarly split. All but one participant said that they felt that their teacher/coach/advisor would be willing to listen and would be helpful, however some expressed concern that it would be inappropriate, or that they would likely go to their friends first because they didn't want to bother the leaders of the group with something that might be trivial. One student shared that he had come to rely on his teacher for help in the past:

You know I've struggled a lot in the past with anxiety, and Mrs. W actually struggled with anxiety when she was younger as well, so she's really helped me a lot this year kind of getting past that and it's been such a big help.

Shared Emotional Connection. Most students also felt a very pronounced sense of pride in their groups. This peaked at different times depending on the type of group the student participated in. Some of the most common themes that emerged were working towards or the attainment of goals, performing in front of an audience, and providing acts of service. Giving service to others was most common amongst participatory groups, such as the Student Council fundraisers and the Book Club "haunted hallways" and Festival of Trees, but was also mentioned by performance groups. One of the orchestras surveyed performs for two nursing homes within walking distance of their school. Performance groups were the most likely to say that they felt the most pride in their group when they were performing, or immediately following a performance.

Probably just after a choir concert. After we do a performance and everyone is just clapping, I just, it's so awesome, that's when I feel [pride] the most.

We may not be, you know, the Cambridge singers, or the king singers, but we work hard, and we do it together, and there's nothing like it, when you walk off the stage after a performance and you just, think yes, we did it, we finished it, it's such a wonderful feeling when you give it your all.

We're all bound by some sort of belonging and we're all, and all choirs are so gifted, but I think that when we come together with those gifts to do something beautiful, there's nothing like it and I love it so much.

While participatory groups were most likely to talk about goals in conjunction with feelings of pride, students from all three types of extracurricular activity cited the achievement of group goals or working towards group goals as a major source of pride for them:

Like I have a lot of pride in that, but just with student council, um, just for when the things we've accomplished this year, with our Goldrush achieved almost fifty

thousand dollars, so stuff like that, that's not normal, and we went down to Mexico to build schools, so that kind of stuff, that boosts your confidence and your pride a bit. So yes, I definitely have pride in student council. -Participatory

In past years we've done pretty good, but this year we've worked really really hard and it's turned out really well, like we've gotten really high scores, like even higher than the top chamber, which is like hahaha suck it. I'm pretty proud of what we've done this year. - Performance

I do [feel pride]. And it's not like in a bad um, cocky way, but I kind of treat the [marching] band like it's my baby, just because we work so hard, and so I do have pride in it, like everything we are and everything we have been. I think that it's a pretty big thing if you think about it. You have to get like 220 something teenagers and stuff to be able to do what we do. Like, not a lot of people would do that, and so, but I do take pride in it in the kindest way possible. Because we work so hard for what we have, and I think that's something to be proud of. -Competitive

However, feelings of pride were not important to every group. Participatory groups were less likely to report intense feelings of pride when asked about their participation in their group:

With book club there isn't a lot of pride in book club, because it's like yes I am happy to be in book club, but it's not like, I mean we're reading books and it's so much fun and I love it, don't get me wrong, but like in FFA and stuff we have this big, it's national, so it's like this is our motto and this is what we do, and this is what we stand for and it's like YES! But, there's so comparatively not as much pride, but still I am proud to be a book geek.

While most groups showed high agreement with one another on the different themes that contributed to their sense of community, one very interesting theme that emerged was the marked differences between groups of the same category, such as two different level dance classes at the same school, or the symphonic band and the marching band at the same school. The students who were interviewed from these groups not only had very different responses, particularly to whether or not they felt safe talking to their coach/teacher/advisor and whether that adult listened to what students had to say, but also different ways of interpreting their

identity with the group. This was particularly prevalent between the student interviewed from the wind symphony band (highest level audition group) who did not participate in the marching band. Students at his school have the opportunity to participate in both marching band and performance band, which most of them do, resulting in only eight students (six in symphonic band; two in wind symphony) who took the survey and did not participate in marching band, compared to the 114 students who took the survey and participated in both. At several points during his interview, the participant who was not involved in marching band referenced marching band, although we were talking about his own feelings and experiences towards band:

Marching band [holds activities] quite a bit, but the band as a whole, no not really.

I do [feel as sense of pride]. I do. Since the band is such a good program it has the reputation.

Values? I mean, I would say that values are like, since we have that reputation, M's always saying, like don't try to ruin the reputation, so just try to be a good person and show everyone that marching band isn't stuck up, that we're good people.

Near the end of his interview, this participant began referencing himself as part of the marching band, saying that "*we're* good people" even though he himself is not a participant and never had participated before. And his sense of pride comes from the reputation that the marching band has, not that the program as a whole has, and not from any feelings of community, common ground, or goal accomplishment, like nearly every other participant in this study.

While every other participant in this study talked about how they felt as if they could go to their coach/teacher/advisor if they had problems in their personal life (not that they necessarily *would*, but that they felt *safe* doing so), he was the only student who said:

To be honest no, not really. Not that type of person, I just don't know him enough to trust him.

Similarly, while every other participant in this study mentioned the social support they received from participation in their group, specifically that they felt that they could rely on other members of the group to help them if they needed it, this participant reported:

I've never known a lot of students in the band before I started band, and since band is primarily how I got to know them I don't really know them still, so I'd say I trust them, but I wouldn't talk to them about my problems.

It is also interesting to note, in the case of the two different types of bands, that the ensemble this student was a part of scored lower on every scale and subscale than every other group surveyed.

This interview isn't the only one where pronounced differences existed between different level groups at the same school. One of the girls who participated in Dance 3, a non-audition dance class at a school where two audition groups - one competitive and one performance - were also offered noted that:

Sometimes it's kind of frustrating because the classes I feel like are treated differently. Like dance co is definitely more favored of the coach, and everybody wants to be in dance co, but they also practice more often which makes them better, and so I feel like sometimes it's hard just barely like auditions, we just figured out who made it into dance co, and sometimes it's hard to talk about that and I think that can sometimes hurt friendships a little bit. —dance

Discussion

The present two-phase study was designed to assess the differences between different types of extracurricular activities and why those differences occurred. I hypothesized that students involved in competitive and performance activities would exhibit higher sense of community than those involved in participatory activities, and that commitment to and enjoyment of extracurricular activities would be closely linked to sense of community. The second of these hypotheses was supported, as evidenced by the strong correlations among participants' sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment. Our primary hypothesis, however, was not supported. Instead of participatory groups, it was performance groups, on average, that scored the lowest on sense of community, enjoyment, and commitment. Although this finding was unexpected, I see two plausible explanations for this difference. First, many fine arts classes at the high school level are compulsory. Many students in these classes take them because they provide required credits to graduate, or due to parental influence. In this manner, students wouldn't have a large commitment to the group, and would possibly report lower enjoyment. Indeed, our data reflects this, as the sample included entry-level performance groups. Performance groups were the only group to have minimums of zero for both the commitment and enjoyment scales. Participatory groups are, by their nature, optional, as are for the most part, competitive groups. The high level of commitment that is required to participate in competitive groups would increase the commitment scores, and because there is no requirement to participate in participatory groups, commitment comes from the students, not an outside force. They sacrifice time to participate because they want to, and thus it makes sense that enjoyment scales are high for participatory groups. Supporting this, as a general rule those performance groups, which are audition/selective about participants show higher scores on all scales, probably

because students rarely audition or try out without a desire to participate in the extracurricular activities. One of the interviews from Study 2 supports this. The informant was a member of the Women's Choir, one of the non-audition, lower level ensembles:

There's some girls that, you can tell that they don't care. They don't care what we're doing, how we improve ourselves. But there's girls who want us to get better, and they know that, and so we kind of try to work our hardest to meet up to the goals of that day.

Students who “just show up” without commitment to the goals of the larger group can be likened to what sense of community researchers in virtual communities term “lurkers”: people who observe online activities without participation. Lurkers experience fewer benefits of membership, including a lowered psychological sense of community (Blanchard, 2004; Nonneke, Andrews, & Preece, 2006). They are more likely to have less positive feelings about their peers and less likely to consider themselves full members of the community (Nonneke, Andrews, & Preece, 2006). Participants in extracurricular activities who are not committed to the group, as this study shows, exhibit a similar lack of the benefits associated with psychological sense of community.

This in many ways reflects the cheaters and free riders discussed in Chapter II. Because individuals often have to sacrifice in small ways in order to ensure the success of the group, the temptation to cheat and gain a higher reward is always present. Lurkers and students who only show up without actively participating could be considered a form of free-rider. The mechanisms that cause humans to self-select into groups conflict with the temptation to free-ride. This in turn creates an inherent tension within groups between the needs of the individual and the needs of the group. Psychological sense of community may act as a buffer to reduce this tension by promoting greater group cohesion and helping to more closely align the needs and goals of the groups with the needs of the individual.

A second unique aspect of our findings was that marching band and drill team scored higher than other competitive subgroups on all scales, although not significantly so. Still, this trend is interesting. The higher scores among marching band and drill team participants as compared to other competitive groups, specifically sports, may arise from structural differences in interactions between students. Many sports teams have a limited number of “starting” positions for members on the team. Therefore, students who are not the “best” often times don’t get to play. Jockeying for these positions may contribute to competition between students on the same team. Importantly, this intragroup competition may interfere with group cohesion (Leventhal, 1996; Luschen, 1970; Rees & Segal, 1984), and thus has the potential to reduce sense of community. Anecdotally, a marching band instructor who had students participating in our study noted that the success of his group depended upon every single individual being engaged, on the field, and working towards the goal together. Unlike most team sports, every person in marching band “starts” and therefore plays an equal part in the success of the whole. There is no competition for positions because everyone gets to participate in every competitive show. This is important, as the necessity of teamwork in order to achieve group goals has been shown as one way to facilitate higher sense of community among students (Sparks et al., 2015). In the context of competitive groups, the nature of competition as the primary goal and focus of the group can have an interesting effect: groups experience greater cohesion when faced with an external threat (Sahlins, 1961; Simmel, 1904, 1955; Coser 1956), but groups can also be weakened by an external threat if they “lose” and blame each other. To combat this, Peres and Hopp (1990) call for a balance between cooperation and competition.

McMillan and Chavis (1986, p. 16) provided this example of how an extracurricular activity could facilitate a sense of community among its members:

Someone puts an announcement on the dormitory bulletin board about the formation of an intramural dormitory basketball team. People attend the organizational meeting as strangers out of their individual needs (... fulfillment of needs). The team is bound by place of residence (membership...) and spends time together in practice ([shared emotional connection]). They play a game and win ([shared emotional connection]).

While playing, members exert energy on behalf of the team ([membership]). As the team continues to win, team members become recognized and congratulated (gaining honor and status for being members). Someone suggests that they all buy matching shirts and shoes ([membership]) and they do so (influence).

The last sentence of this passage focuses on matching uniforms and clothing items that will help to identify wearers as members of the group. Not only does this relate back to evolutionary theory surrounding manmade markers as a means of kin selection (van der Dennen, 1985), but it has also been suggested that “Loyalty is elicited by and directed towards abstract social symbols (for example, flags, anthems, constitutions, etc.), and not only towards other group members” (Peres and Hopp, 1990 p. 128). Indeed, one of the participants in Study 2 also talked about this, saying:

Like, I wish I had more choir apparel that I could just wear around. It's the best and I just love being a part of it and saying that I'm a part of it.

This isn't an uncommon occurrence. Oftentimes in groups - be it volunteer organizations, school groups, university departments, research labs, or sports fans - one of the first things the group does is purchase matching t-shirts. It not only serves to identify members of the group to other members (which is usually unnecessary in small groups) but also helps to identify members of the in-group to members of the out-group.

Sense of community is strongest when students are committed to and enjoy their activity. Because sense of community contributes to better mental health (Pretty, Andrewes, & Collett 1994; Chipuer et al., 2002; Vieno et al., 2005; Henry & Slater, 2007), and because extracurricular activities do facilitate sense of community amongst their members, it is beneficial for high school students to choose an activity and get involved. However, as evidenced by the unexpected results in the performance groups, *requiring* participation in extracurricular activities does not necessarily provide students with beneficial outcomes such as enjoyment and commitment. Indeed, an increased perception of pressure to participate and/or to do well in extracurricular activities, specifically in sport, is associated with decreased enjoyment and decreased commitment to continue participation on the part of young people (Dunn, Dorsch, King, & Rothlesberger, in press). In light of the present findings, it also possible that this could lead to decreased sense of community among those who engage in the activity. When looking at how to increase sense of community in schools, Finn 1989 states “some form of institutional encouragement may be important to maintaining [extracurricular] participation” (Finn, 1989, p. 129). However, caution should be taken with this. Students' ability to choose their activities and level of participation has an impact on every subscale in psychological sense of community (Newmann, 1981; Obst & White, 2007).

This highlights an important facet of motivational theory. Specifically, the decision to engage in, and stay involved in, an activity should be made autonomously in order for students to achieve intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation. Deci and colleagues' (e.g. Deci, 1971; Deci 1975; Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989; Gagne & Deci 2005) self determination theory stresses the importance of autonomous decision-making as opposed to more controlled forms of motivation that involve acting as a result of pressure, or “a sense of *having to* engage in the actions” (Gagne

& Deci, 2005 p. 334). Autonomy supported decision-making leads to higher performance, citizenship, psychological well being, commitment, satisfaction, and trust (Gagne & Deci, 2005). In terms of psychological sense of community theory (McMillan & Chavis, 1986), both citizenship and trust have strong parallels to membership. Students that are allowed autonomous decision-making in their activities would thus exhibit higher levels of sense of community. Getting students involved in extracurricular activities without requiring them to do so could prove a challenge for district and school officials in the future, however: “Autonomy support is the most important social-contextual factor for predicting *identification* and *integration*, and thus autonomous behavior” (Gagne & Deci, 2005 p. 338; italics mine).

Blanchard and Markus (2002) suggest that psychological sense of community maintenance is more important than psychological sense of community development. Much work has been done to date documenting facilitator behaviors and organizational factors that also influence sense of community, though the relationship of autonomy to sense of community has not been studied extensively. Creating safe spaces with ground rules, as well as creating supportive environments for students both contribute to higher sense of community (Holley & Steiner, 2005; McKinney et al., 2006; Sparks et al., 2015). Students commented on the role that safe spaces played in how comfortable they felt participating in group activities:

We have this saying where we're like, "Leave your ego at the door" because we're all there and we are all trying to improve...and honestly that's really helped because it's built like a safe place. Like I feel like at the beginning of the year I was kindof scared to dance in front of these girls because...I was afraid that they would judge me. But like, since we made that saying it's become like a safe place and I can look like an idiot and I know that they're not going to make fun of me.

Creating roles where students can participate in and influence the group more fully also adds to sense of community perceptions (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Cicognami et al., 2008), as

does helping students form bonds of connection with each other (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; McKinney et al, 2006; Wighting, 2006). Members of a group that feel that they are valued, needed, and accepted have a higher sense of belonging (Hagerty et al., 1992). Additionally, if members feel like they have a unique contribution to the group, they are less likely to free ride, or in other terms, will be more engaged in group activities (Harkins & Petty, 1982). Facilitators can help encourage these feelings by emphasizing the diversity of talents in their group, or building diverse groups to begin with.

For facilitators, drawing upon students' unique assets and getting to know them personally helps strengthen sense of community by supporting students' sense of belonging in the group (McKinney et al., 2006). This was exemplified in Study 2, when facilitators listened to student concerns and took their suggestions into consideration. Once these other aspects are established, it is easier for teachers, coaches, and staff to empower their students, which creates a positive feedback loop, and subsequent perceptions of enhanced sense of community (Witt & Wheelless, 2001; McKinney et al., 2006; Creasy, Jarvis & Gadke, 2009; Sparks et al., 2015).

Similarly, facilitators should be aware of the context of the group to ensure that student goals and facilitator goal are the same. It can cause a lot of miscommunication (and frustration) when facilitators expect something out of members of the group that is different from what the participants want (Lyle, 2002; Côté & Gilbert, 2009). An example of this would be a sports coach who focuses on winning when his team focuses on participating or the fun of the game (Lyle, 2002) , or when a musical instructor assumes that most of their students will go on to be professional musicians, when most have plans to quit after high school or college.

In a virtual setting, psychological sense of community can be maintained through exchanging support, including information exchange; creating identities and making

identifications, identities created through posting things; production of trust, discussions of meetings in the real world, using their real names, etc. (Blanchard & Markus, 2002), as is the active participation of members in online activities (Tonteri, Kosonen, Ellonen, & Tarkiainen, 2011). Similarly, Newmann (1981), suggested guidelines for reducing alienation in the context of schools as follows: voluntary participation, clear and consistent education goals, small school size, student participation in policy decisions and management, extended cooperative relationships with school staff, and work that is meaningful to the student. In both cases the production of trust between members and supportive environments is critically important, just as Study 2 suggests, since many participants specifically mentioned trust when speaking about the support they felt through their peers and their coaches/faculty/advisers. All of the aspects highlighted by Newmann can be transferred to smaller groups as well, making this a useful outline for the facilitation of community in any setting. As outlined in this model, smaller groups have been shown to experience higher psychological sense of community (Lounsbury & Deneui, 1996; Brodsky & Marx, 2001). While it can be difficult to manage the size of a given community, this can be mitigated through the institution of subgroups. Naturally, communities have multiple, nested sub-communities (such as sections in band, orchestra, and choir, different classes in student council, or offense and defense on a football team). Sub-communities have a symbiotic relationship with the macro community. The macro community benefits from high psychological sense of community in the subs (Brodsky & Marx, 2001). Students who are actively involved in sub-communities such as sororities, fraternities, extracurricular activities, and church groups, experience higher psychological sense of community than their peers (Lounsbury & deneui, 1996; Yoo, Suh, & Lee, 2002).

The membership dimension of psychological sense of community is positively influenced by having clear purpose or goals (Hughey, Speer, & Peterson, 1999; Yoo, Suh, & Lee, 2002). Again, this is supported by our own findings in Study 2. In an interview with Hamm and Faircloth (2005), one informant said that “working for that common goal” helped her to feel more connected to her peers (Hamm & Faircloth, 2005 p. 72). Similarly, one of our informants stated,

There were some times where I feel like our group could be better, but at times I feel like, I just feel happy around them because we're all here to dance and we all want a common goal, and we're just reaching towards that. Like we all want to be good.

Working towards a goal also helps to promote personal investment, which is an important factor for sense of community (Reich, 2010). However, unattainable goals may lead to frustration and the withdrawal from the context of that goal (Ford & Nichols, 1987). As with the perception of social support, this is the *perception* of goal attainability, not how attainable the goal actually is. With goal setting it is also important to keep in mind collective efficacy, the “trust in the effectiveness of organized community action” (Perkins & Long, 2002 p. 295). Perceived efficacy of collective action helps to maintain participation (Florin & Wandersman, 1984; Perkins et al., 1990; 1996).

Accomplishing challenging goals also serves the purpose of bringing participants closer together, and thus increasing their *shared emotional connection*:

[Marching band] teaches you [that] you can do hard things, like Band Camp was like the worse week of my life. It's like 105 degrees outside and we go to delta, so we're in the middle of the desert, and we're on the field from 7 in the morning until 9 at night, with two forty five minute breaks, like that's kind of insane when you think about it. And at the beginning of the week, like I'm saying goodbye to all my family, like I'm going to die here, but then at the end of the week, wow, like I can do that. I did it. So it teaches you that you can do things that you didn't ever think you can do. And same with like, even during the summer and there's a

part in the season where we just have rehearsals for straight like two and a half weeks with no competitions or performances, and that's the worst part. Because you're like what am I doing this for, like why am I doing this, because you don't see, you don't know what's coming. But you get to the end of the season and you can say, Okay, I know why I'm doing that for.

This quote illustrates how one of the students in marching band viewed the accomplishment of two different challenges -overcoming band camp and getting to the end of the season with a show she was proud of - helped her to feel proud to be a part of the group. Overcoming trials is a common way to develop a shared emotional connection with other members of a group.

Elder and Clipp (1988) note the closeness of military veterans due to what they've been through together (see also Hobfoll & London, 1986; Solomon, Waysman, & Mikuliner, 1990). In fact, the development of shared emotion can be enough to cause group formation (Moreland, 1987). And in a study conducted in housing complexes for individuals with Serious Mental Illness (SMI), researchers found that, "It is likely that the *shared experience* of mental illness increases individuals' perceptions of belonging to the neighborhood and ability to *contribute meaningfully* to its social fabric" (Townley & Kloos, 2011 p. 443, italics mine). This is one of the areas where commitment to the group is important: groups that maintain more committed members last longer than groups that do not because they are better able to attain collective goals (Sosis, 2004).

Overcoming hardship, either through attaining hard to meet goals or through difficult rites of passage, as a means of facilitating psychological sense of community has also been noted by the larger anthropological community. This is most notably seen in rites of passage, as described by Arnold Van Gennep (1960) and expanded by Victor Turner (1964). The camaraderie, which is the bond between a group of individuals, develops as part of the group's participation in a rite of passage. The camaraderie between people of the same generation or age

group helps to not only solidify their roles in the society, but also strengthens their in-group ties in a functionalist perspective. These social bonds help the group stay together in times of conflict. The inter-reliance further helps to strengthen in-group ties (Turner, 1964). “The collective experience of individuals undergoing [rites of passage] tended to produce a profound sense of commonality, or ‘communitas’” (Perry, 2003 p. 82).

The culture within the county where this study took place could also play a role in the structure and interaction of high school extracurricular activities. Over 80% of the population within these high schools belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS or Mormon). The LDS faith is a conservative Christian denomination with a very strict set of standards based rules. Members are expected to abstain from alcohol and coffee, and wear modest clothing that covers their shoulders and knees. Youth are usually not allowed to go on dates until the age of 16, and exclusive dating is frowned upon until college.

LDS members are organized into congregations called wards, which are based upon geographic location. Young men and women, at the age of 12, are divided into young men's and young women's meetings. These groups meet during the week in the evenings as well for additional Sunday school lessons and service activities. Because most LDS youth actively participate in their church groups, and these groups are geographically based, youth LDS church groups function as very tight-knit geographic communities. The risk this poses, however, is a decreased sense of community among youth who are *not* members of the LDS Church; similar to what happened with the band member who was one of only eight students who were in band, but *not* in marching band. These members experienced ostracism and decreased sense of community.

However, extracurricular activities may act as a buffer between the social segregation experienced between LDS and Non-LDS students because they are relational communities that

exist outside of religious interests. Students in these studies commented that the members of their groups respected religious differences:

I'm not saying we're on the T with everything, because there are definitely people with different religions and different culture and values, but we also respect each other and those values

Though we don't always have the same views, and even though that books sounds really good but it might have too much swearing for someone else, it's like okay okay, we respect that so pick something else.

Despite high acceptance of other religious views, these groups still prioritized largely LDS values and codes of conduct such as modesty and language use. As one participant said about the values that her group held,

We are respectful and we are very modest with what we wear and we don't support like swearing or anything like that, and we are honest, and we just try our best.

Many LDS families also emphasize high community involvement. Parents and social pressures to participate in extracurricular activities may have a detrimental influence on participant motivation, enjoyment, and commitment; although more research would be required to fully understand the relationship between these variables.

The role of LDS and Utah culture could potentially limit the applicability of these results to other high school settings. The study was limited by two high schools located within the same regional area that pull students from very similar geographic, cultural, and demographic backgrounds. The population the participants represent consists of mostly middle and upper-middle class families. Thus socioeconomic status may also be a factor that could impact the ways in which participants view and engage with extracurricular activities. Future work could replicate this study with high schools from another part of the state, or from other schools in the US.

CHAPTER V

CASE STUDY

The model outlined in the next chapter (see page 70) , with sense of community being facilitated through actions such as shared symbols and trust building between facilitators and participants, applies in the context of any community, not just that of high school extracurriculars. Indeed, because participants with higher sense of community also express higher commitment to their group, organizations that work to purposefully facilitate sense of community among their members have the potential to be more effective at meeting their goals. This chapter presents a case study of one such organization that utilizes multiple aspects of each domain of sense of community theory to facilitate strong bonds amongst their members.

Community organizations that utilize this purposeful facilitation of psychological sense of community are largely successful, especially in populations where the very formation of community furthers organizational goals. In refugee populations this is particularly important, since refugees' social networks are severed through the process of migration. Combined with the large volume of added stress, this can have huge negative impacts on migrant health (Krupinski, 1984; Sonn, 2002). In this case “activity groups” such as church organizations and other similar networks provide individuals with needed positive social interactions (Sonn, 2002). One particularly good example of this is Owl & Panther – Expressive Arts for Refugee Families, a 501(3)(c) non-profit organization in Tucson, Arizona dedicated to helping refugees who have been victims of torture and their families through community art programming. Under the partial guidance of the Hopi Foundation, Owl & Panther was founded by the late Amy Shubitz in 1995. Now the organization is run by Marge Pellegrino and Abby Hungwe, and supports a group of

approximately 23 regular attendees, although weekly activities often have more than 30 participants.

Owl & Panther's short-term goals for their participants include (a) participants' use of multiple literacies and modes of self expression, (b) collaboration in order to interact across generations, cultures, and languages, with nature, and with diverse parts of the community, and (c) critical reflection and thinking on art, experiences, language, cultural differences and nature. Their middle term goals include the development of confidence, empathy, and self-correction as well as an increased knowledge of the Tucson community. Of particular relevance to the present thesis, however, is the organization's long-term focus on the development of a sense of belonging and community for children and parents, sustained community involvement, and resilience. Other long-term goals of Owl & Panther are: (a) a sense of stability for participants and their families, (b) a celebration of culture, and (c) educating the larger Tucson community about refugees. Because the development of community is a clearly identified goal of the organization, Owl & Panther staff and volunteers intentionally incorporate multiple aspects of psychological sense of community, both actively and by design of the program. This in turn helps to develop both healing and resiliency more effectively for their participants.

Owl & Panther participants meet every Tuesday night. While the nature of activities has changed over the years, moving from an emphasis on expressive writing to an emphasis on the visual arts, meetings generally follow a three-step format. Participants begin by doing a Write Start when they arrive. This is a private writing exercise that is supposed to prepare and reflect upon the activity for the day. Participants who cannot write or do not want to write may work one-on-one with a volunteer who will act as a scribe. After everyone has arrived and completed the Write Start activity, the main activity occurs. This can be anything from an evaluation of an

art exhibit to writing song lyrics with a guest artist. At the end of the activity there is always a sharing time, where participants are afforded an opportunity to share their work with the rest of the group, which serves as validation of their work. Finally, participants and volunteers work together to clean up the space, share announcements, sing a closing song, and have a snack (usually along the lines of string cheese and pretzels). When discussing sense of belonging, reports emphasize the “myriad of small but mindful ways in which program organizers and volunteers seek to create an atmosphere of open inclusion through collaborative, choice- and empowerment-oriented communication strategies” (Taha, Smith, Mills, & Hadrovic et al., 2015). In reviewing the structure and activities of Owl & Panther, however, there are many more components of psychological sense of community facilitation than are explicitly mentioned.

Membership. Similarly to the high school participants in Study 2, participants in Owl & Panther liken their fellow members to family. Before her death, Shubitz served as a godmother to many children born after their families came to the United States, and many children who were old enough to remember Shubitz have named their daughters after her. Younger participants call older participants in the group family terms such as “auntie” and several alumni of the program mentioned feeling like Pellegrino and Hungwe were like second mothers to them, and the other participants were like siblings. While some organizations include kinship terms in the discourse (e.g. “we’re a family, guys”), it would appear that feelings of kinship between participants in Owl & Panther emerged organically, and independent of intentional facilitation.

Membership also includes things such as common symbols and emotional safety (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The Cherokee creation myth of the owl and the panther pervades as a common theme and symbol in much of the Owl & Panther programming, as well as being the central symbol for their group logo. As far as emotional safety goes, that is the most important

and strongly emphasized aspect of Owl & Panther programs. Creating intentional safe spaces for participants to share their work and talk about their emotions is not only a part of volunteer training, but also an important aspect of the healing process.

Influence. Owl & Panther is founded on the principle of individual decision-making. In this way, participants have a large amount of say in the program. They are allowed to decide when to participate and to what extent, and volunteers are instructed to help facilitate art projects, but never direct. In this manner, the Owl & Panther slogan of “process over product” helps to facilitate feelings of influence, because participants are encouraged to follow their own direction when creating their projects, rather than attempting to obtain a specific product. Where possible, Owl & Panther volunteers include participants in organizational efforts, such as having participants lead the closing song and having everyone help clean up.

Additionally, the group logo for Owl & Panther (see Figure 2), was based off drawings created by program participants. In fact, an earlier draft of the professional rendering depicted the panther standing up. Participants vetoed this version because they felt that having the panther standing was “too aggressive” (Taha et al., 2015). Owl & Panther participants also have opportunities to influence the larger Tucson community through their work to educate people about refugees. This occurs through public poetry readings and art exhibits at the Tucson Museum of Art. Participants have also engaged in service projects for recipients such as earthquake survivors in India and El Salvador among other victims.



Figure 2. Owl & Panther logo as designed by participants.

It is an end goal of Owl & Panther to have the organization run entirely by participants and program alumni. This goal is beginning to see completion with the installment of Hungwe, an Owl & Panther alum, as one of the two paid staff members. They also have plans for a youth council, which would give older youth in the group more of a voice.

Fulfillment of Needs. Owl & Panther gives participants a way to connect with people who are going through similar trials – learning the English language, dealing with the after effects of torture, navigating the political landscape and their status as refugees, trying to fit into the larger community – and they use the other participants as a means of social support. Facilitators, both volunteers and staff members are careful to get to know participants personally, adding to their sense of social support. Volunteers noted that it is helpful, rather than trying to form deep, meaningful connections with every member of Owl & Panther, to work closely with one or two participants in particular.

Often the program's younger participants (ages 6-16) are not able to have their parents drive them to weekly meetings. In these cases, volunteers provide rides to and from meetings, picking students up from school or from their houses. This provides an informal space for volunteers to build rapport with the students they chauffeur. Volunteers remark that sometimes,

the students just need somebody to talk to about their lives, and sometimes they would rather listen to music or play games. Regardless, these informal interactions help develop trust between volunteers and participants, and also reinforce social support networks for the children.

Shared Emotional Connection. Participants' shared history of struggles as refugees and torture survivors certainly bonds them together and gives them a shared emotional connection. Sharing their work with each other at the end of activities also helps to reinforce this sub-category of psychological sense of community. One alumnus specifically referenced a shared history with other group members, simply because they spent so much time together while they were growing up (Taha et al., 2015). Indeed, the reliable occurrence of weekly meetings over the years that participants are usually involved in activities creates a long history between members. Both their service and their constant work towards projects helps participants to work towards and accomplish goals together, further adding to a sense of accomplishment and successes together.

The design of Owl & Panther lends itself perfectly to the purposeful facilitation of psychological sense of community. In review, the process of creating art not only facilitates influence by allowing participants a voice, but also provides goals for completion so that participants can have their work displayed in the Tucson Museum of Art. Service projects and art projects (as well as goal-oriented field trips such as those to farms to plant and harvest crops) help participants to succeed together, contributing to their shared emotional connection. Informal spaces such as car rides and free time before activities begin allows for trust-building interactions that feed back to strengthen participants fulfillment of needs. Highlighting group activities as a safe space for both artistic and emotional expression is key catalyst of this development. Coming together weekly as well as the emphasized group values of inclusion promote feelings of

membership, and this in turn encourages the emergence of feelings of family between group members.

The strength of Owl & Panther lies in its ability to unite program participants together in a shared community. Although volunteers and staff members may not consciously promote some of these aspects of community, they are undoubtedly present due to the program's design. While a purposeful facilitation of community is incredibly useful for groups that are just beginning, Owl & Panther provides an illustrative example for how aspects of community facilitation can, in fact, arise organically from normal group activities. Would the sense of family group members feel for each other have emerged as such a salient domain if staff and volunteers had stressed family terms from the beginning? While a lack of leadership roles for participants could be counted as a significant weakness, Owl & Panther makes up for this by assigning their participants small jobs. Their move towards a youth council will also help strengthen the *influence* domain. While there are physical and monetary barriers that restrict the feasibility of such a space, having a dedicated space where members of Owl & Panther can interact outside of normal group activities would also help to strengthen their community. For student groups this could be their teacher's classroom, or for college students their program's office space. Overall, however, it is difficult to find shortcomings in Owl & Panther's facilitation of sense of community amongst their participants. Their holistic model for incorporating all of the aspects of psychological sense of community makes Owl & Panther an ideal example of both the benefits of and the process for facilitating sense of community within a program.

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present research has implications for high school administrators, teachers, coaches, and students, and lends itself to a number of future research directions. The purposeful facilitation of psychological sense of community can be utilized to help improve group outcomes. At the high school level, higher psychological sense of community can help to act as a buffer between the school environment, the home environment of the students, and negative outcomes (Pretty, Andrewes, and Collett 1994; Chipuer et al., 2002; Vieno et al., 2005; Henry & Slater 2007). For anthropologists engaging in applied work, working to facilitate psychological sense of community among the populations they work with could also have a positive impact on program outcomes. There are positive correlates between psychological sense of community, neighboring, and participation in grassroots communities (Perkins & Long, 2002). Facilitators of grassroots communities may find that facilitating psychological sense of community within the grassroots programs will help achieve greater group solidarity and thus greater goal accomplishment within members of the program. Supporting this, Putnam points out that studies show “successful outcomes are more likely in civically engaged communities” (Putnam, 1995 p. 65). “What is needed are community organizations that intentionally foster supportive relationships to develop strong organizations that in turn yield concrete community change so individuals’ sense of their communities expands to reflect opportunity in truly adaptive niches” (Hughey, Speer, & Peterson, 1999 p. 108).

I propose a model for the facilitation of psychological sense of community (see Figure 3) in any group setting based upon research done by a review of the extant literature and including

the findings from Study 2. Membership can be achieved through the use of unifying symbols. These can be expressed in the form of logos or apparel, common sayings, or more abstract tokens that indicate membership to the group. When facilitators diversify the talents within their groups, or emphasize the unique talents of participants, each participant will feel that they have a specific role to play and will more likely be engaged, also increasing feelings of membership. Providing activities for participants to engage in *outside* of normally scheduled activities gives participants a space to engage in conversation with each other in topics that are not necessarily related to the group. Finally, promoting a feeling of family can also increase feelings of membership. As seen in chapter three, the use of kinship terms can also emerge organically.

In order for *influence* to be met, facilitators need to empower participants within the context of the group. Additionally the group needs to be participant driven. In many cases this can be achieved by allowing group members a say in what happens within the community. For student groups this could mean that the teacher allows students to pick their music, or in the case of a participatory group the students can set their goals for the semester. Similarly, constructing a group where participants have the opportunity to fulfill leadership roles could help the entire group to feel like they have stronger influence.

In developing a *shared emotional connection* amongst group members, facilitators should promote connection between group members. This can be done, at least in part, by ensuring that the group as a whole goes through trials together. While hazing, a death in the community, disaster, and other trials that would be considered negative can create very long, lasting emotional connection, a simpler way to achieve a shared trial is through the achievement of goals.

One of the fundamental aspects of *fulfillment of needs* is that of support. This support can come from other participants or it can come from the facilitator. While teachers cannot do much to ensure that their students support each other, they can make sure that they support their students. This includes trying to understand what is going on in their participants' lives and empathizing with those situations. Building trust between facilitators and participants is also key, both for relationships between facilitator and participant and for building safe spaces. Safe spaces in this context means the ability for participants to feel safe expressing views or actions that may be contrary to the larger group. Finally, participants need to be able to have a large degree of self-choice in how much they participate, how they participate, and even if they participate to begin with.

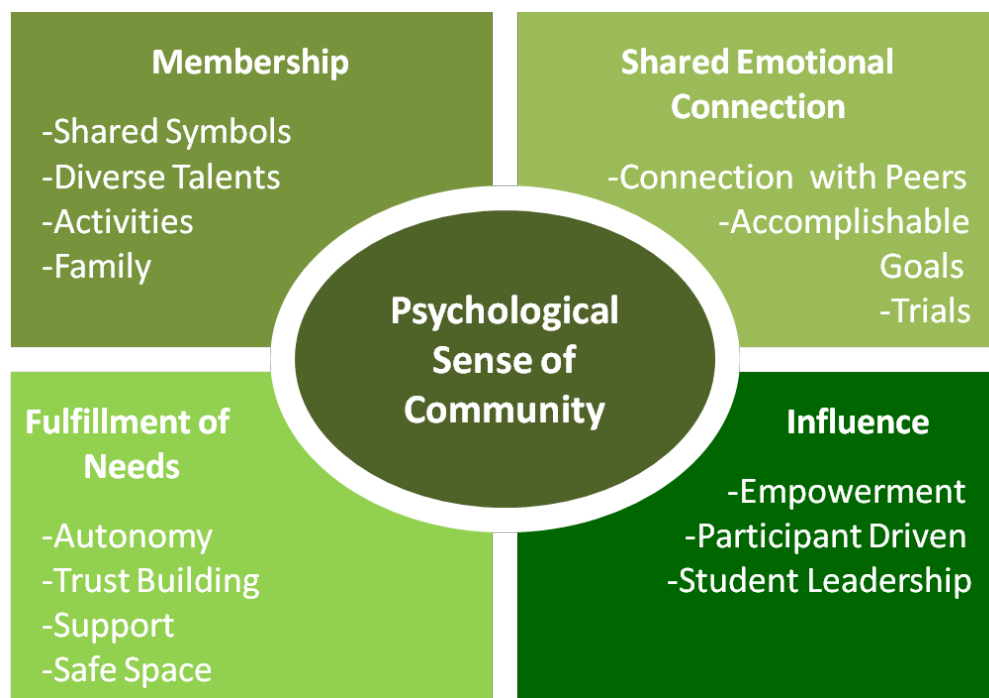


Figure 3. Model for the purposeful facilitation of sense of community, as based on the original McMillan and Chavis (1986) domains.

It is important to remember that, while separated for conceptual convenience, many of these terms are interrelated in the same way that the four domains are interrelated. For example, having outside activities and feelings of family (membership) help to facilitate a connection between peers (shared emotional connection). Providing support to participants (fulfillment of needs) may also serve to empower them (influence).

It is also important to remember the role that culture and social structure plays on the facilitation of sense of community. Aspects of culture such as social and racial segregation, economy, gender dynamics, ages of participants, and religion could have an impact on the ways that participants both interact with one another and how they conceptualize positive group interaction. For example, a society that segregates men and women would not benefit from a mixed genders community. Additionally, a society that values age and stressed respect of older individuals could potentially suffer if participant leaders were significantly younger than older participants. While the model works within any community, it is necessary to tailor the model to the needs and the structure of the group in question.

Another aspect that needs to be considered with applying this model to situations broader than high school extracurriculars or grassroots organizations is the roles that established boundaries play on the functionality of this model. Both of the organizations discussed in this thesis exist within a social system with pre-conceived ideals of group organization. For example, in both cases group facilitators are adults, as compared to participants who are students or other minors. Developing a community without these social norms could bring up questions of power between facilitators and participants. Extracurricular activities are also modeled on a set of guidelines. In the case of participatory groups, these groups must meet a certain number of times a semester, have a certain number of officers holding a set of pre-designated positions (e.g.

president, treasurer), and have a faculty advisor. In some cases these groups must also fulfill an obligatory service project. Similarly, sports teams are based upon a model that is used in most levels of competition within sport culture, including specific athlete positions and their roles. Sense of community has largely been studied within structured groups such as these, however, community structure, and therefore sense of community, may look different in an organization that does not follow a pre-set model.

Future research in sense of community should address the theories within sociology (collective action theory) and anthropology (social capital theory) to determine their overlap and how they apply to the larger sense of community models in psychological sense of community. This would increase the interdisciplinary aspects of this thesis and the model as a whole.

Additionally, future research in educational and extracurricular settings should examine the specific factors that contribute to the facilitation of sense of community, such as student leadership (influence subscale) or “bonding” activities held outside of regularly scheduled meeting times (membership subscale) through *quantitative means* rather than just qualitative. Researchers should also engage in more efforts to better understand what coach/facilitator/mentor behaviors help promote a sense of community among their students. If intrinsic motivation is an indication of higher student enjoyment (and thus a predictor of sense of community), faculty and coach verbal behavior could foster tangible outcomes for students. Indeed, Deci found that tangible extrinsic rewards undermined intrinsic motivation, but positive verbal cues enhanced it. Positive verbal feedback enhances intrinsic motivation, while negative verbal feedback undermines both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan 1985; Deci 1971; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Ryan 2008). Importantly, these types of behaviors have been found to have an impact in a classroom setting (Sparks et al., 2015). Further research is needed to

determine the link between these and other teacher behaviors, and students' sense of community. This would contribute to facilitator education, to help improve these programs in the future.

The research presented herein continued the trend of looking at sense of community separate from geographic location (Gusfield, 1975) by investigating extracurricular activities within a high school setting. Because the two high schools in the study are relatively large by cultural standards, students may not have maintained a strong sense of community at the broader school level (Royal & Rossi, 1996). By participating in smaller sub-groups, students are able to increase their sense of community, thus increasing the potential benefits of belonging to a community (Pretty, Andrewes, & Collett 1994; Chipuer et al., 2002; Vieno et al., 2005; Henry & Slater, 2007). Indeed, our findings support past research that shows extracurricular activities to enhance participants' sense of community (Cohen, 2012). While the present study was limited to only two high schools in a single school district, it builds upon past work conducted in high school settings (e.g. Royal & Rossi, 1996; Chipuer 2001; Cohen, 2012) by illustrating potential differences between different types of extracurricular activities. These differences may stem from facilitator behavior, group structure, group size, individual autonomy, or other factors found to impact sense of community in students (e.g. Royal & Rossi 1996; Holley & Steiner, 2005; McKinney et al., 2006; Wighting 2006; Cicognani et al., 2008; Sparks et al., 2015). Indeed, more research is needed to determine whether these differences are representative of a larger sample of high school students. Addressing this remaining gap would allow future scholars and practitioners to educate facilitators on behaviors and structures that are conducive to the building of sense of community in order to help support students across the nation.

The facilitation of psychological sense of community has been used, though largely unintentionally, in the past to help promote group outcomes in grassroots programs. Not only

would a more purposeful approach to facilitation help students in extracurricular activities, but an interdisciplinary approach utilizing knowledge from the anthropology and community psychology literatures could enhance future work with populations such as disaster survivors, refugees, grassroots programs, and youth communities programs, as well as with programs developed for use within larger institutions such as schools or the workplace. Due to the heavy emphasis on individual choice and participation, and the fact that greater awareness of a problem leads to more active participation (Peterson & Reid, 2003), an asset based mapping approach to research and development in an applied anthropological context is probably the most effective approach.

The studies presented in this thesis contribute to the field of community psychology in several key ways. First, they show the ways in which extracurricular activities at the high school level facilitate psychological sense of community among participants. Secondly, they show that there are significant differences in sense of community, commitment, and enjoyment between performance groups and other forms of extracurriculars (participant and competitive). Thirdly, they present one potential approach and the benefits of the purposeful facilitation of sense of community in student groups. Additionally, because the theoretical basis of psychological sense of community is the same for adolescents and adults, the model presented at the end of this thesis could be used in any community based organization, not just student groups.

With the current movement towards interdisciplinary applied work in all sciences, this thesis also presents one way of utilizing psychological theory within the context of applied anthropological work. Conversely, it also shows how anthropological evolutionary theory can be applied to explain certain aspects of community psychology. The application of psychological sense of community within applied anthropology not only gives us a tool for understanding how

communities – both geographic and relational – are created and maintained, but also for strengthening applied programs for community betterment.

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APENDICES

APPENDIX A

Student Interview Guide

- 1) What kinds of activities does your group participate in outside of normal meeting times?
 - Who plans these activities?
 - Do many students go?
- 2) What is student leadership like in this group?
 - What roles do students fill?
 - Do you feel like you can go to your coach/instructor/faculty advisor if you have a problem?
- 3) Do you feel like your coach/instructor/faculty advisor listens to what students have to say?
- 4) Could you describe a time that someone in this group has supported you when you needed help?
- 5) Do you feel a sense of pride in this group?
 - When do you feel the most pride in this group?
- 6) What do you feel most contributes to your sense of community with this group?
- 7) What, as you see it, are the values of this group?
 - What contributes to those values?

APPENDIX B

The Utah State University Sense of High School Community Study

**Enhancing Families and Communities through
High School Extracurriculars**



Student Survey

For office use only:

Project ID#: _____

Please answer the following questions about yourself and your family

Your age (in years):

Your sex:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Your grade:

- ☐ 9th
- ☐ 10th
- ☐ 11th
- ☐ 12th

Your parents' relationship status:

- ☐ Married
- ☐ Living together, not married
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Other

Please select your ethnicity.

- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ NOT Hispanic or Latino

Please select your race.

- ☐ American Indian / Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ White
- ☐ More than one race
- ☐ Unknown
- ☐ Other (please specify)

How many siblings do you have:

How long have you been involved in this group?

How many of your friends participate in this group?

How many school groups are you involved in?

What is your current GPA?

Please say how true each of these statements is for your community.

	Not at all	Somewhat	Mostly	Completely
1. I get important needs of mine met because I am part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Community members and I value the same things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. This community has been successful in getting the needs of its members met.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Being a member of this community makes me feel good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. When I have a problem, I can talk about it with members of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. People in this community have similar needs, priorities, and goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I can trust people in this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I can recognize most of the members of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Most community members know me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I put a lot of time and effort into being part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Being a member of this community is a part of my identity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Fitting into this community is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. This community can influence other communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I care about what other community members think of me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I have influence over what this community is like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. If there is a problem in this community members can get it solved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. This community has good leaders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. It is very important to me to be a part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. I expect to be a part of this community for a long time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Members of this community have shared important events together, such as holidays, celebrations, or disasters.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. I feel hopeful about the future of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Members of this community care about each	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

other.

Please answer some questions about why you enjoy your particular activity.

	Not at all	Sort of	Pretty Much	Very Much
1. Do you enjoy being a part of this group?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Are you happy participating in the activities of this group?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Do you have fun participating in the activities of this group?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I like participating in this group.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please answer some questions about your commitment to your particular activity.

	Not at all	Sort of	Pretty Much	Very Much
1. How dedicated are you to staying involved in the group this year?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Barring academic requirements or family obligations, how hard would it be for you to quit this year?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. How determined are you to keep participating in this group?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>




THANK YOU for your participation!

Please hand your survey to the administrator.


APPENDIX C

Psychological Sense of Community: A Handbook for Facilitation in High Schools



Psychological Sense of Community: A Handbook for Facilitation in High Schools

Erica Hawvermale
and
Travis Dorsch, PhD.



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Introduction

This handbook is the product of four years of work as an anthropology student at Utah State University. Its purpose is simple: to provide teachers the tools they need to facilitate a strong sense of community amongst their students. When the authors were in high school, they were dedicated to their extracurricular activities. For Ms. Hawvermale, playing trombone and performing in her school's marching band was her life. For Dr. Dorsch it was football. Here they made some of the strongest friendships of their lives; friendships that have carried them through their greatest triumphs and hardest trials.

However strongly we feel about the necessity for all high school students to be a part of a community, we realize that our experiences are limited by our activities, our experiences, and our perspectives. For this reason, We've provided brief explanations, theory, and (hopefully) humorous insights into each of the following methods for facilitating community. The rest of this book was written by teachers, by coaches, and by leaders of community organizations. Hopefully their experiences will provide insightful examples into how to facilitate community. When we failed to find examples from facilitators, we turned to their students, asking them to reflect upon how their communities were built. In this way, this handbook reflects a broad range of viewpoints and experiences from multiple types of groups.

Sense of Community

Psychological Sense of Community (PSOC) is defined as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" ¹. Sense of community is generally built upon the foundation of four main concepts: membership, influence, fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. Membership is "the feeling that one has invested part of oneself to become a member and therefore has the right to belong" ¹. It is characterized by feelings of belongingness to the group as well as things such as common symbols, participation, and emotional safety. Influence is "whether or not individuals believe they can affect the community" and the pressures the community puts on the individual ². Fulfillment of needs encompasses both the individual's needs being met by the community and the individual fulfilling the community's needs, as well as feelings of pride in the community. Finally, shared emotional connection is represented by a "shared history of struggles and successes"².

The term "community" can be used to reference a geographical area (e.g., one's neighborhood, city, or town) or in a relational sense (e.g., one's spiritual community, a volunteer group, a classroom) ^{3, 4}.

For adolescents, schools function as both geographic *and* relational communities, making them one of the most influential communities youth belong to. During childhood, the neighborhood can satisfy the need to belong to a group; however, as the amount of time spent in school (and its related activities) increases, the school becomes the center of life and social networks during adolescence ^{5, 6}.

So why is a psychological sense of community important?

The presence of sense of community is linked to enhanced perceptions of personal well-being ^{7, 8}. Sense of community has also been found to decrease feelings of loneliness in adolescents ⁹, which in turn helps reduce the risk of mental health problems because of increases in perceived support networks ⁶. It should be noted that these benefits are independent of actual support, but are strengthened by an individual's perception that they could obtain support if it was needed ^{10, 11, 12}. Mental health problems such as depression, suicidal thoughts or tendencies, anxiety, and

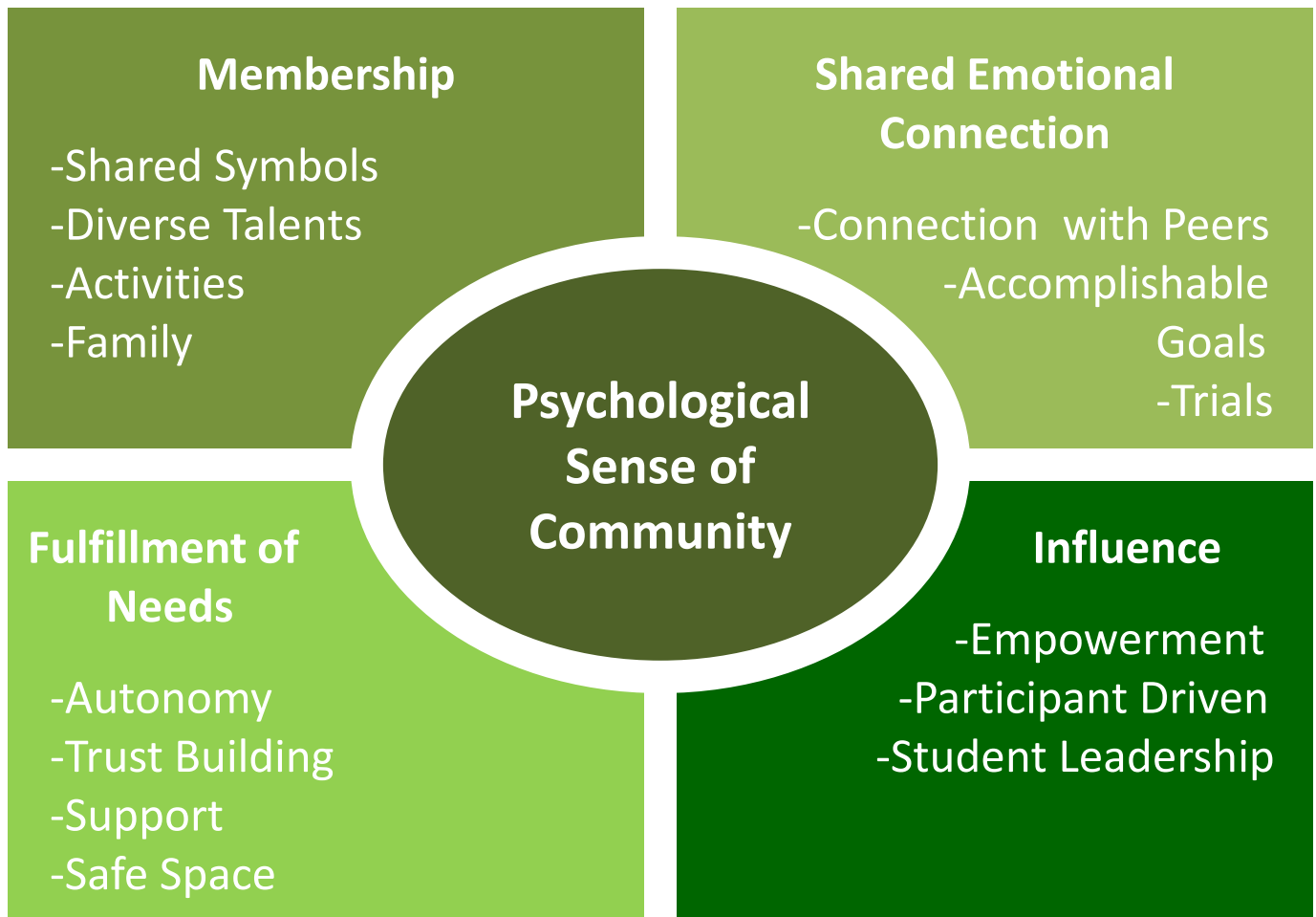
high stress - as in the case of student burnout - are found in adolescence due to the high stress environment that students occupy ². **Feeling a sense of community with other students has been shown to reduce these traits, especially during major life transitions, such as the transition from middle school to high school, and again from high school to college** ^{8,13}. Additionally, PSOC may act as a buffer against suicide, "if only because [social] ties help restrain people from killing themselves" ¹².

Supportive school environments are also linked with emphasizing individual effort and improvement, thus successful schools focus on building community among their students ¹⁴. There is a concern that the declining interest in school that occurs as students get older is linked to a lack of sense of community in school ¹⁵. **Thus, having strong sense of community becomes a factor for not only motivating students and improving grades** ^{16,17}, **but also for keeping them in school**. Students who form some sort of identification with their school are less likely to drop out. They might feel as if they are "part of the school environment" ¹⁸. This is not only the case in high school students, but in adult students as well ^{19,20}. Because sense of community helps to mediate stressful life events, and student burnout can be seen as a manifestation of high stress, studies have also sought to correlate student burnout and a lowered sense of community ².

Because a great deal of time is spent around friends and teachers at school, students rely upon these resources for adjustment and support. Being a part of a larger whole (i.e., a community) helps to facilitate feelings of self worth and esteem ^{21,22,23,24}. Therefore, the support adolescents feel at school may help make up for a lack of family support or bad social conditioning at home ^{25,26}. Positive support and feeling a sense of belonging to a group with positive values have been shown to reduce the risk for gang involvement, crime, and youth risk behaviors ^{8,12,27,28,29,30}. This finding also comes at a time when peers and trusted mentors such as teachers and coaches begin to have a greater impact on the actions of high school adolescents than the family ⁵. **Thus, a sense of community may have a buffering effect on students' perceptions of negative high school outcomes such as stress, depression, and student burnout.**

Aspects of the broader social setting may also impact how individuals in that setting experience a sense of community. As school size increases, the perceived sense of community decreases ²⁸. In response to this, adolescents often create sub-units in schools, building close-knit friendships through the formation of sub-communities; students who are involved in sub-groups such as this experience a higher sense of community than those who are not ³¹. Importantly, these sub-units are not destructive to the larger sense of community at the school level ²⁸. **Extracurricular activities such as performing groups have been found to facilitate a sense of community among members in this way, and are an important facet of a sense of belonging in school** ^{18,32,33,34,35}. They also could remain the sole point of attachment to the school if students don't perform well academically ¹⁸.

Sense of Community Model



The facets of sense of community as defined by McMillan and Chavis¹, with the methods for facilitation for each domain.

Membership

Membership is the feeling that someone has the right to belong to the group and participate. It is facilitated through active participation and common symbols.

Shared Symbols

One of the easiest ways to begin forming a sense of community among a group of people is to give them a common symbol, such as a logo. This helps all of the members of the group to identify with a common theme. Additionally, providing members with apparel such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, ball-caps, and other personalized goods that they can wear and use when they are among people who are *not* part of the group will help members identify themselves as members of the group. This also will help to instill a sense of identity and a sense of belonging to the group.

This also helps to identify members of the group to individuals who are not members. In the case of a very large group of students who may not all know one another, the use of apparel and common symbols enables members of the group to identify other members of the group.

This is not a particularly new or groundbreaking strategy, in fact, most groups do this naturally. One of the first things most college student clubs will do is buy matching t-shirts for all of the members. Sports teams have logos and team colors that fans can wear to identify themselves as a fan of a specific team, and it allows them to identify strangers as members of the in-group as well.

“I wish I had more choir apparel that I could just wear around. It's the best and I just love being a part of it and saying that I'm a part of it.”
— Student

“We have two sets of apparel. The first is for the general program. This has the logo for the theatre department. We offer many different items, t-shirts, long sleeved t-shirts, hoodies, crew neck sweatshirts and a couple of different sweat pant/yoga pant options. We also have t-shirts that are custom designed for each show. Both of these items are extremely important in building a brand and an image with the department and within the school.” — High School Theater Teacher

Shared Symbols

"I think that it is very interesting that what started out as just a method of keeping track or whether students worked problems correctly or not, ended up being a symbol of belonging. I'm referring to the small glass pebbles that I now use in calculus as a student reward system. The aptly named "Pebbles of Hope." About 5 years after I started using the "Pebbles of Hope" I had a student, Robbie Olsen, return from BYU and tell me that one of the meanings of the word "Calculus" is actually "Pebble." I wasn't sure if he was serious or not so I googled "Definition of Calculus" and one of the items listed was the item below. What's most interesting is, I started using the pebbles when I only had about 100 of them. I used them one day after school as a simple counter. If a student worked a problem correctly I gave them a pebble. If they missed a problem I took a pebble away. That way I could quickly look at their pile of pebbles and determine how well they were doing at solving problems.

Over a few years, the practice evolved significantly. I stopped taking pebbles away, because I didn't like giving negative feedback. I also purchased 1000's of pebbles and started giving them away for all types of good student behavior. Based on how I've observed students treating their pebbles, for some students the pebbles have truly become a symbol of belonging. Some student store their pebbles in elaborate containers to symbolize how important the pebbles have become. I've had several students tell me that they have kept a few pebbles for years and their regularly look at their pebbles as a reminder that they were once a part of calculus and that since they were able to overcome something difficult years ago, the pebbles help to remind them that they can overcome difficult challenges now as well. " —AP Calculus Teacher

LATIN

Calculus small pebble (as used on an abacus)	→	Calculus mid 17 th century
--	---	---

mid 17th century: from Latin, literally 'small pebble (as used on an abacus).'

"When I was in high school, I wanted to be part of the National Honor Society. I loved the key and flame logo and I wanted to be part of that group. I worked especially hard in certain subjects so that I would qualify to be part of it. At graduation, I noticed the plain robes compared to robes with the NHS sash and I was so proud to be wearing one, too."
-- Student

Diversify your talents

The Membership domain is partially built upon participants feeling that they deserve to belong and that they are uniquely needed. Revel in diversity. Celebrate it. Focus on what each individual uniquely offers to the group, and then let them do that. If everyone in the group knows they have a unique addition to the group, they will feel more like they belong. This also relates back to participation and commitment. Students who develop greater feelings of membership in the group are going to be more committed to the group than those who do not.

Members of a group who feel that they are valued, needed, and accepted have a higher sense of belonging ³⁶. Additionally, if members feel like they have a unique contribution to the group, they are less likely to free ride, or in other terms, will be more engaged in group activities ³⁷. Facilitators can help encourage these feelings by emphasizing the diversity of talents in their group, or building diverse groups to begin with.

On the facilitator side, drawing upon students' unique assets and getting to know them personally helps strengthen students' sense of community by supporting their feeling of belonging in the group ³⁸.

Mechanical v Organic Solidarity

Think about whether your group is characterized by organic or mechanical solidarity. In mechanical solidarity individuals are united by shared understanding and jobs. On the other hand, organic solidarity leads groups to form cohesion based upon the individual's interdependence upon the others in the group. Diverse groups lead to greater organic solidarity.

“The functions in [our] county are both diversified and specialized. Each person knows that the job they do is essential, and they also interact with, and rely on, other County personnel who are also essential in a symbiotic way. That regular collaboration, and the need to count on each other, helps everyone to feel like they are connected to something greater than themselves, and that they are a vital and valuable member of that larger team.” – County Clerk

Group Activities

Providing activities for the students to participate in that are separate from standard practices, rehearsals, and meetings is a fantastic way to encourage the students to develop a sense of community amongst each other. Parties, dinners, and other activities where the students can focus on getting to know one another in a context outside of their normal activities is a great way to form and reinforce friendships and bonds.

It's really easy to fall into a habit, especially with clubs, that every single meeting has to revolve around the core purpose of the club. The truth is, having something like a game day or a movie night allows the students to have their own conversations and bond in ways that extend beyond the scope of the club. Oftentimes the topic of conversation turns back to the topic of the group, but it does so naturally and of the students' accord.

It is important to let your students plan and coordinate the events. This gives them ownership of the event (reinforcing the Influence domain) while ensuring that it's an activity that they want to participate in. Additionally, doing activities as a group, such as service projects, are another great way to get the students doing things together that are both productive in helping the larger community (Influence domain again), provide a break from normal activities, and are fun.

"I've for several years told students that they are welcome to stop by my home on Halloween evening for a quick treat. Initially I had about 5 students who were brave enough to stop by. But over the years, more and more have come. Last year I had about 100 students stop by. One group even took a picture of the event and gave it to me as a gift at the end of the school year. This year I wasn't able to do the Halloween activity, instead I'm planning on doing something very similar as part of the Gold Rush Charity fund raising activities here at Lone Peak. I'm planning on scheduling several evening in the coming weeks where students can stop by home as a group and I'll treat them to a variety of very tasty desserts. In order to earn the privilege, students will have to pay an amount to the Gold Rush charity. I'm hoping that the idea will foster a sense of community for my students, both through the activity itself and through the fact that they will be helping others, in this case, the Make a Wish Foundation."

— AP Calculus Teacher

Group Activities

“[On my church mission], we would do activities together so that we could work better as a cohesive whole. One of the best things for this was district lunches, which we would have every Wednesday afternoon after our weekly meeting. This was a time for us to set work aside and focus on our own personal thoughts and feelings, something that you don't do often enough as a missionary.

On top of district lunches, we would often have P-day-eves as well. Sunday evenings we would get together in the largest apartment in the city and cook food together, play a couple of games and stay up into the night talking about girls and other things that teenage boys think about. When we would wake up Monday (our P-days) we would head straight to the computer zala (internet cafe) check our emails and then spend the rest of the day with each other. These two activities helped me to feel much closer to all of the missionaries that I served with, almost to the point where I considered them my companions even more so than the person I was actually forced to live with.” – Former Missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

“Our theatre officers and theatre board members started a charity outreach program a few years ago, and we have continued the tradition. For each of our productions, we select a charity or organization. The selection of the charity sometimes matches the theme of the show (mental health, cancer, etc.), and sometime there is a more personal connection. In the past we have had cast members with diabetes, or a cast member with a relative with Cystic Fibrosis. This year we had a faculty member pass away unexpectedly, so we have used this effort to raise funds for a scholarship in her honor. We make an announcement before the show and we have a table set up for donations at intermission and after the show. We have also done activities as a cast to support the activity. Last year we went Feed Our Starving Children to pack food for overseas.”

– High School Theater Teacher

“My professor and I have tried to implement lab activities so that all of the students can spend time with each other not working on research. It's nice to get to know everyone and spend some time with them outside of our regular work duties. Once we began implementing regular socials our group became closer and our output became stronger.”

– Student Researcher

Fulfillment of Needs

There are two components of fulfillment of needs: both the community filling the needs of the individual, and the individual fulfilling the needs of the community. Both are important, but this section will focus on the community filling the psycho-social needs of the individual.

Emphasis on Autonomy

Above all else, students need to choose to participate themselves. Sense of community is severely reduced in students when they are required to be in a particular group, either because they need certain credits to graduate or because their parents told them they had to. This is a big problem because students who don't want to be in the group do not fully engage or participate. When this happens they don't have any sort of personal investment in the group, which lowers feelings of Membership. In turn, this means that members of a group who do not fully engage do not reap the same benefits of a sense of community such as improved mental health and social support networks ^{39, 40}.

Because extracurricular activities facilitate sense of community amongst their members, it is essential that high school students choose an activity and get involved. However, requiring participation in extracurricular activities does not necessarily provide students with adaptive outcomes such as enjoyment and commitment. Instead, an increased perception of pressure to participate and/or to do well in extracurricular activities, specifically in sports, is associated with decreased enjoyment and decreased commitment to continue participation ⁴¹.

*"There's some girls that, you can tell, that they don't care. They don't care what we're doing, how we improve ourselves."
— Student*

"A key element to fostering self choice in activities is to recognize that not everyone participates in the same way. Members of the team may be ready and willing to participate, but some might only be comfortable with contributing in a way that does not require them to be the center of attention. This can be especially true in the early stages of group formation when members do not yet trust each other enough to be vulnerable in front of other group members.

In such cases, it can be very helpful to design activities that encourage interaction without singling anyone out, and that do not require a great deal of vulnerability when the group is new. Establishing an environment where all types of group members feel comfortable while the group is still forming can go a long way towards encouraging self choice in continued participation."
— County Clerk

Support

This is exactly what it sounds like: be there to support your students, both with activities that pertain to your group and with their lives outside of school. Be aware of what is going on in your students' lives and how that might affect them. Try to engage in personalized conversation with every student ⁴², particularly those you think might need a little extra help.

Review these seven ways that teachers can show support for their students:

1. Individualized conversation with your students
2. Teacher enthusiasm for the activities
3. Friendly general communication
4. Task-related support for what the students are doing during the activities
5. Promoting cooperation and teamwork between students
6. Awareness of things that are going on in the students' lives and what they might be struggling with in the group specifically
7. Caring behaviors

Some teachers have also experienced success pairing high achieving students with low achieving students ³⁸, or in the case of sports, band, and clubs, pair more senior students with newer students.

*"You know I've struggled a lot in the past with anxiety, and Mrs. W actually struggled with anxiety when she was younger as well, so she's really helped me a lot this year kind of getting past that and it's been such a big help."
— Student*

I find it helpful, especially when teaching a bigger class, to set aside one day a month as a "work day." This serves a few purposes. One, it allows time in-class for students to come up and talk to me one-on-one. Second, my students are perpetually overwhelmed with their homework loads, so this gives them an hour to catch up. And finally, it actually encourages students to help each other with their assignments." —Teaching Assistant

Support

“One philosophy that I have verbalized in the office on several occasions is that, ‘You don’t have a home life and a work life. You have a life.’ While it is sometimes necessary to compartmentalize personal issues in order to get the job done, that doesn’t mean that what happens outside of the office has to stay outside of the office. We recognize that we often spend as much, or perhaps more, time with coworkers that we do with family and friends.

We regularly ask each other about what is going on in life outside of the office, including how family members are doing. When you can remember the names of those family members, it’s even more powerful when it comes to connecting with people on a more personal level.

There is a practical reason for doing this. When people feel a more personal connection with their coworkers, they are more likely to open up and express when they are having difficulties that might impact their work. This knowledge enables the team to make adjustments to ensure that the individual is cared for, and also that the job does not suffer.

I believe that it also promotes overall employee well-being, which translates into a happier, healthier staff. This can reduce employee turnover, and can also reduce time lost due to stress or illness.” —County Clerk



Trust Building

Bonds of trust between students involved in extracurricular activities and their coaches, teachers, and advisers is critical for establishing and maintaining psychological sense of community in a group. Specifically, students who trust their advisers are more likely to reach out to them for help, thus reinforcing the students' social support network. In my own thesis work, many students specifically spoke about trust when speaking about the support they felt through their peers and their coaches/faculty/advisers.

"[My professor] was always uplifting and never condescending, while still being forward with everything. I think I felt validated with whatever talking with him too... I don't know. It just seems like he knows what to say and how to say it and when to say it. He's incredible."
— Student

"While a deep and abiding level of trust can really only come from familiarity over time, I have found that a foundation of trust can be built rather quickly early in a professional relationship. Whenever I hire a new person, on their very first day I sit down with them and have a frank and open discussion about my expectations, and what they can expect from me.

In that discussion, I include the following information:

1. I expect them to make mistakes. As long as they are not intentionally breaking any laws, I will always assume the best, I will always back them up, and I will always work with them to help fix it.
2. The only "mistakes" I will not tolerate are if they lie about something, or if they attempt to cover up a mistake. Trust works both ways, and trust is an extremely high value characteristic in my world.
3. They can be confident that I will take good news and bad news the same way. They never need to worry about me getting angry, yelling, or any other behavior that would discourage them from bringing me bad news. I have worked hard to develop an "even keel," and have developed a reputation for being cool-headed under pressure. So, never be afraid to bring me bad news at any time. The sooner I know about it, the sooner we can fix it.

Making those expectations clear at the beginning seems to go a long way towards building trust quickly. And, since I am the leader of the team, everyone on the team knows what the expectations are, and there is an implicit understanding that everyone operates under those rules with each other as well."

— County Clerk

Trust Building

"Trust can be difficult to build because it requires people to be vulnerable with one another. You cannot force another person to open up to you, they must choose into a trusting relationship. I found that you can encourage a student to open up by, first, starting where they are emotionally and energetically. Reading body language, matching vocal tones, and empathizing helps you reach them where they are. Simply syncing with them on these levels creates a sense of unity, allowing them to settle into a comfortable space with you as they have created that space that you may align with. Second, build on personal interest to help open the door to trust by getting to know them. Find what is important to them, their goals, free-time activities, favorite school subjects, or something they care for. Having these casual conversations lets you share about yourself and allows them to participate and share as they feel comfortable. Remember, these can be quick follow up conversations just to check-in with them or they can be longer dialogues as the situation or student allows for. Each time you meet you can evaluate their energy and body language, seek to sync up on their level, and overtime they will slightly open that door to let you in. It is on a foundation of comfort and shared interest that a dependable, trusting relationship can grow. Only through choosing to be vulnerable and sharing with another can trust take root and grow into an empowering and safe connection."

— Social Worker

"So many students don't trust themselves, and that makes them afraid to make mistakes and so they don't try. I try to help them see how mistakes are useful and helpful to our learning, as long as we don't make the same mistake again and again. I celebrate every mistake a student makes. We talk about what they learned from the mistake and what they will do differently the next time. I have learned that when students trust themselves, they gain confidence and are willing to take risks. They begin to see mistakes as a part of the path to success rather than the proof of failure."

— Elementary Teacher

Safe Spaces

Creating safe spaces for your students is crucial to building trust. While creating a safe space can mean physical safety, this usually refers to emotional safety. Students need to feel safe being themselves and talking about themselves. This means not saying or doing things that would invalidate any participant's thoughts or actions. It also means acceptance of any political views, religious affiliations, gender/sexual orientations, disabilities, etc.

Here are a few basic guidelines for creating safe spaces that are commonly used in college interfaith groups:

1. "I" statements: everyone can only speak from their own experiences, not speak for everyone in the same situation
2. Deep listening to what everyone in the group has to say
3. It is possible to appreciate where someone is coming from without agreeing with them
4. In conversation, remember to have dialogue, not debate
5. Give the benefit of the doubt if someone says or does something offensive or hurtful. Don't be afraid to point out the problem, and the offender shouldn't be afraid to say sorry.
6. Confidentiality: if something sensitive comes up in any form, it doesn't leave the group.

This quote combines both *safe space* and *trust building*. Here, having one group create safe spaces for other members builds trust within the larger community:

"I feel like with the introduction of the safe space and letting people know that they can come to us when they are being followed, harassed or whatever, and I feel honored to be a part of that. It builds trust between groups and cosplayers, I like to believe." –Charity Cosplayer

"When I was president my high school theatre club, I sat down with the actors the first day of the season, before discussing any business, to let them know they could be themselves within the theatre walls. We discussed boundaries, what would and would not be tolerated (discrimination, harassment, etc.). All actors would then make a verbal contract with each other to make our theatre community safe for one another. I found that when my actors were responsible to each other, as well as to me, they were more respectful. We had very few problems. They all knew they could come to me if they felt unsafe and we would take care of it right away." –Student

Influence

Influence is the combination of participants feeling like they can influence their community and that the community can influence other communities.

Participant Driven

From my research, it seems that most facilitators struggle with this the most, yet for high school students it seems that having a specific say in what goes on in the group can make or break their experience. Having a participant driven group helps with internal influence: students feel like they have influence over the community they are a part of.

The hardest aspect of making something participant driven is that the facilitator has to relinquish quite a bit of control, which can be especially hard to do in a high school with teenagers. The teenagers think they know best, the teachers think the adults know best. This can make everything rather messy.

I've found that the best way to satisfy both parties is to allow students to choose between options that are acceptable to you. For example, pick three songs for a band to play, or a drill team to dance to, and let the students pick one. Or give your sports team options between two warm ups for the day and let them pick between the two. This allows students some degree of choice while still allowing you to guide productive activities that support your teaching objectives.

"She's really open minded about what we want to do so she kind of will build our exercises and our activities that we do in class around that. Around what we like and what will help us at the same time."
— Student

"[Our advisors] want us to achieve what we want to do, but they also are there to say okay, did you think about this, let's try to work you through this problem. So I guess they bring kind of more of a reality to our ideas, while they still allow us to do what we want to." — Student

"I don't know if she even took [our suggestion] into consideration so that's the only thing. Or we'll recommend something for the warm up but she already knows what she's doing so she doesn't really consider doing anything else." — Student

Participant Driven

“Making an activity or event participant driven can greatly enhance feelings of responsibility and engagement. However, the facilitator must be careful to not overwhelm the participants with options, including the unlimited options that arise when there are no constraints outlined with the assignment.

When creating participant driven activities or events, the facilitator should give extra time and attention to visualizing the myriad ways the participants may approach the situation. If the facilitator envisions a way that instructions could be interpreted in a detrimental way, the facilitator must introduce a constraint to prevent the negative outcome.

Facilitators should be careful, though, to not engineer out the opportunities for learning and growth that come from making mistakes. Constraints should keep participants from going astray from the objectives of the activity, but still allow them to try innovative ideas and explore their own limits.

In my office, we have a Party Committee that rotates its membership annually. The committee has constraints that include: budget (a fixed amount), location (must be on-site), time (typically two hours, spanning across two lunch breaks), and participation (volunteer assistance only). With clear constraints, they know where the fence is around their playground.

In addition, the Party Committee is a group of peers with a nominal leader on the committee (one of the office supervisors), who acts as the person who reports activities up the chain to higher leadership. While it can be a good exercise for groups to determine their own leader, if that is not the learning objectives of the group, the group will likely experience faster cohesion and productivity if a leader is assigned or otherwise identified at the outset.

This, of course, assumes that a member who was not identified as the leader does not initiate a power struggle. In that case, the facilitator must step in and discuss the situation with that individual, and perhaps the entire group if they were complicit in undermining the established structure. If there are several activities that provide an opportunity for group leadership to rotate among the members, this can help to alleviate this problem, and may help to expand empathy and support within the group.”

—County Clerk

Student Leadership

This is a fairly easy way for students to feel like they have influence in their community. Not every student needs to have a leadership position, and students don't have to elect their own officials (though it certainly helps them feel once again like they're the ones influencing the group).

Student leaders can do a wide variety of tasks, and you can choose how involved you want them to be in the operation of the group itself. The important thing to remember is to not give anyone a figurehead position. If you have student leadership, make sure that they actually have a job and that the job is important. High school students are quite good at seeing through a figurehead position when it's handed to them. They will easily discover when they have a position with no control or authority.

“During my Initial Entry Training for the Army (Basic and AIT) I served in several student leader positions ranging from being a Squad Leader to a Student First Sergeant. To put that in perspective, I was responsible for anywhere between 8 and nearly 200 other trainees, ensuring they were where they were supposed to be, at the right time, and in the right uniform. I can honestly say that it made me far more invested in the success of the unit because

I started to be able to see more of the bigger picture about what was going on. The added responsibility also helped to break up the routine which allowed me to remain more engaged.” – Army Cadet

“We encourage our students to take ownership in our theatre department. We have four elected officer positions (President, VP, Secretary, and Historian). Those running for office need to give a presentation to their peers as to why they want to be a leader. Students can only vote if they are present to hear the speeches. We also have an Advisory Board. I select those students from those not elected to officer positions. This has been a fantastic addition to our department. It has turned into a wonderful training ground for the younger students wishing to become officers. ”

– High School Theater Teacher

Student Leadership

“Some people shy away from “leadership.” They often associate the term with power, authority, and responsibility, which for some reason have been internalized as negatives for those people. (Of course, some other folks are just plain shy, and are uncomfortable when others are looking at, or to, them.)

When I was going through Air Force officer training, one key concept that was ingrained into me is the idea that a person can “lead” from whatever position they are in. They don’t have to be “the leader” in order to influence a group or organization. In fact, some of the best and most influential leaders I have seen were not in positions of authority. Instead, they cultivated relationships of trust, and used their influence to shape the direction, and even the culture, of their organization.

If the objective is to help students develop leadership abilities, this concept can (and, I would say, should) be taught early on. Helping team members to conceptualize leadership as a mindset independent of position can help empower the wallflowers to assert themselves a little more, and can also help those in positions of authority to recognize that ‘leadership’ can be a shared experience, even only one person actually holds the reins.” – County Clerk



Empowerment

Like several of the other categories, empowerment has a lot of facets as it applies to facilitating sense of community. One very important aspect is empowering students to get involved with the group and making them feel like their input is valid. It involves listening to students when they voice concerns and helping them to make the group into what they think it needs to be. Sense of community in the group is strengthened when facilitators listen to student requests and concerns when they are reasonably founded, and when the facilitator explains to the students why they made the decisions they did ³⁸.

This includes verbal and nonverbal immediacy. "Nonverbal immediacy may include more subtle behavioral or affective cues such as whether the instructor uses different vocal expressions while talking with the class or smiles encouragingly at students when responding to questions", while "verbal immediacy might include utterances that convey to students that the instructor values their input" ⁴³.

*"My dance teacher always wanted our feedback on new steps, dances, and performances. He wanted to make sure that we enjoyed what we were doing since we were the ones doing the dances. If we really didn't like a step he would change it or remove it. I stayed with that group for so long because I knew that I was valued there as a dancer."
— Irish Dance Student*

"Empowerment is the mirror image of trust. When you trust your people, that trust manifests in what they are empowered to do. Empowerment can also lead to reciprocated trust, in addition to an increased sense of ownership of and commitment to the group.

Look for opportunities to delegate decisions and, where practical, authority to people under your supervision. They may need instruction and advice in how to apply that authority, but, to quote General George S. Patton, "Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results." —County Clerk

Shared Emotional Connection

Shared emotional connection develops through members of the community struggling and accomplishing things together over a longer period of time. Barring traumatic experiences, emotional connection takes the longest of the four categories to develop, but comprises most of the “bonds” between members of the group.

Going Through Trials

This is one of the harder things to facilitate. Hardships and trials tend to create and strengthen bonds between groups of people. You've heard of hazing. It is the same basic principle. In actuality, hazing serves a really important function: not only do the people who go through the trial together bond, but it also serves as costly signaling. That is to say, it's rather hard to fake going through a hazing ritual, so members of the group recognize hazed members as committed parts of the whole.

Obviously, it is not a good idea to haze your students, or to encourage hazing of any kind. Hazing can be dangerous, and despite the fact that dangerous hazing rituals are theoretically more effective at creating sense of community, the same ends can be accomplished through similar, yet different means.

Design activities or mandatory aspects of the group that are *hard* for students to accomplish and that will test them physically and mentally. A great example of this is a marching band camp. Students are required to work together to make it through a week of hot 12-13 hour days in order to learn their show. The same goes for sports camps. They test students in a fundamental way, yet they serve a needed purpose. A sports team has to learn their plays, and a marching band has to learn their show.

"My first year of marching band, one of our competitors lost one of their instructors. On the way back from a competition that we didn't attend, one of their busses crashed. Their instructor was killed because she stood and steered the bus, but no students were injured. For the rest of the season every band wore red ribbons to show our solidarity. While none of us knew that instructor, going through that grief process together brought all of us closer together."
— Student

"Band Camp was, like, the worse week of my life. It's, like, 105 degrees outside and we go to delta, so we're in the middle of the desert, and we're on the field from 7 in the morning until 9 at night, with two forty five minute breaks, like, that's kind of insane when you think about it. And at the beginning of the week, like, I'm saying goodbye to all my family, like, I'm going to die here, but then at the end of the week, wow, like, I can do that. I did it." — Student

Going Through Trials

“I can share a slightly different approach to creating a shared emotional connection through trials. While it is definitely helpful to share the same trial in the same way, this seems to often be in a context of an extraordinary sort of event, such as a team-building exercise. However, this can also apply in a workaday setting in the normal course of events.

In the Weber County office setting, the front line workers are empowered to make many routine decisions. However, in unusual circumstances, the decision is at least discussed with a supervisor or similar coworker, and perhaps is made at that level. The decision is often made in consultation with the line worker, and the line worker is the one to relay the decision back to the customer.

So, the burden of researching and deciding such cases is effectively shared between the line worker and the supervisor. The discussion with, and input from, the line worker also contributes to a sense of shared burden in dealing with the unusual situation.

Similarly, when there is a particularly difficult customer, the supervisor often steps in to bear the brunt of the abuse, and can back up the line worker with policy and authority, and can sometimes make adjustments and exceptions that the line worker is not authorized to do.

These situations often act as trials that are shared among the team, as long as those in a position of authority take a supportive and collaborative role with the line workers.

In an educational environment, a teacher could fill a role similar to a supervisor, and act as a supporting backstop to the students. By stepping in and assisting in areas where the students are overwhelmed or uncertain, at least until they are able to operate more independently, the teacher can share the ‘trial’ of the activity, event, or other task that the group has been given.” – County Clerk

Accomplishable Goals

We are not talking SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-based) goals here, at least not in the explicit sense. Despite their usefulness, most high school students don't particularly appreciate the SMART goal layout. However, achieving important and accomplishable goals is a very easy (and non-hazing) way for students to earn success by working together. The trick is to create goals for students that they actually want to achieve and which are productive. Fundraising and service activities are two common and easy ways to get students to work towards goals together.

Remember the Influence domain of sense of community when it comes to goal setting though. Students should be a full part of the process. Goals that the students set for themselves are going to be easier for them to commit to and accomplish than goals that they feel a disconnect with; goals that they were not involved in creating seem arbitrary. Those kinds of goals are *your* goals, not *their* goals.

Achieving goals also builds confidence as well as capacities for leadership. Just remember to keep them in the realm of possibility. Nothing destroys confidence more than feeling like there are expectations that are impossible to meet.

"At the beginning of each season, we try to talk to the players about team and individual goals. What I've found interesting over the years is that my most successful players have been the ones who are most invested in the team goals. This gives them a sense of ownership, as well as a connection to their teammates that can't be fostered elsewhere."
— High School Football Coach

"Like I have a lot of pride in that, but just with student council, um, just for when the things we've accomplished this year, with our Gold Rush achieved almost fifty thousand dollars, so stuff like that, that's not normal, and we went down to Mexico to build schools, so that kind of stuff, that boosts your confidence and your pride a bit."
— Student

Connection to Peers

Many students believe that connectedness with their peers is the most important variable in developing a sense of community⁴⁴. This can be facilitated by simply encouraging students to get to know one another³⁸. For larger groups, however, this becomes a bit more difficult. It's nearly impossible for every student in a large 250-person marching band to develop deep connection with every other person in the band.

There is a small work-around to this problem that doesn't involve cutting the group in half.

Smaller groups have been shown to experience higher sense of community^{45, 46}. While it can be difficult to manage the size of a given community, this can be mitigated through the institution of subgroups. Naturally, communities have multiple, nested sub-communities (such as sections in band, orchestra, and choir or the different school classes in student council). Sub-communities have a symbiotic relationship with the macro community. The macro community benefits from high PSOC in the subs⁴⁶. Students who socialize with a smaller subgroup regularly will also have a greater connection to those students than they will if they are expected to know everyone in a large group equally.

"I had a teacher do an experiment with us once. He divided the class into three groups and my group had all but six students in the class. We were tasked in creating a game and immediately I felt useless and didn't think I could be of any use. I would go with what everyone else wanted to avoid contention. Through out the class we naturally created subgroups to work on pieces of the project. The smaller the group, the more voice I felt I had." – Student

Military pilots, especially pilots from a common aircraft or mission have a bond that sticks them together, even if they haven't been assigned to the same unit. They know what the risks are, they have all been in similar circumstances and the recognize that kindred spirit. I see posts from guys who haven't flown for 20 years comment on how much they miss the mission when something current is posted." – Military Spouse

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Thank you!

REFLECTIVE WRITING

Coming to school, Dr. Scott Bates had us “do research on our research”, which meant that I got to sit at a computer for six hours, looking at what every single professor on campus was studying. I was again mortified at what I had gotten myself into. I didn’t care about chemicals, or cellular biology. I didn’t want to be working with mice or molecules. Searching through every college imaginable, I eventually found Anthropology. To be completely honest, I didn’t even know what the word meant. Suddenly, it felt like I had discovered something new and exciting. Everything that the professors were doing sounded like something *I* wanted to be doing. After a week and two interviews, I found myself in the research lab of Dr. Bonnie Glass-Coffin looking at how USU students approach religious literacy and tolerance of religious difference. As I am part of the religious minority (a shamanic practitioner in an LDS world) I connected on a deep level with this project.

This is the first thing I would say to students looking at undergraduate research: Find something that you’re passionate about.

My research was the reason why I changed my major from biology to anthropology. Although being handed a tape recorder and being told to sink or swim was a little intimidating, doing 43 one-hour long interviews with participants was an incredible experience. There is no other way to learn how to do qualitative research than to just get out and do it. You have to talk to people, you have to make mistakes, and you have to have the chance to get a feel for your own style of interviewing. Looking back on the transcriptions I’ve done, I can see how I’ve grown as a researcher through that project. My interfaith work helped me to understand the mechanisms of interviewing, transcription, coding, and poster presentation. Through this project I was able to present a poster to legislatures at Utah Research on Capitol Hill, which really was an amazing experience. It allows you to feel like you’re the expert; because in many ways, you are.

Which brings me to my second lesson for undergraduate students: Research really does open doors of opportunity. Future jobs, careers, and mentorships are created through the role that students play in these projects.

At the end of my freshman year, I was given an assignment through my Honors English 2010 class. We were to write an argumentative research paper on any topic we wanted. The one caveat: we had to approach any cliché arguments in a new way. Returning to my ideal of working on ideas and topics that I’m passionate about, I chose to write my paper on the importance of the arts in schools. Specifically I focused my thesis on the importance of the performing arts in facilitating a strong psychological sense of community among their student members. Sense of community has been linked to reduced anxiety and depression, higher academic standing, increased tolerance for major life transition, and an increase of overall mental and physical well-being. For me, there was nothing more important than this research because I did marching band for four years in high school and losing that sense of community coming to college wrecked havoc on my mental health. Because of that passion, I threw myself into the paper. Over spring break I even returned to my high school and administered a survey to the band students there which provided both qualitative and quantitative original data that I could use in my research paper. But I didn’t want to stop there.

My first experiences with an independent research project came from this paper. I had found a research question - what types of extracurricular activities facilitate the highest sense of community and why? - and ran with it. I found a research mentor, Dr. Travis Dorsch, and spent my summer doing a more in depth literature review. As soon as my sophomore school year started, I wrote both an IRB and an URCO Grant proposal, received funding, and hit a wall. Getting IRB approval for a project, it seemed, was easy. Getting Utah school districts and principals to allow me to come into their schools and survey their students was surprisingly difficult. I couldn't get any of the principles in one district to respond to my proposal, in another I was stopped at the district level: they were already giving students a survey (although it didn't cover the same topics as mine would). The only district that gave me permission to study their students had three high schools - one of which had no extracurricular activities, the other wouldn't contact me back, and the third, which at first seemed interested, eventually decided against my project. It was frustrating. In my mind, I had this great project that would change the world, and I couldn't even collect the data. But I still learned a lot of valuable skills: the foundational importance of a literature review, how to write grants, how to design a project, and how to write an IRB proposal. And eventually my old high school district came through and I was able to gather my data over the summer. This came with its own set of limitations: many of the sports teams were not practicing or couldn't take the time to have me come in, and because it was the end of the school year many of the clubs were no longer meeting. This impacted my sample size, but I was still able to conduct my research.

Here is where I would identify lesson number three for undergraduates: don't allow yourself to get discouraged by setbacks. All research projects have them, and you should always get back up and keep working towards another goal.

Most students are not this involved in research, but co-curricular events like this are really what makes or breaks a degree. It isn't so much what you learn in the classroom, but how you learn to apply your knowledge in a real world setting. Most students are also not going to go into research as a career, but similar to the lessons you learn in class, undergraduate researchers learn important communication skills as well as gaining the ability to analyze data and think creatively and critically. For example, I asked my participants how many of their friends were also involved in the activity with them. I got a range of answers from "all of them" to percentages to numbers. Because of this I couldn't actually analyze that variable, and it was the one I was most interested in. I wouldn't have known the limitations of that question had I not been able to get out and administer my surveys. Writing my thesis and defending it has better prepared me to go to graduate school and enter the workforce than any other part of my college career.

After presenting a research poster at an honors Food for Thought session, one of my colleagues said that the hardest part of research is coming up with a good question. I would disagree. The hardest part of research is trying to limit yourself; to decide which projects you're going to do and which ones have to sit on the proverbial shelf for a little while longer. Every student that I have talked to has only ever had positive things to say about their research. As researchers, we love what we do. I know for me, my studies have become my one great love.

Lesson four: never stop questioning.

PROFESSIONAL AUTHOR BIO



Anthropologist by day.... Superhero by night! Erica Hawvermale is an undergraduate honors student, a leader in her student interfaith community, a wicked jazz trombonist and an avid charity cosplayer. She began working in the field of community psychology during her freshman year at Utah State University as an Honors English essay. During the assignment she had the bright idea of including original data in her writing and was hooked ever since.

During her time at USU she participated extensively in her professor's research projects, including topics such as the interfaith climate on campus, video gaming addiction, LDS gender roles, LDS mate preference, psychological sense of community, and cooperative social behavior. In 2015 she also traveled with the Himalayan Health Exchange to Himachal Pradesh, India on a medical anthropology field expedition. There she did research into the barriers to biomedical intervention in rural Himalayan villages.

Erica has presented her research both nationally and internationally, including presentations at

the Society for Applied Anthropology, the American Anthropological Association, Posters on the Hill (Washington, D.C.), Research on Capitol Hill, the Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research, and at Ignite USU. She's been a guest lecturer in several classrooms and events on USU campus. She has been the recipient of an URCO grant, an AOF grant, several departmental grants, and an Academic Opportunity Scholarship. She received the Douglas G. Alder Award in 2015, and was a Lillywhite Scholar two years in a row. In 2016 she was named the Honors Undergraduate Teaching Fellow of the Year.

In addition to her academic research, Erica was a founding member of the Interfaith Student Association (IFSA) and served as vice-president for one year, and president for two. While Erica is sad to be leaving USU and the amazing community of honors students and mentors, she is excited to step into the "real world" and work on applying her anthropological skills for human betterment.

CIRRICULUM VITAE

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Education:**Utah State University**

Honors B.S. in Cultural Anthropology
Minor in Music

3.96 GPA

Research Experience:**Utah State University - Sense of High School Community Study***Honors Thesis Project**PI- Travis Dorsch***Utah State University - Interfaith Campus Climate Project***Undergraduate Researcher**PI- Bonnie Glass-Coffin***Utah State University - LDS Gender Roles Study***Research Assistant**PI- HJF Dengah II***Utah State University - General Intelligence, Social Intelligence, and Robust Cooperation in Social-Ecological Systems***Research Assistant**PI- Jacob Freeman; Jacopo Baggio**NSF Funded***Utah State University – Video Gamer Study***Undergraduate Researcher**PI- HJF Dengah II, Utah State University; Jeffery Snodgrass, Colorado State University**NSF Funded***Himalayan Health Exchange - Medical Anthropology Expedition***Undergraduate Researcher***Grants, Fellowships, Scholarships, and Awards:**

CHaSS Scholar of the Year	2017
A-Pin Recipient, Utah State University	2017
Honors Undergraduate Teaching Fellow of the Year	2016
Lillywhite Scholar	2016
Dean's List, Utah State University	2016

Excellent Communicator Badge, Student Research Symposium	2016
A-Pin Recipient, Utah State University	2016
AOF Grant Recipient	2016
Honors Teaching Fellowship, Utah State University	2016
Lillywhite Scholar	2015
Dean's List, Utah State University	2015
Honors Douglas G. Alder Award	2015
Student Opportunity Scholarship	2015
AOF Grant Recipient (x2)	2015
Honors Teaching Fellowship, Utah State University	2015
URCO Grant Recipient	2014
Dean's List, Utah State University	2014
Undergraduate Research Fellowship, Utah State University	2013
Dean's Scholarship, Utah State University	2013

Presentations:

Hawvermale, Erica. <i>Find Your People. Find Your Passion.</i> Talk presented at Ignite USU.	2017
Hawvermale, Erica. <i>Expressions of affinal kinship and social support among high school extracurricular activities.</i> Paper presented at the Student Research Symposium, Utah State University, UT. Accepted for presentation at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research.	2017
Light, Tim, Erica Hawvermale, and Emma Hall. <i>"Because it was Cheap, Because it was On-Sale": Essential Nutrient Intake at USU.</i> Poster presented at the Student Research Symposium, Utah State University, UT.	2017
Hawvermale, Erica. <i>Belonging to Something Bigger: Facilitation of Sense of Community for Community Program Development.</i> Poster presented at the 2017 Annual Meeting for the Society of Applied Anthropology, Santa Fe, NM.	2017
Bingham, Elizabeth and Erica Hawvermale. <i>LDS Mate Preference: No Laughing Matter.</i> Poster presented at the Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research, Utah Valley University, UT.	2017
Hawvermale, Erica. <i>Viewing high school extracurriculars through a lens of evolutionary theory: Common goals, member differentiation, in-group favoritism, and aggression toward others.</i> Paper presented at the Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research, Utah Valley University, UT.	2017
Hawvermale, Erica. <i>Why we participate: Competitive extracurricular</i>	2016

activities as homologous to tribal warfare. Paper presented at the Fall Undergraduate Research Symposium, Utah State University, UT.

Hawvermale, Erica, Essa Temple, Kirsti Patterson, Talon Dutson, Tyler Young, David Tauber, and Elizabeth Bingham, and Abigail Bentley. *Expectations of the Angel and the Beehive: How Religious Gender Roles Shape Mental Health on a Utah Campus*. Poster presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting for the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, MN. 2016

Bingham, Elizabeth, Kirsti Patterson, and Erica Hawvermale. *Searching for Mr. Right-eous: Portrayal of Ideal Mate Construction in LDS Media Culture*. Poster presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting for the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, MN. 2016

Hawvermale, Erica and Travis Dorsch. *Is Sport Unique: Comparative Study of High School Extracurricular Activities*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity, Montreal, QC. 2016

Hawvermale, Erica and David Tauber. *Applying anthropology for student betterment: Evolution and Impacts of an Interfaith Student Association*. Paper presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting for the Society for Applied Anthropology, Vancouver, BC. 2016

Dutson, Talon, Tyler Young, Essa Temple, Erica Hawvermale, Elizabeth Bingham, and Kirsti Patterson. *Halfie Mormon Anthropology*. Paper presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting for the Society for Applied Anthropology, Vancouver, BC. 2016

Hawvermale, Erica. *Preparing our Students: Importance of High School Extracurricular Activities*. Poster presented at the National Posters on the Hill, Washington D.C. 2016

Hawvermale, Erica. *Sense of Community in High School Extracurricular Activities*. Paper presented at the Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research, Salt Lake City, UT. Accepted for presentation at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research 2016

Hawvermale, Erica. *School Families: Sense of Community in High School Extracurriculars*. Poster presented at the 15th annual Utah Research on Capitol Hill, Salt Lake City, UT. 2016

Hawvermale, Erica. *"Picking a Husband": Mate Preference Among Mormon College Students*. Poster presented at the 2015 Annual 2015

meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Denver, CO.

Temple, Essa, Erica Hawvermale, Talon Dutson, Elizabeth Bingham, Kirsti Patterson, Tyler Young, and Henri J Dengah II. *"I'm Too Bold to be a Little LDS Woman!": Gender Roles and Mental Health Among Mormons*. Poster presented at the 2015 Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Denver, CO. 2015

Hawvermale, Erica, and Audrey George. *Faith-Based Dialogue on a Public University campus*. Poster presented at the 14th annual Utah Research on Capitol Hill, Salt Lake, UT. 2015

Hawvermale, Erica. *The Interfaith Movement: Facilitating change through anthropological research*. Paper presented at the Student Research Symposium, Utah State University, UT. 2015

Hawvermale, Erica, Essa Temple, and McKayla Montierth. *#GenderRoles: Modeling Gender Among LDS Students*. Poster presented at the Student Research Symposium, Utah State University, UT. 2015

Glass-Coffin, Bonnie, Erica Hawvermale, and Audrey George. *"Speed Faithing"—an applied anthropology model for developing interfaith literacy on a public university campus*. Paper presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, Pittsburgh, PA. 2015

Dengah II, H.J.F., Erica Hawvermale, and Essa Temple. *Modeling Religious Gender Roles among Mormon Students*. Paper presented at the 75th Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology, Pittsburgh, PA. 2015

Invited Presentations:

Hawvermale, Erica. *"Picking a Husband": Mate Preference Among LDS College Students*. Poster Presented at the Undergraduate Research Orientation, Utah State University, UT. 2016

Hawvermale, Erica. *The Culture of Dating and Marriage: Practices in an LDS Population*. Presented in Susan Anderson's American Culture course, Utah State University, UT. 2016

Hawvermale, Erica. *Challenges to Wellness and Healthcare in Spiti Valley, India*. Poster presented at the Undergraduate Research Fall Poster Session, Utah State University, UT. 2015

Hawvermale, Erica, and Essa Temple. *Modeling Religious Gender* 2015

Roles and Mental Health among Mormon Students. Presented in Dr. Christy Glass's Course, Utah State University, UT.

Hawvermale, Erica. "*Picking a Husband*": *Mate Preference Among Mormon College Students*. Presented as part of the Museum of Anthropology Lecture Series, Utah State University, UT. 2015

Publications:

Dengah II, HJF, Erica Hawvermale, Essa Temple, McKayla Montierth, Talon Dutson, Tyler Young, Elizabeth Thomas, Kirsti Patterson, Abigail Bentley, and David Tauber. *Undergraduates Deserve Methods Too: Using a Research Laboratory Model to Engage Students in Cognitive Anthropological Research*. *Annals of Applied Anthropology* 40(2). 2016

Teaching Experience:

Honors Teaching Assistant: *Media and Democracy (Breadth American Institutions)* 2017
 Honors Teaching Assistant: *Connections* 2016
 Honors Teaching Assistant: *Healthy Brains-Healthy Society (Breadth Social Systems)* 2015
 Honors Teaching Assistant: *Connections* 2015
 Honors Teaching Assistant: *Age of Revolution in the Atlantic World (Breadth Humanities)* 2015

Research Interests:

Community Development
 Community Psychology
 Disaster and Emergency Management
 LDS Gender Roles/Identity

Certifications:

CITI Certified: Expires 09/09/2019
 EMT Certified: National Registry No. E3275938

Computer Skills:

Dedoose, Anthropic, ExpressScribe, UCINET, MAXQDA, SPSS

Activities, Leadership, and Volunteer:

Honors Mentor	Mentor, 2015-2017
Honors Student Council	Committee, 2016-2017
USU Interfaith Student Association	President, 2015-2017
	Vice President, 2014-2015
H.E.R.O.I.C. Inc.	Volunteer, 2014-present
REACH	Volunteer, 2016-present
Intermountain Healthcare	Volunteer, 2014-2015