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Examining Civic Outcomes between 2-year and 4-year Colleges: A Case Study of Two
Postsecondary Institutions

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WP designed the study, conducted the data analysis and wrote the substantial parts of the manuscript. TY contributed to the data collection and analysis, and wrote parts of the methods and discussion sections. JKE contributed to the development of conceptual framework and research questions, and wrote a part of the discussion section.

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ABSTRACT

While postsecondary education appears to promote civic mindedness and engagement, relatively little is known about the association between civic outcomes and types of postsecondary education, as well as across different academic programs. Using a convenience sample from two postsecondary education institutions in the Mid-Atlantic U.S., this research examines the differences in civic mindedness and civic engagement between 2-year community college and 4-year university students, as well as students in different majors. Despite no significant difference between 2-year and 4-year institutions, postsecondary institution type, social science majors have greater civic outcomes in the specific areas compared to other majors.

Keywords: Higher education; civic engagement; volunteering; social science;

INTRODUCTION

The National Conference on Citizenship (2013) reported that college graduates are four to five times more likely to engage in civic activities, such as voting, volunteering, and serving as a committee member than those without a high school diploma. Colleges and universities are more than just degree granting institutions. Postsecondary education appears to promote active participation in a democratic society. However, specific higher education aspects that promote civic outcomes are still unclear. Specifically, the roles of community colleges and four-year universities, as well as the types of academic programs in relation to students' civic activities and attitudes, need more scientific inquiry. This current case study is a comparative analysis of civic outcomes between two postsecondary institutions: the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The definition of civic engagement varies across the literature. Some scholars refer to civic engagement as the umbrella term for political and non-political activities that sustain communities and shape public life (Ehrlich 2000; McBride, Sherraden, and Pritzker 2006; Musick and Wilson 2008). McBride, Sherraden, and Pritzker (2006) assert that civic engagement occurs within two spheres of action: (1) social engagement, such as the involvement in a community service or volunteer work, membership in an association, or donating money to an organization, and (2) political engagement, such as voting at the local, state, and federal level, and/or influencing the electoral and decision-making process. Nonetheless, these two spheres of action exhibit the following characteristics among its actors: active citizenship and the desire to effect change (Adler and Goggin 2005). For the purpose of this research, civic engagement is defined as the collective action of individuals to address issues of public concern and improve the conditions of public life through community involvement and democratic participation.

Postsecondary Education, Civic Engagement, and Civic Mindedness

Colleges and universities are unique institutions that not only provide opportunities for civic engagement, but also nurture civic mindedness. Civic mindedness is the extent to which one is aware of political and social issues (Anheier 2014). Importantly, civic mindedness is the prerequisite to civic engagement (Putnam 2000). Postsecondary institutions foster civic mindedness in many ways, often through class instructions and discussions about sociopolitical issues, service-learning embedded courses, student-led government associations, on-campus solidarity groups and clubs, and interactions with peers from diverse backgrounds (Bowerman 2011; Chong et al. 2011; Kisker, Weintraub, and Newell 2016; Nishishiba, Nelson, and Shinn 2005). Based on a meta-analysis, Bowman (2011) reported that college diversity experiences, including the diversity of student populations, diversity-related coursework, events, student

organizations, and the interactions with diverse peers outside of a classroom setting contributed to students' ability to evaluate complex political and social issues. In other words, diversity experiences in postsecondary institutions are linked to gathering knowledge on public issues (e.g., income inequality, racial inequality, women's rights, environmental justice, healthcare reform) and addressing such issues. Indeed, colleges and universities are the epicenter of student-led movements, such as the Black Lives Matter Movement, March For Our Lives, and the Student Climate Strike – movements that exemplify students' civic knowledge and civic behavior.

Education is known to enhance civic mindedness and civic engagement. Individuals with greater years of formal education tend to exhibit higher levels of civic mindedness and civic engagement (Anheier 2014). Musick and Wilson (2004) suggest that higher education heightens awareness of social problems, broadens problem-solving skills, increases empathy, and builds self-confidence; these collectively promote civic outcomes. In a longitudinal study that examined young adults aged 29 to 33 years old with postsecondary degrees, Doyle and Skinner (2013) found that each additional year of postsecondary education was associated with a 7.7% greater likelihood of voting, volunteering, and making charitable contributions. However, in the context of postsecondary education, voting itself is not a sufficient measure of civic engagement as not all young college students are eligible to vote (Kisker, Weintraub, and Newell 2016; Suchowerska 2013). In fact, the national data clearly shows that younger adults were less likely to vote compared to older adults (NCoC 2017). Suchowerska (2013) suggests that as entry into adulthood becomes more competitive and capitalism becomes more advanced, young adults are more likely to disengage from politics than older adults because of progressive individualism, or the need to be independent and self-reliant as a result of distrust in government and capitalism. In

short, young adults are more likely to participate in different forms of civic engagement than older adults. Therefore, various types of civic engagement and the age of participants should be taken into account in any discussion and research in higher education settings.

Civic Engagement by Type of Postsecondary Education Institutions

Studying civic engagement is important for two reasons: (1) civic engagement sustains civil society, or more commonly referred to as networks of people connected by community and political affairs (Putnam 2000; Skocpol and Fiorina 1999), and (2) civic engagement provides extrinsic (e.g., skills and training, networking opportunities, and employability) and intrinsic (e.g., sense of purpose, confidence, and benevolence) rewards that can be used towards upward mobility, or also known as economic advancement (Benenson 2017; Doyle and Skinner 2013; Kavanaugh et al. 2005; Paxton 2002). However, research shows disproportionate civic participation by factors like education, income, race, gender, and age (Benenson 2017; Foster-Bey 2008; McBride, Sherraden, and Pritzker 2006; Musick and Wilson 2006). Adults who are less educated, less wealthy, racial-ethnic minorities, male, and younger are less likely to participate in civic activities (Anheier 2014; Benenson 2017).

Similarly, community college students are less likely to be socioeconomically advantaged as compared to 4-year university students (Albert 2004). Community college students might face more barriers (e.g., economic resource, caregiving responsibility) for civic engagement compared to their university counterparts, despite both types of students pursuing post-baccalaureate education. At the same time, community college students are more civically engaged than high school students (Lopez and Brown 2006). This is not to say that community college students are less motivated to be civically engaged than their university counterparts. Community colleges tend to focus more on technical and career training, and relatively less on

general education (e.g., social science), which may be linked to lower levels of civic outcomes (Albert 2004). Additionally, community college students are more likely to have work and caregiving responsibilities, which may prevent them from being civically engaged (Kisker, Weintraub, and Newell 2016). Arguably, due to the academic focus and students' socio-demographic and economic characteristics, community college students may face disadvantages in civic engagement compared to 4-year universities' students.

To date, research on differences in civic outcomes between 2-year and 4-year, postsecondary institutions are limited. Most existing research has focused on 4-year universities (Doyle and Skinner 2017; Shores et al. 2020). The study by Lopez and Brown (2004) is one of the few studies that examined civic outcomes between 2-year and 4-year, postsecondary institutions. However, Lopez and Brown (2004) mainly analyzed voting patterns and membership associations. As mentioned, various forms of civic engagement need to be investigated in the higher education settings as some students may structurally have zero chance of voting due to their eligibility (e.g., age and citizenship status restrictions). Additionally, an issue with membership-based civic engagement measure is that it does not capture the civic activity being performed, nor how frequent that activity is being performed. Fortunately, research like Kisker, Weintraub, and Newell (2016) considered other forms of civic behavior, such as signing a petition, boycotting or buycotting, participating in a demonstration, and attending political meetings or rallies in their research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is guided by social capital theory. Social capital theory is defined as social relationships that act as resources to acquire knowledge, skills, and action (Coleman 1988). Social capital can be divided into two categories: (1) bonding social capital, which is referred to

as the strong ties that members share within social networks, and (2) bridging social capital, which is referred to as the weak ties that members share between social networks (Putnam 2000). Bonding social capital allows individuals (friends and family) from similar backgrounds to connect with each other in solidarity based on a shared identity, whereas bridging social capital allows individuals (acquaintances) from diverse backgrounds to engage with each other in less conventional ways.

In the context of this research, bridging social capital can occur in the classrooms, in student associations and organizations, and at on-campus events and gatherings. Altogether, the social relationships that occur through bonding and bridging social capital can lead to individuals acquiring new knowledge, skills, and networks (Kavanaugh et al. 2005), as well as sustaining civil society through trust, norm, solidarity, and collective action (Putnam 2000; Paxton 2002). Indeed, the relationship between civic engagement and social capital is reciprocal (Paxton 2002; Jennings and Stoker 2004). In other words, if civic engagement is lower, individuals are less likely to build social capital and vice versa. Therefore, colleges and universities offer students multiple ways to build social capital, exercise civic mindfulness, and participate in civic engagement.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

The objective of this research study is to: (1) document differences in civic outcomes among 2-year community college versus 4-year university students, (2) identify associations between types of academic programs (e.g., majors) and civic outcomes, and (3) provide program and policy recommendations on how to promote civic engagement on campus. To achieve the objectives, this research addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the difference in civic mindedness between 2-year community college and 4-year university students?
2. What is the difference in civic engagement between 2-year community college and 4-year university students?
3. How are academic programs associated with civic mindedness among postsecondary education students?
4. How are academic programs associated with civic engagement among postsecondary education students?

Based on the social capital theory and literature review, it is hypothesized that types of higher education institutions and academic programs are associated with civic mindedness, as well as civic engagement.

METHODOLOGY

Settings

The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) is identified as the 2-year community college and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) is identified as the 4-year university. CCBC and UMBC are public institutions located in the Baltimore, Maryland metropolitan area. It is important to note that CCBC has three campuses located in Essex, Dundalk, and Catonsville, all within the Baltimore area, whereas UMBC only has one campus located in Catonsville. As of 2018-2019, CCBC has approximately 17,900 undergraduate students (62% women versus 38% men) and are on average 27 years old, whereas UMBC has approximately 11,100 undergraduate students (45% women versus 55% men) and are on average 22 years old (College Board 2020).

Procedures

Primary data collection was conducted at two higher education institutions. All instructors who taught a 100- or 200-level undergraduate social science or an Honors course at CCBC and UMBC were contacted to assist in this project. Of the 54 instructors who were contacted, 12 instructors from CCBC and 6 instructors from UMBC agreed to recruit participants for this study. The courses that were taught by the 18 instructors included political science, psychology, sociology, and anthropology, as well as general Honors classes. The collaborating instructors recruited their students to participate in the online survey. The survey was sent out to approximately 1,500 students, which yielded a response rate of 17%. The questionnaire was designed using the online survey platform – Qualtrics (2020). Most of the survey items on the questionnaire were adopted from the General Social Survey (GSS) (2018) and the Community College Civics Outcome Survey (CCCOS) (Kisker, Weintraub, Newell 2016). The GSS, established by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, is one of the longest running and highly regarded biennial repeated cross-sectional social surveys. The GSS and CCCOS survey items and relevant information were retrieved from the ICPSR data repository (ICPSR 2020).

Due to the diverse view on the term civic engagement, it was operationalized to political and social engagement on the questionnaire (as cited in McBride, Sherraden, and Pritzker 2006). The online survey was designed to obtain informed consent, basic demographic, socioeconomic information, voting status, information on civic mindedness, and information on civic engagement. The survey also included three qualitative open-ended questions (1 – how a participant’s favorite political and social engagement activity shaped their understanding of political and social issues, 2 – how a challenge or barrier prevented the participant from being politically and socially engaged, and 3 – recommendations on how the participant’s college or

university can promote political and social engagement on campus). Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and results were not shared with the collaborating instructors. No monetary incentive was offered for completing the survey. The online survey was conducted between March 4, 2020 and April 1, 2020, and the researcher requested the instructors to forward the reminder three times to students and to encourage students to participate in the study. This project and the study design were approved by the Institutional Review Boards at CCBC and UMBC (Protocol #: *Masked for the blind review*).

Participants

A total of 252 participants completed the questionnaire. Of the participants who completed the questionnaire, 145 participants were from CCBC and 107 participants were from UMBC. Participants had to be at least 18 years or older to participate in the study. After conducting a power analysis using the R package “pwr” (Champely 2018), the required minimum sample size for statistical analysis in this case study was 68 with a power of 0.80 and the alpha level of 0.05. The sample size at each institution was sufficient for all analyses in this study.

Outcome Variables

Civic mindedness was measured by four survey items (as cited in CCCOS, Kisker, Weintraub, Newell 2016): (1) “I see myself as part of the campus community” (sense of community), (2) “I see myself as something bigger than myself to effect change” (sense of effect), (3) “I have the tools to gather information to develop an informed position on a political and social issue” (sense of tools), and (4) “I have an understanding of what it is I want to do with my future” (sense of future). Given the distributions and conceptual groupings, each item was

dichotomized into “Positive” (“strongly agree” and “agree”) and “Negative” (“disagree” and “strongly disagree”).

Civic engagement was measured by five survey items (as cited in GSS 2020): (1) signing a petition; (2) boycotting or deliberately buying a certain good for political, environmental, or ethical reasons (i.e., boycotting); (3) participating in a demonstration; (4) attending a political meeting or rally; and (5) donating money to, or fundraised for a charitable, religious, or political organization. Given the distributions and conceptual groupings, each item was recorded in a dichotomous measure indicating “Have participated” and “Never.”

It is important to note that whether the participant voted in the last general election was captured on the survey. Participants reported either yes, no, or ineligible. Ineligible refers to participants who were not 18 years old or a U.S. citizen at the time of voting. Unfortunately, 80% of the students who took the survey answered that they were ineligible to vote. Therefore, voting was not examined in this study. As stated earlier, voting is arguably not the best representation of civic engagement among college and university students (Kisker, Weintraub, and Newell 2016).

Predictor Variables

Postsecondary education was operationalized as higher educational attainment past the high school level and at the college-university level. In this case, postsecondary education is categorized as 2-year community college (CCBC) and 4-year university (UMBC). In addition, academic programs were operationalized as participant’s major. Given the importance of the social science in context of civic engagement, majors were dichotomized as social science majors versus all other majors.

Covariates

The following basic demographic and socioeconomic characteristics were selected and included in the analysis: age (in years); gender (woman vs. man); racial identity (nonwhite vs. white); religiosity (1-4: “Very religious,” “Moderately religious,” “Slightly religious,” “Not at all religious”); hours per week worked in the past year for pay (1-6: “0 hours per week,” “1-10 hours per week,” “11-20 hours per week,” “21-30 hours per week,” “31-40 hours per week,” “41 hours or more per week”); whether participant cared for any dependents (i.e., child, parent or guardian, aging adults, etc.) in the past year; student enrollment status (full-time versus part-time); number of years in college (less than one year to more than four years); and first generation college student, or the first person in immediate family (i.e., brother, sister, mother, father, or primary guardian) to go to college.

Analytic Strategies

A descriptive summary of all measures was computed, and bivariate significance tests (t-test or chi-square) were conducted for CCBC and UMBC students. To examine the differences in civic mindedness and civic engagement between CCBC and UMBC students, a binary logistic regression was conducted (Allison 2012). First, the unconditional model for each outcome variable was evaluated. Second, in case any statistically significant association was identified, a conditional model with all covariate was constructed. The final models were evaluated by the area under the receiver operating characteristics (ROC) curve and the Hosmer & Lemeshow (2000) criteria (> 0.70 = acceptable; > 0.80 = excellent; > 0.90 = outstanding predictive accuracy). Results from the open-ended questions were also explored to contextualize the quantitative findings.

RESULTS

Participants

Table 1 shows the descriptive summary by CCBC and UMBC. CCBC students (mean = 23.94, SD = 7.68) were significantly older than UMBC participants (mean = 20.28, SD = 3.75, $p < 0.05$). There were more women (75%) than men (25%) among the CCBC participants, whereas there was a more equal distribution of women and men among the UMBC participants. Furthermore, the CCBC participants (35.66% white) were racially/ethnically more diverse than the UMBC counterparts (50.96% white). Overall, the descriptive characteristics of CCBC and UMBC are consistent with previous research findings. Community college students are generally older, more racially diverse, first-generation college students, and have work or caregiving responsibilities in addition to college (Lopez and Brown 2004).

Table 2 displays the descriptive characteristics of CBCC and UMBC participants by civic mindedness and civic engagement. First, of the four civic mindedness outcome measures, there was a statistically significant difference between CCBC and UMBC participants in the sense of tools ($\chi^2 = 4.77, p < 0.05$). UMBC participants (90.65%) had greater sense of tools than the CCBC counterparts (80.69%). Although the observed percentage distributions are somewhat different, there was no statistically significant difference in the sense of community, effect, and future between CCBC and UMBC participants.

Table 3 illustrates the descriptive characteristics of civic mindedness and civic engagement by academic programs (e.g., social science majors and all other majors). Regarding the four civic mindedness outcome measures, there were statistically significant differences in the sense of community and tools (all $p < 0.05$). The social science majors were less likely to positively report having the sense of community than all other majors. At the same time, the social science majors were more likely to positively report having the sense of tools than their counterparts. Additionally, regarding the five civic engagement outcome measures, there were

statistically significant differences in four out of five measures including signing a petition, boycotting, attending a political meeting, and donating (all $p < 0.05$) between social science majors and other majors. Overall, social science majors were more likely to be civically engaged than all other majors.

Postsecondary Institutions and Civic Mindedness

This section addresses the first research question: What is the difference in civic mindedness between 2-year community college and 4-year university students? Table 4 shows the estimated odds ratios from the binary logistic regression models of the civic mindedness outcome measures (i.e., sense of community, effect, tools, and future). Results showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the sense of tools between CCBC and UMBC in the unconditional model. However, after adjusting for all covariates in the conditional model, the difference in the sense of tools was no longer statistically significant. For all other civic mindedness outcome measures, there was not a statistically significant difference between those and CCBC and UMBC students in the unconditional models. Therefore, the conditional model was not conducted. Overall, the first research hypothesis was not supported.

Postsecondary Institutions and Civic Engagement

This section addresses the second research question: What is the difference in civic engagement between 2-year community college and 4-year university students? Table 5 shows the estimated odds ratios from the binary logistic regression models of the civic engagement outcome measures (i.e., signed a petition, boycotted or buycotted, participated in a demonstration, attended a political meeting or rally, and donated money or raised funds). There was not a statistically significant association between the civic engagement outcome measures

and CCBC and UMBC students in the unconditional model. As such, the conditional model was not conducted. Overall, the second research hypothesis was not supported.

Social Science Majors and Civic Mindedness

This section addresses the third research question: How are academic programs associated with civic mindedness among postsecondary education students? Results from the binary logistic regressions (Table 4) showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in the sense of community and the sense of tools between social science majors and all other majors in the unconditional model. After adjusting for all covariates, the association between the academic majors and the sense of community, as well as the sense of tools remained statistically significant. Interestingly, social science majors had 0.37 times odds ($p < 0.05$) of seeing themselves as part of the campus community compared to all other majors. Additionally, social science majors had 3.72 times odds ($p < 0.05$) of having the tools to seek out information to develop an informed position on a political and social issue compared to all other majors. Overall, the third research hypothesis was partially supported, but the finding of the sense of community was unexpected.

Social Science Majors and Civic Engagement

Finally, this section addresses the fourth research question: How are academic programs associated with civic engagement among postsecondary education students? Table 5 shows the estimated odds ratios from the binary logistic regression models for the civic engagement outcome measures. The unconditional models showed that social science majors were more likely to sign a petition, boycott, attend political meeting and donate/fundraise. However, in the conditional models, only the association between the academic majors and donating/fundraising remained statistically significant. Specifically, social science majors had 3.19 times odds ($p <$

0.05) of donating/fundraising compared to all other majors. Overall, the fourth hypothesis was only partially supported.

DISCUSSION

This research is among the first studies to examine differences in civic mindedness and civic engagement between types of postsecondary education institutions. The hope of this analysis was to increase democratic participation and strengthen democracy among students by identifying and addressing disparities in civic outcomes. As the results show, the differences in civic outcomes between students at CCBC and UMBC was not observed. This contradicts the existing literature, which suggests that community college students are less civically engaged than university students (Hugo Lopez and Brown 2006, Newell 2014). Yet, this contradiction may indicate the positive roles of community colleges such as CCBC in their students' civic behaviors.

In view of the social capital theory, one may argue that the social relationships – developed through diverse interactions – produce civic skills, such as the ability to acquire knowledge, maintain civil discourse, and understand lived experiences that are different than one's own (Coleman 1988, Putnam 2000). In some ways, colleges and universities are unique institutions that provide opportunities for students to foster new social relationships and learn from each other. Arguably, depending on the characteristics of postsecondary institutions, community colleges and universities could have equivalent civic outcome-related environments. As Bowman (2011) suggests, having a diverse student population adds to students' ability to interact with and learn from diverse peers. In the open-ended questions in the current study, a 24-year old black woman and student at CCBC states, "Going to a community college where the student population is diverse gives me more opportunities to engage in social activity with those

who belong to a different ethnic background than my own.” It should be noted that in the current study, CCBC and UMBC have similar student populations. After all, both institutions are public, coed, and racially/ethnically diverse. Additionally, CCBC and UMBC share a strong collaboration and articulation agreement for many transfer students. Nonetheless, regardless of types of postsecondary education institutions, community colleges and universities have an important role in providing opportunities for diverse interactions and relationship building.

The qualitative data from the open-ended questions also suggested that there are several possible strategies including service-learning embedded courses, student-led government associations, and public forums and debates to enhance students’ civic outcomes in higher education. Indeed, both CCBC and UMBC provide students with similar civic-related co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Not surprisingly, for CCBC and UMBC students, these civic opportunities are centered around their community – Baltimore. For a 21-year old white man and student at CCBC, his understanding of political and social issues can be attributed to watching Baltimore City and Baltimore County executive officials discuss and debate controversial topics at his school. For other several CCBC students, they mentioned how volunteering with the homeless population in Baltimore City with their sociology or psychology class contributed to their understanding of poverty in America and the need to address issues surrounding homelessness. Similarly, UMBC offers alternative spring breaks in Baltimore City, in which students can volunteer with community partners and learn about crucial issues effecting the city. In general, when students are given the opportunity to discuss issues concerning their communities through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, they can make better sense of issues effecting their community, as well as create solutions to address these issues. Overall, diverse student population and civic-related co-curricular and extra-curricular activities centered

on students' local communities, as identified in the current study, are civic outcome promoting factors and are likely applicable to other higher education institutions.

This research discovered that academic programs like the social sciences contribute to civic mindedness. Overall, the social sciences help students develop the tools to seek out information to create an informed position on political and social issues. This is perhaps because the social sciences promote critical thinking regarding complex sociopolitical issues. For a 19-year old white man and student at UMBC, they mentioned how a class on race and poverty in Baltimore City challenged the preconceived notions they had about urban poverty and contributed to their understanding of structural racism. In fact, they said, "My class on race and poverty in Baltimore City really changed my perspective on my city, and gave me a much better understanding of its history, specifically how several events in the city's history have combined to create and perpetuate structural racism, and how those forces have led to the state that the city is in today. I had much more empathy for individuals living in poverty, especially people of color living in poverty in Baltimore City, and was familiar with the appropriate language to discuss these factors after taking this class." In other words, this student was able to gather knowledge on how to properly discuss and understand issues of inequality. Similarly, for an 18-year old white woman and student at CCBC mentioned how a course called, "Race and Minorities in the U.S." shaped her understanding of the struggles that minorities endured. In turn, she was able to discuss and learn about a variety of race- and minority-related topics with classmates whose racial and ethnic backgrounds were different than her own. Overall, the social sciences play an invaluable role in developing informed and engaged citizens.

On contrary, it is surprising to see that those who are social science majors feel less likely to be a part of the campus community compared to all other majors. As Paxton (2002) and

Jennings and Stoker (2004) note, those who feel connected to their communities often express a high commitment to maintaining their communities and engage in civic behaviors – vice versa. One explanation as to why social science majors are less likely to feel connected to their campus community could be that, generally, most colleges and universities value the natural sciences (e.g., science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and workforce preparedness majors (e.g., business and education) over the social sciences. Another explanation could be that social science majors are likely to be transfer students, live at home, and/or have nonacademic responsibilities (e.g., work or caregiving) in addition to college. As a result, social science majors may not have the capacity to engage in on-campus, extracurricular activities. At the same time, it is premature to conclude that social science majors lead to lower sense of community due to the selection effect. That is, lower sense of community could be a motivational factor to pursue social science studies. Our findings (Table 3) showed that social science majors had either greater or equivalent senses of effect, tools, and future compared to other majors.

Despite lower sense of community among social science majors than all other majors, social science majors generally exhibit higher associations of signing a petition, boycotting, attending political meetings and rallies, and donating money or fundraising than all other majors. However, it is likely that other factors like gender, race, religiosity, and even family responsibilities (Benenson 2017; Foster-Bey 2008; McBride, Sherraden, and Pritzker 2006; Musick and Wilson 2006) (see Table 4) may explain the association between social science major and civic engagement. The only exception is that social science majors are more likely to donate to charitable, religious, and political organizations than all other majors even after accounting for demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Social science majors may be more aware of how money can make a difference in shaping social issues. From a social capital

perspective (Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000), in combination with lower sense of community as identified in this research, donating could be a reflection of students' motivation to be more civically engaged and make an impact on society. Nonetheless, further research is needed to understand this phenomenon.

While there are many positive assets to community colleges and 4-year universities, including the contribution of academic programs on students' civic outcomes (Albert 2004; Benenson 2017; Doyle and Skinner 2017), it is important to highlight the challenges and barriers that prevent students from being participating in civic engagement, regardless of the type of higher education institution they attend, as expressed in the qualitative data. Generally, students are unable to participate in civic engagement activities because of lack of time (i.e., full-time student, work outside of school, and caregiving responsibilities), lack of transportation, and limited knowledge of civic opportunities nearby. Students recommended that colleges and universities accommodate students with scheduling conflicts, as well as students with children. This can include offering civic engagement opportunities when classes are not in session, during the evenings, and on weekends, as well as encouraging children to attend, or by offering childcare. Additionally, colleges and universities should increase student outreach to better promote civic opportunities that are nearby and on-campus. This includes directly connecting to students via email or in-person. Also, students recommended that colleges and universities invite key speakers, like politicians to the schools. This would allow students to hear from different backgrounds, as well as learn more about the communities in which the politicians serve. Lastly, students recommended there be ways to vote on campus. This can include holding voter drives. Although only based on the current case study data, these suggestions should be useful for practice in higher education as well as informative to future research.

LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

This research is not without its limitations. First, this research is a case study with a convenience sample from only two postsecondary institutions. As such, findings from this research is not generalizable to a wide range of community colleges and universities, or student populations. Nonetheless, this case study provides insights on types of institutions and academic majors for future research when exploring differences in civic mindedness and civic engagement. Second, although the outcome measures of civic mindedness and civic engagement are based on a national survey, survey items were not entirely comprehensive. Future research should consider expanding components of civic mindedness to include civic knowledge (i.e., understanding of the legislative, judiciary, and executive branch), as well as expand components of civic engagement to include electoral behavior (i.e., voting behaviors at the local, state, and federal level, as well as voting in student-led government organizations). Third, for the information on students' level of civic mindedness and civic engagement prior to entering college was not available. For that, this case study cannot empirically determine whether postsecondary education institutions in fact affected civic outcomes. As discussed earlier, selection bias cannot be ruled out. Therefore, future research should consider the pre- and post-test design (e.g., assessing pre-college civic mindedness and civic engagement). Fourth, while the comments from the civic engagement survey served as rich qualitative data, future research should consider more rigorous data collections such as face-to-face interviews and focus groups to capture wider ranges of ideas. Lastly, this survey solely focused on students at the unit of analysis. To further understand the role that community colleges and universities play in developing active citizenship, future research should consider expanding the analysis to the institutional level and examining higher education institutions' mission statements, civic requirements, and civics-

related professional development training for faculty and staff. Furthermore, the research showed that importance of community for students local to Baltimore. Future research should consider expanding the unit of analysis on students to include in-state and out-of-state students relative to the community in which the college or university serves. It is important to understand how out-of-state students respond to learning about communities that are different than their own.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this case study was to examine differences in civic outcomes between types of academic institutions, as well as academic programs. There were no statistically significant differences in the civic outcomes between community college and 4-year university. However, majoring in the social science was associated with a specific type of civic mindedness (e.g., sense of tools or to gather information to develop an informed position on a political and social issue). At the same time, social science majors were less likely to see themselves as a part of campus community than other majors. Moreover, social science majors reported more engagement in a specific activity – donating and fund-raisingfundraising. These findings and discussions made contributions to the literature. Also, the descriptive statistics and qualitative data suggested that community colleges that are as civically mindful and engaged as their 4-year universities seemed to have the few characteristics (e.g., diverse students, co-/extra-curricular activities) in common. Nonetheless, additional scientific inquiry is needed to advance the understanding of civic outcomes in different types of higher education institutions and academic programs.

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Table 1. Descriptive characteristics of the Community College Baltimore County (CCBC) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) students by covariates ($N = 252$)

Variables	CCBC ($N = 145$)	UMBC ($N = 107$)
Age	*	*
Mean (<i>SD</i>)	23.94 (7.68)	20.28 (3.75)
Gender	*	*
Men	25.17%	49.50%
Women	74.83%	50.50%
Race	*	*
White	35.66%	50.96%
Black	39.86%	11.54%
Other	24.48%	37.50%
Religiosity	N.S.	N.S.
Very religious	18.88%	13.46%
# of Hours Worked Per Week	*	*
Mean (<i>SD</i>)	2.60 (1.63)	1.67 (1.42)
(0) 0 hours	16.08%	30.77%
(1) 1-10 hours	9.09%	16.35%
(2) 11-20 hours	23.08%	20.19%
(3) 21-30 hours	14.69%	21.15%
(4) 31-40 hours	24.48%	10.58%
(5) >40 hours	12.59%	0.96%
Provided Care for Dependent	*	*
Yes	35.66%	15.38%
No	64.34%	84.62%
Enrollment Status	*	*
Full-time	61.11%	92.45%
Part-time	38.89%	7.55%
# of Years in College	NS	NS
Mean (<i>SD</i>)	1.10 (1.48)	0.99 (1.53)
<1 year	50.69%	62.26%
1 year	17.36%	6.60%
2 years	15.97%	16.04%
3 years	10.42%	6.60%
4 years	2.78%	3.77%
>4 years	2.77%	4.72%
First Generation College Student	*	*
Yes	31.35%	13.21%
No	68.75%	86.79%
College Major	*	*
Social science majors	19.31%	32.71%
All other majors	80.69%	67.29%

*indicates the statistically significant associations with CCBC and UMBC ($p < 0.05$)

NS indicates not statistically significant associations with CCBC and UMBC

N shows the unweighted sample sizes

Students aged ≥ 18 years and ≤ 40 years within all predictor variables for CCBC and UMBC

Table 2. Descriptive characteristics of the Community College Baltimore County (CCBC) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) student by domain ($N = 252$)

Variables	CCBC ($N = 145$)	UMBC ($N = 107$)
<u>Civic Mindedness</u>		
Sense of community (Positive)	72.41%	77.57%
Sense of effect (Positive)	93.79%	91.59%
Sense of tools (Positive)	80.69%*	90.65%
Sense of future (Positive)	87.59%	78.50%
<u>Civic Engagement</u>		
Signed a petition (Have participated)	88.97%	92.52%
Boycotted (Have participated)	75.17%	71.96%
Participated in a demonstration (Have participated)	80.69%	76.64%
Attended a political meeting or rally (Have participated)	68.28%	73.83%
Donated money or raised funds (Have participated)	84.14%	73.83%

*indicates the statistically significant associations with CCBC and UMBC ($p < 0.05$)

N shows the unweighted sample sizes

Students aged ≥ 18 years and ≤ 40 years within all predictor variables for CCBC and UMBC

Table 3. Descriptive characteristics of social science majors and all other majors by domain ($N = 195$)

Variables	Social Science Majors ($N = 63$)	All Other Majors ($N = 189$)
<u>Civic Mindedness</u>		
Sense of community (Positive)	63.49%*	78.31%
Sense of effect (Positive)	95.24%	92.06%
Sense of tools (Positive)	95.24%*	81.48%
Sense of future (Positive)	84.13%	83.60%
<u>Civic Engagement</u>		
Signed a petition (Have participated)	98.41%*	87.83%
Boycotted (Have participated)	84.13%*	70.37%
Participated in a demonstration (Have participated)	80.95%	78.31%
Attended a political meeting or rally (Have participated)	82.54%*	66.67%
Donated money or raised funds (Have participated)	90.48%*	77.78%

*indicates the statistically significant associations with social science majors and all other majors ($p < 0.05$)

N shows the unweighted sample sizes

Students aged ≥ 18 years and ≤ 40 years within all predictor variables for social science and all other majors

Table 4. Estimated Odds Ratios from Binary Logistic Regression Models By Civic Mindedness Outcome Measures

Variables	Sense of Community		Sense of Effect		Sense of Tools		Sense of Future	
	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)
UMBC (vs. CCBC)	1.32 (0.72, 2.36)	1.91 (0.91, 4.02)	0.71 (0.28, 1.88)	-	2.32 (1.07, 5.02)*	1.94 (0.72, 5.23)	0.52 (0.26, 1.02) ⁺	-
Social science majors (vs. all other majors)	0.48 (0.26, 0.89)*	0.37 (0.18, 0.75)*	1.72 (0.48, 6.16)	-	4.55 (1.35, 15.34)*	3.72 (1.05, 13.15)*	1.04 (0.48, 2.26)	-
Age		1.08 (1.01, 1.15)*		-		0.97 (0.91, 1.04)		-
Women (vs. men)		1.38 (0.69, 2.76)		-		0.87 (0.37, 2.03)		-
Black (vs. white)		1.57 (0.69, 2.76)		-		0.56 (0.22, 1.46)		-
Other (vs. white)		1.74 (0.77, 3.91)		-		0.67 (0.25, 1.92)		-
Religiosity (Very religious)		1.14 (0.83, 1.56)		-		1.15 (0.78, 1.69)		-
# of hours worked (1-5: lower – higher)		0.96 (0.78, 1.19)		-		1.12 (0.88, 1.43)		-
Provided care		1.11 (0.47, 2.60)		-		0.66 (0.26, 1.66)		-
Full-time (vs. part-time)		1.21 (0.54, 2.71)		-		1.11 (0.46, 2.67)		-
# of years in college		0.75 (0.60, 0.92)		-		1.12 (0.85, 1.47)		-
First generation college student		0.64 (0.30, 1.37)		-		0.70 (0.31, 1.58)		-

* indicates the statistical significance ($p < 0.05$)

a. The conditional model was constructed only if at least one of the predictor variables was significant

OR = Odds ratio; CI = confidence interval

Table 5. Estimated Odds Ratios from Binary Logistic Regression Models by Civic Engagement Outcome Measures

Variables	Signed a petition		Boycotted		Participated in a demonstration		Attended a political meeting or rally		Donated money or raised funds	
	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)	Unconditional Model 1 OR (95% CI)	Conditional Model 2 ^a OR (95% CI)
UMBC (vs. CCBC)	1.53 (0.63, 3.73)	1.62 (0.49, 5.40)	0.85 (0.48, 1.49)	0.58 (0.26, 1.29)	0.79 (0.43, 1.44)	-	1.31 (0.75, 2.28)	1.20 (0.59, 2.50)	0.62 (0.33, 1.16)	0.61 (0.27, 1.36)
Social science majors (vs. all other majors)	8.59 (1.14, 64.97)*	5.74 (0.71, 46.58)	2.23 (1.06, 4.70)*	2.16 (0.91, 5.12)	1.18 (0.57, 2.41)	-	2.36 (1.15, 4.84)*	2.16 (0.99, 4.74)	2.71 (1.09, 6.73)*	3.19 (1.22, 8.21)*
Age		0.96 (0.89, 1.04)		1.02 (0.96, 1.08)		-		0.97 (0.92, 1.03)		1.00 (0.94, 1.07)
Women (vs. men)		3.82 (1.40, 10.45)*		1.74 (0.87, 3.49)		-		1.35 (0.72, 2.53)		0.77 (0.37, 1.59)
Black (vs. white)		0.36 (0.09, 1.38)		0.58 (0.25, 1.34)		-		0.67 (0.31, 1.45)		1.11 (0.45, 2.72)
Other (vs. white)		0.33 (0.09, 1.29)		0.60 (0.27, 1.34)		-		0.39 (0.19, 0.82)*		0.97 (0.43, 2.22)
Religiosity (Very religious)		0.77 (0.47, 1.26)		0.68 (0.49, 0.93)*		-		0.83 (0.62, 1.12)		0.90 (0.64, 1.26)
# of hours worked (1-5: lower – higher)		1.06 (0.78, 1.42)		1.03 (0.83, 1.27)		-		0.99 (0.82, 1.20)		1.11 (0.89, 1.39)
Provided care Full-time (vs. part-time)		0.55 (0.17, 1.78)		0.37 (0.17, 0.82)*		-		1.11 (0.53, 2.35)		0.59 (0.25, 1.40)
# of years in college		0.69 (0.21, 2.32)		2.17 (0.98, 4.82)		-		1.28 (0.61, 2.66)		0.47 (0.18, 1.22)
First generation college student		1.05 (0.74, 1.48)		1.19 (0.94, 1.52)		-		1.04 (0.84, 1.27)		0.89 (0.71, 1.11)
		1.05 (0.35, 3.12)		1.36 (0.63, 2.92)		-		1.32 (0.65, 2.66)		1.26 (0.54, 2.91)

* indicates the statistically significant associations with CCBC and UMBC ($p < 0.05$)

a. The conditional model was constructed only if at least one of the predictor variables was significant

OR = Odds ratio; CI = confidence interval