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MODELING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ATTITUDE AND YOUTH ACTIVISM

by

MICHAEL ARMSTRONG

Under the Direction of Gabriel P. Kuperminc

ABSTRACT

Despite existing literature that demonstrates the relation between an attitude of social responsibility and activism; few studies have examined the underlying factor structure of social responsibility. The current study had two goals. The first goal was to examine the structure of a measure of social responsibility attitude for urban adolescents. The second goal was to examine the associations of social responsibility with civic and political activism. The participants were 221 adolescents from schools and youth serving organizations in metropolitan Atlanta, GA. Confirmatory factor analysis of social responsibility items revealed that a model with a single latent factor explained the data better than a two-factor model with one latent factor representing neighborhood social responsibility and the other representing global social responsibility. There were significant positive relations between social responsibility and civic activism and political activism when controlling for parental activism and peer activism. This study suggests that a

social responsibility attitude may exist as a single factor amongst urban adolescents and it has added empirical support to show that higher levels of social responsibility are associated with greater depth of involvement in civic and political activism. Implications for both theory and practice are discussed.

INDEX WORDS: Social responsibility, Youth activism, Civic engagement, Political activism, Adolescence, Sociopolitical development

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by

MICHAEL ARMSTRONG

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

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2011

MODELING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ATTITUDE AND YOUTH ACTIVISM

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May 2011

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation and the body of work that represents my graduate career to my wife and children who have put up with me and supported me as I attempt to make a contribution to the communities I have devoted my life to. Thank you. I am because you are.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for the guidance and instruction of my committee members who have helped to make my completion of this study possible. Thank you specifically to Rod Watts whose radical theories and commitment to integrating action with theory will continue to serve as a model for me in my future work. I would also like to thank Jack Barile who has always been patient and willing to share his expertise regarding complex statistics and utilization of Mp*lus*.

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INTRODUCTION

In some ways, social activism is on the rise. As was evident in the last Presidential election and in the recent rise of the Tea Party, America appears to be experiencing a resurgence of activism. Although prominent during the presidential and congressional campaigns, increases in activist behaviors have been occurring for nearly two decades. A number of recent studies have demonstrated that various forms of activism are being practiced by a growing number of Americans, especially among younger people. Voting rates for young people were slightly lower in 2008 than in 2006; however these voting rates remain at their highest levels since young people were first given the right to vote in 1972 (American University, 2008). Beyond voting, over one-third of young people reported engaging in volunteer activities between 2002 and 2006, and their rate of volunteering at 36% remains higher than adults at 34% (The Center for Information and Research on *Civic* Learning and Engagement, 2006). A separate study conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service (2006) supports the findings of CIRCLE by demonstrating that volunteering rates among young people have steadily increased from 1990 through 2006 to their highest levels since the 1970s.

Looking beyond these conventional forms of civic activism captured by indicators such as voting and volunteering rates, increases in participation have also been measured for more political forms of activism. While not as drastic as the increases in volunteering and voting, young people reported increases in their rate of participation in political campaigns from 1% in 2002 to 2% in 2006 (Lopez, Levine, Both, Kiesa, Kirby, & Marcelo, 2006). CIRCLE's national study on the political health of the nation in 2006 confirms the findings of Lopez et al. and further describes that in addition to formal participation in political campaigns, the rate young people participated in informal campaign activities such as displaying propaganda (20% in 2002 to 23% in 2006) and donating money to a campaign (4% in 2002 to 7% in 2006) has increased.

These slight increases are also evident in more grass-roots forms of political activism. From 2002 to 2006 the rate of youth participation in protests increased from 7% to 11%, 2% more youth signed online petitions (16% in 2006), and 1% more youth contacted a public official (11% in 2006) and engaged in political canvassing (3% in 2006) (CIRCLE, 2006).

These increases in activism are promising for our society and for the communities in which activists reside. Aside from the potential positive social change and social justice that can result from activism, increases in activism may also provide individual benefits to those engaging in activism. This is especially true for adolescents who are in the process of developing mature social identities. Promoting activism among adolescents should be a salient issue within adolescent development as recent literature suggests that participation in various forms of activism may enhance academic performance, increase the likelihood of future civic engagement, and aid in the development of a national identity. Research findings on the effects of civic and political activism on adolescent development are somewhat inconsistent, but are generally positive (Reinders & Youniss, 2006). Existing research has positively and significantly linked civic engagement in the form of community service to scholastic performance (Davila & Mora, 2007), to reducing problem behaviors (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; Kuperminc, Holditch, & Allen, 2001; Larson, 2000), and to enhancing self-esteem and social relatedness (Maton, 1990).

Given the potential for activist behaviors to generate positive outcomes, it is imperative for researchers to shift the focus of research from the outcomes of participation towards identifying what factors increase the likelihood that an individual will engage in activist behaviors. Although the body of literature focused on this topic is growing, it remains sparse. While not directed specifically at activist behaviors, the work of social psychology suggests that personal attitudes are a significant factor in predicting or determining behavior. Azjen and

Fishbein's (1980) highly influential theory of reasoned action first posited that attitudes along with social norms significantly predict behavioral intention. Numerous studies spawned by this theory have confirmed the relationship of attitudes with behavior (Sheppard, Hartwick & Warshaw, 1998). Despite the strong base of research supporting the attitude-behavior link, a substantial body of research calls into question this relationship and represents a departure from the notion that attitudes and behaviors are directly related. For instance, findings from Fazio and Zanna's (1981) study on religious attitudes and behaviors found no predictive value of attitudes towards behavior. Given their findings, Fazio and Zanna (1981) contend that research on attitudes and behaviors should focus on identifying mediating and moderating variables.

With respect to the political development of adolescents, recent works by developmental and community psychologists have identified an attitude of social responsibility as a predictor of activist behavior. While both the conception and application of social responsibility varies across the literature from a social attitude to a sense of civic commitment to simply a pattern of moral behavior, a common description of the construct can be distilled from various definitions (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Flanagan et al., 1998; Gough et al., 1952): Social responsibility is a concern with broader ethical issues beyond the self and characterized by an obligation to a common good. Multiple studies demonstrate the positive effect that participation in civic and political activism has on individual levels of social responsibility (Reinders & Youniss, 2006; Leming, 2001; Yates & Youniss, 1998; 1997). Still, other studies suggest that social responsibility may predict the level at which individuals will engage in activist behaviors (Pancer, 2007; Watts & Guessous, 2006; Flanagan et al, 1998; Berkowitz & Lutterman, 1968).

Concurrently, researchers have attempted to validate the construct of social responsibility itself and expand the construct's nomological net; various scale derivations have been developed and tested for decades (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). For instance, Pancer and colleagues (2000)

developed a highly reliable measure of social responsibility for youth, the *Youth Social Responsibility Scale*, that captures adolescent views of the normative responsibility people should have for others and society. Starrett (1996) has further refined the construct by developing and validating a measure of global social responsibility that taps into individual attitudes regarding responsibilities toward global issues. To shed further light on the relation between an attitude of social responsibility and activist behaviors, this dissertation proposes to explore the factor structure of social responsibility and examine the association of social responsibility with activist behaviors among a sample of urban adolescents. Prior to fully describing the nature of the present study current literature on the constructs of interest will be reviewed.

Activism

There is no widely accepted single definition of activism, as evidenced by the broad range of terms used by scholars across disciplines to capture esoteric or issue-specific definitions – civic engagement, citizenship, political engagement, community service, volunteerism, etc. This ambiguity in the definition of activism may be due to discipline-specific uses of the term or as Youniss & Levine (2009) describe in their book on engaging young people in civic life, the ambiguity in the definition of activism across time may be due to the need subsequent generations have "to forge a definition that fits its history because younger and older generations view the society differently" (p. 25).

To account for the spectrum of activities that make up the general conception of activism, this study takes the position of Westheimer and Kahne (2003) who capture the broad range of activism in their typology of good citizenship in the U.S. According to their conception, 1) a personally responsible citizen demonstrates citizenship through volunteering, 2) a participatory citizen engages in local affairs and stays current on local and national issues, and 3) a justice-

oriented citizen emphasizes collective work towards community betterment. According to this typology, an active citizenship moves beyond the civic domain of community service and conventional politics (i.e., voting and participating in local-level associations) towards justice-oriented work that is often characterized as political. Accepting a broad definition for the term captures the various activist behaviors that are categorized across disciplines.

For the purposes of this study, activism or activist behaviors refer to the various forms of civic engagement and justice-oriented political action. The definition of activism used for this study does not imply that activism is restricted to these two realms or that the other forms of activism are unimportant, rather a focus is only established for the sake of clarity and measurement. Moreover, civic engagement and political activism represent the dominant types of activism that have been at the center of research.

Civic Engagement

The psychological perspective broadens the conceptualization of activism from that of political science to include citizenship and the range of civic activities in which youth participate (Flanagan & Faison, 2001; Flanagan & Gallay, 1995; Sherrod et al., 2002; Yates & Youniss, 1998). Research based on this definition reveals how civic engagement experiences in adolescence play a key role in helping adults define their political stances in adulthood and in community service (Flanagan & Tucker, 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998). Taking these civic activities into account represents a shift towards a greater emphasis on the behaviors of adolescents and beyond political science's narrower focus on political attitudes. Given this relation between political understanding and activism, a greater understanding of the civic activities that youth participate in is necessary. These activities can range from signing petitions, volunteering, donating to a cause, to working on political campaigns (Corning & Myers, 2002).

Activism in the form of civic engagement has been the focus of a substantial body of research and discourse over the last decade. Especially as it relates to adolescents, civic engagement has been both the goal and practice of a number of positive youth development programs (Larson, 2000; Yates & Youniss, 1999). In his article emphasizing the shift of developmental psychology towards a focus on positive youth development, Larson (2000) argues that a characteristic of "initiative" is critical to the fostering of civic engagement and leadership skills among youth while at the same time describing how the experiences of civic engagement, which have the potential to involve youth in meaningful activities, may also lead in reciprocal fashion to the development of initiative.

Youniss and Levine (2009) explicitly link the concept of civic engagement to activities that promote liberty and democracy. This conceptualization of civic engagement naturally includes such conventional activities as voting, volunteering, community service, and participating in political discourse; however Youniss and Levine acknowledge that this list is incomplete. They contend that "there can be no consensus" about all the specific behaviors that constitute civic engagement as determination of civic engagement activities is dependent upon one's moral and ideological stance (p. 273). For instance, one who supports the current sovereign political establishment may only consider participatory and supportive activities such as voting and mandatory civic education as acceptable civic engagement, while civil disobedient behaviors such as protest or revolution may be a part of the civic engagement lexicon of someone considering current social and political order to be unjust. Despite the acknowledged ambiguity of what behaviors are considered to be a part of civic engagement, Youniss and Levine (2009) present a basic list of behaviors that can be considered a part of the continuum of activist behaviors.

Youniss and Levine's sentiment that the concept of civic engagement may not capture the full range of potential activist behaviors is also apparent in sociology. In his treatise to establish a civic agenda for higher learning institutions, Ehrlich (2000) provides a definition of activism in an effort to promote civic engagement opportunities within colleges and universities. Activism as civic engagement "means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities…It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and nonpolitical processes" (p. IX). The problem as Ehrlich notes is that contemporary American universities tend to emphasize the nonpolitical processes and political activism is not encouraged. In attempting to reconcile whether student activism can be a part of the civic agenda of the 21st century, Ehrlich echoes the frustration of strictly political activists (i.e., justice oriented) in the college environment. He believes that a less political civic agenda that excludes true student activism will only serve to "domesticate" student impulses for justice and promote conventional volunteer and service activities. Ehrlich challenges conventional notions of civic engagement and activism by asking "If the civic agenda does not involve social change, what is the point of it?" (p. 370).

Recent work by Watts, Williams, and Jagers (2003) also makes the distinction between civic engagement and political activism in order to develop and advance a theory of sociopolitical development. The authors note that a distinction between civic and more political behaviors is helpful in understanding how individuals come to apply the insight drawn from a sociopolitical analysis to confront oppression (Watts et al., 2003). A sole focus on civic engagement thus may exclude a range of behaviors that do not fit into the civic domain.

Political Activism

While the concept of civic engagement is helpful to further discourse and provides a broad framework to understand a sub-set of behaviors that constitute activism, the conclusions

emerging from the definitions of civic engagement provided in the literature suggests a limitation of civic engagement to truly capture activism – the omission of more overt political engagement behaviors. Ehrlich's (2000) question challenges the notion of civic engagement and demands the inclusion of more politically-oriented activities as a part of activism's definition. Morally and politically, there is a strong distinction between civic engagement and political activism.

Considering this distinction, a growing body of scholars has shifted attention towards more political forms of activism and their knowledge base further informs our understanding of what activism entails. In particular, community psychology has moved beyond emphasizing the importance of including justice-oriented political activities within the concept of activism towards identifying specific behaviors that can be considered political activism. In describing an emerging sociopolitical development theory, Watts, Williams and Jagers (2003) provide a list of justice-oriented behaviors that can be characterized more as political activism than simply civic activism. They define an activist as someone who utilizes specific political methods to execute social change strategies. These methods include pressure tactics aimed at gaining concessions, operating an organization with a mission of social change or liberation, community mobilization for protests or boycotts, and even armed struggle. These types of activities are in stark contrast to more conventional activities (e.g., voting, fundraising for a political party, volunteer community service) that are encompassed within civic engagement.

Whereas Watts and colleagues (2003) differentiate conventional notions of activism from more justice-oriented political activism in an effort to describe how people come to confront oppression, Lerner (2004) delineates activism and its associated behaviors in an effort to emphasize the value and role of both political and civic engagement in defending liberty and justice in our democratic society. Lerner is a part of a body of psychological scholars who believe that civic action is critical to the functioning and maintenance of our democratic society

(Flanagan & Tucker, 1999; Lerner, 2004; Sherrod et al., 2002; Youniss & Levine, 2009). Although accepting a broad definition of activism to demonstrate the role of civic engagement in our society, Lerner does suggest that a specific focus on political activism is also valuable. He broadly defines civic engagement as contributions to civil society that are both moral and dutiful. At the same time, he notes that civic engagement includes behaviors that "support justice, freedom, equity, and democracy and that support a social order that ensures the availability of liberty to all." (p. 19). In Lerner's definition of activism as civic engagement, justice-oriented political activism is implied as a required component of a general definition of activism. He later refines this notion of justice-oriented civic engagement by defining activism as behaviors that "sustain and enhance political, economic, and environmental justice" (p.159). Thus, a consideration of both justice-oriented, political activism and service-oriented, civic engagement is essential in defining activism for this study.

The Benefits of Activism

Although the literature remains inconsistent in how various activist behaviors may be categorized, behaviors in both typologies represent individual or collective efforts at creating change in various socio-environmental levels (e.g., reducing individual stress by volunteering at a soup kitchen or establishing just social policies as a result of political protest or voter mobilization). Regardless of how scholars characterize activist behaviors, the potential benefits of activism are agreed upon across disciplines.

Levine and Youniss (2009) have described how youth activism is beneficial to the institutions and communities in which they participate. Settings such as schools, non-profit organizations, neighborhoods, and governments function better when the assets of active youth are utilized. The findings of a multi-site evaluation of an Atlanta youth internship program, the Summer Youth Fellows Program, confirms the positive effect youth can have on non-profit

organizations and neighborhoods in which they are active (Armstrong & House, 2007; Guessous, Armstrong, House, & Prescott-Adams, 2006), while the historical results of student activism in the U.S. Civil Rights and Feminist movements are evidence of how youth activism can benefit governmental and other institutional systems. Flanagan and Van Horn (2003) posit that active youth participation results in a strengthened community spirit and increased mutual respect between youth and adults which leads to improvements in the functioning of these settings. Alternatively, Kahne & Middaugh (2009) offer an explanation rooted in systems change by arguing that youth activism enhances political equity in that individuals who are politically active receive more attention from the government.

Aside from the benefit to the social and political contexts activists engage in, there is growing evidence that engagement in activist behaviors also results in a range of individual benefits that includes identity development, reductions in problem behaviors, and the promotion of positive development. Literature from developmental psychology demonstrates how engaging in activism helps to shape the political identity of adolescents. Research on political development is revealing that youth's understanding of the political aspects of society is based on their participation in civic and political activities and that these experiences play a key role in helping them define their political stances in adulthood (Flanagan & Tucker, 1999; Yates & Youniss, 1998; Youniss & Yates, 1997). What emerges specifically from political and civic activism experiences is a greater understanding of the political world and this understanding (i.e., social analysis) is linked to the identity development of adolescents and also to their future activism as adults (Yates & Youniss, 1998; Flanagan & Gallay, 1995).

Beyond identity formation, engagement in activism also promotes healthy and successful development for adolescents (Hart & Kirshner, 2009; Pancer, Pratt, Hunsbeger, & Alisar, 2007). Healthy development includes reductions in problem behaviors and the promotion of positive

development. Youth who are involved in civic and political activism have been shown to be less likely to engage in risk behaviors such as drug and alcohol use (Barber et al, 2001; Eccles & Barber, 1999), risky sexual behavior (Kirby, 1999, 2002), truancy and school dropout (Flanagan & Van Horn, 2003; Janosz et al, 1997), and criminal activity (Mahoney, 2000). At the same time, additional research is revealing how engagement in activism is related to positive developmental outcomes for adolescents. For instance, existing research has positively and significantly linked civic and political engagement to improved scholastic performance (Davila & Mora, 2007; Barber, Eccles, & Stone, 2001), enhanced self-esteem (Pancer et al., 2007; Smith, 1999; Maton, 1990), and improved personal relationships (Maton, 1990).

Measuring Activism

Having described the concept of activism and highlighting its importance to the healthy development of adolescents and the settings they engage in, current literature on measuring the concept must be distilled to further clarify the nature of this study. The clear division between civic engagement and true political activism noted in the literature and by more radical ideologies (e.g., Ehrlich, 2000; Watts et al., 2003) is somewhat echoed in psychometrics. For instance, Pancer, Pratt, and Hunsberger (2000) differentiate between political, community, helping, and responding behaviors in their *Youth Inventory of Involvement (YII)* scale which measures the frequency with which youth engage in various activist behaviors.

A spectrum of activist behaviors has also been identified by Corning and Myers (2002) who developed the Activism Orientation Scale (AOS) which measures the likelihood one may engage in various conventional activist or “high-risk” activist behaviors. The AOS avoids issue-specific content to remain applicable across diverse settings and political movements, and the scale provides a range of politically-oriented behaviors to capture a wide variety of activist behaviors. Factor analysis of data captured by the AOS has validated the presence of an activist

behavior typology. Corning & Myers dichotomize this typology as either conventional activism or high-risk activism. Behaviors that have been defined as civic engagement typically fall under conventional activism while justice-oriented political engagement behaviors are more likely to be categorized as high-risk activism.

Whereas both Pancer et al. (2000) and Corning and Myers (2007) developed scales that capture a variety of activist behaviors and demonstrated the multi-faceted types of activism other measures of activism have taken more narrow approaches by focusing on a single type of activism. For instance, Verba, Scholzman, Brady (1995) summarize a number of scales that utilize self-report measures to specifically report engagement in civic activism behaviors such as voting, volunteering, campaign work, contacting public officials, or in donating money to various social causes. Given the interest to examine activism as both civic and political engagement, this study utilizes Pancer and colleagues (2000) YII scale to measure adolescent engagement in activism.

Although for the sake of measurement and organizational programming, it may be important to make the distinction between the various types of activism; recent literature suggests that this distinction may not be as important to the empowerment of youth and to the positive developmental outcomes noted above (McGuire & Gamble, 2006; Morgan & Streb, 2001). It may not be the type of activism an adolescent engages in which benefits them psychologically, but the depth of their involvement that may prove to be more important. McGuire and Gamble (2006) found that the positive outcomes of resulting from participation in community service such as community belonging and social responsibility are more determined by the level of psychological engagement experienced by participating youth than other independent predictors. Civic and political engagement activities that provide opportunities for intensive experiences and social interactions are strongly associated with adolescent sense of

agency (Yates & Youniss, 1996). Activities and roles for youth that are not considered meaningful do not enhance sense of agency, and in fact undermine any sense of ownership youth may have with an organization or project (Larson et al., 2005; Morgan & Streb, 2001). Given the importance placed on the intensity of activist experiences rather than the frequency, this study utilized a measure of depth of involvement in activist behaviors using the Youth Inventory of Involvement (Pancer et al., 2000). Additional details on the scale can be found in the methods section.

A Social Responsibility Attitude

As noted earlier, a significant body of social psychology literature points to attitudes as a determinant of behaviors. Considering the relationship of attitudes and behavior along with the positive benefits that result from activist behaviors, it remains highly imperative to examine what attitude(s) may predict engagement in activism by youth. As suggested by the literature, an attitude of social responsibility is a valuable construct to consider in determining how to predict engagement in activist behaviors (Pancer et al., 2007; Flanagan et al., 1998). Although definitions of social responsibility vary across time and disciplines, it is generally understood to be a concern with broader ethical issues beyond the self and characterized by an obligation to a common good (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Flanagan et al., 1998; Gough, McClosky, and Meehl, 1952). The lack of consensus on a conceptual understanding of social responsibility necessitates operationalizing the construct so that its predictive value can be measured.

Operationalizing a Social Responsibility Attitude

An understanding of social responsibility as a concern for moral and social issues, as an expression of duty and loyalty, and a disapproval of privilege is evident in the literature as early as 1952 in a Social Responsibility Scale developed by Gough and colleagues (1952). As part of their research to determine personality variables that could be used to predict political

participation, Gough and colleagues (1952) developed the scale by assessing high school youth and college adults on theoretically related concerns of social and moral issues, disapproval of privilege, emphasis on duties and self-discipline, sense of trust and confidence in the world. The researchers noted that students who scored high on the scale were considered by peers to be the most responsible students, and they possessed a deeper concern for broad ethical and moral problems and possessed a stronger sense of justice.

Berkowitz and Lutterman (1968) expanded upon this early conception of the construct by adding a dimension of altruism in their version of a Social Responsibility Scale. The authors describe social responsibility as a personal orientation "to help people even when there is nothing to be gained from others" (p. 170). The researchers measured social responsibility in adults by tapping into attitudes related to proper individual duty to help others and to address broad political and social issues (e.g., unemployment and social security). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to statements that applied the political and social issues to their communities and country (i.e., the United States). Scores on their scale were positively related to social class and education; higher scorers were more likely to be involved in faith-based or community based organizations, and were more interested in politics. Evident in these early conceptions of social responsibility is a commitment of socially responsible individuals to act selflessly out of duty.

More recently, Flanagan and colleagues (1998) have provided a somewhat different conception of social responsibility in their multi-national comparison of adolescent volunteer service and environmental variables. Rather than a general altruistic attitude to serve the common good of others within one's immediate community, the authors describe the construct more from a nationalistic perspective. "Other", as inferred by their conception of social responsibility, is considered to be geographically bound such as to other people who may share

one's membership in a country or a culturally-defined society. Referring to social responsibility as civic commitment, the authors describe the construct as "the importance adolescents attach to public interest as a personal life goal" (p.459). The public in this description refers to one's own country or society, and public interest refers to the importance one places on doing something to help one's country and society now and in the future.

Ehrlich (2000) continues a similar line of thinking as Flanagan and colleagues (1998) in his conception of social responsibility. Narrowing the focus of responsibility from one's nation or society to that of one's own community, Ehrlich refers to the construct of social responsibility as civic responsibility. He describes civic responsibility as understanding how one's community operates, being aware of its needs and assets, and being willing to enhance the life of one's community and to work collectively with fellow community members to resolve concerns.

Expanding Social Responsibility

Inherent in these earlier conceptions of social responsibility is membership in some group, typically a nation or one's community. What becomes apparent in the evolving conceptions of social responsibility is a distinction between the varying socio-environmental levels to which social responsibility can be measured and applied. The scope of measuring an individual's social responsibility appears to be limited by the context to which a specific social responsibility scale has been developed to measure. The early conceptions of the construct approach measuring social responsibility as duty to friends and country (Gough et al., 1952; Berkowitz & Lutterman, 1968) while more recent iterations of the scales have focused measurement of the construct to specific civic boundaries of either one's country or community although they have not been labeled as such (Ehrlich, 2000; Flanagan et al, 1998).

Diverging from this trend in measuring social responsibility as applied to specific contexts like a neighborhood or nation, Pancer and colleagues (2000) developed and tested a

scale for measuring social responsibility in adolescents, the Youth Social Responsibility Scale (YSRS) that assessed a generalized or global attitude of social responsibility without being limited by geography. Most of the items in their scale assess individual attitudes toward broad social and moral issues such as poverty, injustice, racism, and the environment, as they relate to the larger world. The researchers assessed agreement to items such as "Young people have an important role to play in making the world a better place" to tap into youth's views about normative responsibility towards other people.

Pancer and colleagues' (2000) focus on measuring social responsibility more generally is a better reflection of classical moral development theory. The final stages of moral development in both Kohlberg's (1963) and Gilligan's (1982) theories assert that the post-conventional level of reasoning relies on abstract ethical principles to judge moral and just behaviors rather than external rules and boundaries (e.g., race, creed, class, sexual orientation, nationality, etc.). Likewise, the highest level of Eisenberg's (1986) stage theory of prosocial reasoning states that justification for engagement in prosocial behaviors is based on values, responsibilities, the desire to improve society, and the belief in the equality of all people. Implicit in these highest stages of moral reasoning is a conception of true social responsibility which considers the welfare of all members of a society, not just one's own country or community.

Although an enhancement to defining and measuring social responsibility, Pancer and colleagues' (2000) YSRS does not explicitly reference the growing sentiment among activist and researchers who demand a more global perspective towards research and social change strategies. For instance, Smith and Pangsapa (2008) insist that in the struggle to promote environmental justice the traditional notion of citizenship must be re-defined. Viewing the structures of traditional nation-states as oppressive and causing a number of socio-economic and environmental problems, Smith and Pangsapa argue that the role of just citizens should be tied

more to causes (e.g., the environment, poverty, human trafficking) rather than to a nationalistic identity, especially in light of globalization. Likewise, applied ethicist Peter Singer (1985) argues that social responsibility can no longer be limited to our countries of citizenship; instead he asserts that as members of a global society, individuals now have global social responsibilities and moral obligations.

Recognizing that the traditional limits of social responsibility to community and country are being challenged by a developing global community, Starret (1996) has developed and validated a global social responsibility scale. He defined global social responsibility as a social attitude and as a pattern of behavior that implies good citizenship within one's community. While he maintains a similar definition of social responsibility as in previous iterations, Starrett has expanded the scope by which a social responsibility measure can be applied in that he argues "one's community" is the global community.

In his study, three subscales emerged from an initial inventory of items that represented attitudes and values related to ethics, moral obligations, social justice, equality, and peace (Starrett, 1996). The primary scale, a Global Social Responsibility scale (GSR), tapped into attitudes about individual and governmental responsibility for global issues, the second scale, a Responsibility to People scale (RTP), expressed similar attitudes as the GSR without the emphasis on a global perspective, instead focusing on individual and community responsibilities. The final subscale to emerge was a Social Conservatism scale (SC) which captured the divergent (i.e., reverse-coded) attitudes included in the index such as those supporting nationalism and a belief in a "just world." As Starrett (1996) hypothesized, the GSR was positively correlated with the RTP and negatively correlated with social conservatism. As further validation of a global social responsibility construct, Nakamura and Watanabe-Muraoka (2006) adapted and applied Starret's (1996) GSR scale to a sample of Japanese youth. They found that their adapted scale

provided a useful and reliable measure of determining levels of global social responsibility in their sample.

While broad support for a construct representing an attitude of social responsibility is demonstrated in the literature, less is known about the differentiation and relationship among the varying levels of social responsibility. Starret (1996) has provided an initial examination of a social responsibility on a global level; however research on this level of the construct remains limited. Moreover, what remains unclear is the identification and validation of more circumscribed levels of the construct. It is clear that researchers in the U.S. have relied on measures of social responsibility that apply attitudes about various social and moral issues on the national and community level; however a national or community level scale of social responsibility has not been explicitly defined as distinct from a global social responsibility, nor has there been an examination of how social responsibility at smaller levels may be related to a global social responsibility. It is this relationship between global social responsibility and smaller level(s) of social responsibility that is of interest to this study.

Beyond the literature on measuring social responsibility, the existence of two distinct social responsibility attitudes – one representing a neighborhood social responsibility and the other being a global social responsibility – is linked to both classical and contemporary theories of politics and psychology. Theories ranging from social contract theory (Rawls, 1972) to McMillan and Chavis' (1986) theory on sense of community offer concepts such as belonging, membership, and interdependence that when considered together suggest that two distinct attitudes of social responsibility may exist.

According to social contract theory people are bound to one another to create a civil society that mutually protects members of society from brutish and chaotic natural law; individual civil rights are dependent upon accepting the responsibility to respect and defend the

rights of others and to act out against injustice that may threaten the social order of the civil society (Rawls, 1972). It is from this civil society that nations have emerged and from within them, communities. As described in McMillan and Chavis' (1986) theory on sense of community, this interdependence is a quality of a person's membership in a group. Specifically as an element of sense of community, membership in a community implies a sense of belonging and identification to whatever group (e.g., church, neighborhood, society, etc.) a person chooses to be a part of.

Berman (1997) makes the link between membership and belonging with social responsibility with his proposition that social responsibility grows out of a person's sense of connectedness and identification with a community. A young person's responsibility may then be assumed to be dependent upon what community they perceive to be a member of. If a young person were connected to an immediate and surrounding community such as their neighborhood or country they may then experience a responsibility to that neighborhood or country to act justly and protect the order of that community. However if a young person rejected or was oppressed by their immediate community, they may not connect or identify with that community. Instead with a lack of membership, they may abandon responsibility to their immediate community and identify more with larger, global struggles against oppression, connect with society-at-large, and develop a global social responsibility. It can thus be posited that one could develop a responsibility for the socio-environmental level at which they experience the greatest sense of belonging or connectedness.

Correlates of Social Responsibility

The origins of a social responsibility construct indicate a distinct relationship between the construct and a range of prosocial variables. As both a predictor and outcome of activist behavior, social responsibility is a valuable concept in understanding how best to promote

engagement in civic and political activism. Reviewing the nature of the construct's associations with a broad spectrum of activist behaviors will provide a useful framework from which to understand the present study.

A number of studies have demonstrated how individual levels of social responsibility may influence the likelihood of engagement in activist behaviors. Individuals with a strong sense of social responsibility are more likely to be active in civic affairs of their communities than those with low levels of social responsibility (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Flanagan et al., 1998). Verba and colleagues (1995) concluded from their extensive (N=15,000) cross-sectional study on the nature of political activities in the U.S. that those who engage in political activism do so out of a sense of duty (i.e., social responsibility) to the larger community. Additionally, not only is an attitude of social responsibility predictive of current engagement in activism by adolescents, but additional research is revealing how it may also predict future engagement as adults (Reinders & Youniss, 2006; Hart, Atkins & Ford, 1998; Flanagan et al., 1998).

The relationship of engagement in activism with social responsibility is not unidirectional. On the contrary, research also indicates a reciprocal relationship in which engagement in activist behavior may also serve as a determinant of levels of social responsibility. Some theorists have observed that youth can have significant increases in social responsibility when they participate in civic and community service projects (Flanagan et al., 1998; Hamilton & Fenzel, 1988). This effect has been demonstrated by Pancer and colleagues (2007) in their effort to distinguish active youth from youth who do not engage in activism. The researchers used cluster analysis to develop a typology to categorize youth engaged in activist behaviors. Youth who were most active in a range of political and community activities were grouped as ‘activists’, and youth who engaged in helping people from their communities but not in political activities were grouped as ‘helpers’, while the least active youth were grouped as

either ‘responders’ or ‘uninvolved’. Pancer and colleagues (2007) found that youth from their sample students who were characterized as ‘helpers’ and ‘activists’ reported significantly higher levels of social responsibility attitudes than those characterized ‘responders’ or ‘uninvolved’.

Social responsibility has also been significantly predicted by levels of psychological engagement during participation in community service projects (McGuire & Gamble, 2006). The role of both participation in activism and the depth of psychological engagement in predicting social responsibility is also demonstrated in a study on the effects of structured ethical decision making curriculum within community service projects (Leming, 2001). Leming found that students who were exposed to a structured ethical decision-making curriculum within a community service program, thus increasing their psychological engagement, developed increased awareness of, and greater ability to reason systematically about ethical issues, and these same students reported significantly higher increases in sense of social responsibility.

Social responsibility may not only be related to the act of participating in activist behaviors, but also perhaps to one’s rationale for participation. This line of reasoning is consistent with sociopolitical development theory which posits a relationship between social analysis, which is a manifestation of critical consciousness through which one attributes causation for events in society somewhere between individuals and social systems, and social responsibility, referred to as societal commitment in the theory (Watts & Flanagan, 2007). In their study on the sociopolitical development of a sample of urban adolescents in Atlanta, Watts and Guessous (2006) found that youth from their sample who believed the world is unjust, indicating a high level of social analysis, reported significantly stronger levels of societal commitment.

Possible explanations for why engagement in activist behaviors influences levels of social responsibility are also offered in the literature. A case study by Yates & Youniss (1998)

of urban adolescents that participated in a year-long service learning program in which participating youth served homeless individuals at a soup kitchen demonstrates that when youth have the opportunity to "use social skills to redress social problems" they can experience responsibility for society's well-being (p. 499). The participating adolescents' opportunity for meaningful community service to serve less fortunate individuals allowed them to experience their emerging social responsibility as a collective part of society. Youniss and Yates (1997) refer to belonging to a collective part of society as social relatedness; social relatedness is associated with how an adolescent locates their identity within a socio-historical context. Opportunities to engage in activist behaviors are important to this location. Activism can be a vehicle for stimulating the identity process that involves situating one's self within a socio-historical context by identifying with an ideological perspective on it (Yates & Youniss, 1996). How an adolescent relates to society and the resultant responsibility to it are thus a function of opportunities to engage in contexts of activism which allow for the adolescent to self-reflect on and question their own political identity.

Despite the literature on the relationship between social responsibility and activism, less is known about how the construct is related to age. Psychological literature demonstrates variability in cognitive (Piaget, 1932), psychosocial (Erikson, 1963), and moral (Kohlberg, 1963; Gilligan, 1982) development during adolescence. Given the differences in maturation during adolescence it remains possible that the meaning of social responsibility may be different between younger and older adolescents. At the same time, the relationship between social responsibility and engagement in activist behaviors may be influenced by age. The role of age with regards to social responsibility is of interest to this study.

The existing literature demonstrates how social responsibility and activism are related; however in light of the limitations noted in operationalizing social responsibility, the nature of that relationship is unclear. A dearth in the knowledgebase exists around examining the relationship of activism with the varying levels of social responsibility. This study intends to address the limitations noted in the literature.

The Present Study

The gap in the evidence base suggests that the construct of social responsibility needs to be further refined and that the nature of the construct's relationship with activism could benefit from further exploration. This study aims to determine the structure of social responsibility, to better understand the role of social responsibility in promoting youth activism, and to explore how age may influence this association. More specifically, this study addresses two main questions: First, is social responsibility best explained by two latent constructs of Global Social Responsibility and Neighborhood Social Responsibility for urban adolescents or by a single overall attitude of Social Responsibility for this population? Secondly, what is the relationship of social responsibility to depth of involvement in civic and political behaviors? Given the somewhat exploratory nature of this study, it is difficult to generate specific hypotheses about an undefined factor of social responsibility; however in light of existing research, some general hypotheses can be made and are presented below each corresponding research question.

1. Is social responsibility best explained by the two latent constructs of Global Social Responsibility and Neighborhood Social Responsibility or by a single overall attitude of Social Responsibility for urban adolescents?
    1a. Given the body of literature that demonstrates validated scales of social responsibility across socio-environmental levels, it was hypothesized that a two

factor model differentiating between global and neighborhood social responsibility would better fit the data than a single factor model.

2. What is the relationship of social responsibility to depth of involvement in civic and political activist behaviors?
   - 2a. Given the variance in development (i.e., cognitive, personality and identity development) and maturation during adolescence, age was first examined to determine if it moderates the relationship between social responsibility and activism.
   - 2b. It was hypothesized that higher levels of social responsibility would predict higher levels of engagement in both civic and political activism.

METHODS

Participants

The sample for this study consists of participants from a study, the *Youth in Action* (YinA) study in Atlanta, GA, that collected data on the constructs of interest. Participants from the Atlanta study lived inside the highway that encircles the city of Atlanta or frequented a school, program, or organization within this perimeter. Given YinA's focus on societal involvement behavior, youth who were involved in some type of civic, community or political activity were over-sampled. This was done by actively identifying and recruiting from settings that encouraged such community engagement. Settings were contacted if there was reason to suspect that they might work with or serve a youth population—regardless of whether youth were their primary focus. As a result, the twenty-two settings that participants were recruited from vary with respect to their size and budget, philosophy and values, mission, approach to youth work, standards of success, etc. For example whereas some organizations focused on political development, others focused on academic, social, and/or artistic development.

Of the combined 221 youth from the study, about two-thirds (63%, N = 140) were female and over three-quarters (80%) self-identified as Black or African American (N = 175); the remaining 20% were White (N = 36), Asian American (N = 1), Other (N=6), or unknown race/ethnicity (N=3). The mean age for the combined sample was 15.33.

Procedures

Data were collected using paper-and-pencil surveys that were administered in group format by a team of trained undergraduate and graduate research assistants. Data were collected on-site at the school or organization where youth were recruited. Parental consent was secured prior to data collection, while youth assent was secured at the start of data collection. Participation was voluntary, and incentives for participation consisted of movie tickets.

Measures

Each variable of interest was assessed using self-report survey instruments that were answered on a numerical Likert scales. The surveys for the YinA study were comprised of 11 scales, eight of which were borrowed from well-established scales. The remaining 3 scales were created specifically for the YinA study and were untested. The variables in the current study are derived from 5 scales from the survey and include:

Civic and Political Activism. Both observed variables were calculated using the Youth Inventory of Involvement (YII) (Pancer, Pratt & Hunsberger, 2000). This 30-item scale was devised to assess young people's type and amount of societal involvement behavior. The authors used factor analysis to derive four subscales, each of which represents a different kind of societal involvement: political activities, community/neighborhood activities, helping activities, and responding activities. Only the first two were used in the present study. Respondents indicated how much, in the past year, they have participated in each of the activities using a 5-point scale that ranges from "I never did this over the past year" to "I did this a lot over the past year".

Based on two large samples of Canadian youth aged 16-19, Alpha for the YII was .90 and test-retest reliability over two years was .61. The political activities subscale was used to assess political activism and the community/neighborhood activities subscale was be used to assess civic activism. Depth of involvement, or intensity of participation, for both civic and political activism was calculated by dividing how much respondents participated in either civic or political activities by the total number of respective activities respondents were involved in. This method of measuring involvement in civic and political activities reflects the categorization of youth involvement in organized activities referred to as 'intensity' of involvement; intensity of involvement refers to how frequently youth participate in an activity or context versus breadth of involvement which refers to the number of different activities or contexts youth are involved in (Bohnert, Fredericks, & Randall, 2010). Based on the Youth in Action sample (N=221), Alpha for YII was .92.

Global Social Responsibility. This variable was assessed using items from the 29-item Youth Social Responsibility Scale (YSRS) (Pancer et al., 2000). This scale was developed to assess teenagers' commitment to societal involvement, using such items as "More young people should become active in political parties and organizations" and "Young people have an important role to play in making the world a better place." Based on the Youth in Action sample (N=221), Alpha for YSRS was .89.

Neighborhood Social Responsibility. This variable was assessed using items from the 10-item You and Your Neighborhood Scale (YYN) (Watts & Guessous, 2006). This scale was developed to assess young neighborhood residents' beliefs about the worth and effectiveness of community-level individual and collective action, as well as their commitment to community involvement using such items as "I would be willing to do some work for free if I thought it would make my neighborhood better" and "It is important to give something back to the

community by helping others." Based on the Youth in Action sample (N=221), Alpha for YYN was .72.

Parental Activism. This control variable was assessed using 6 items from the Political Socialization Scale (PSS) developed for the Youth in Action study (Watts & Guessous, 2006). Respondents were asked about societal involvement behaviors on the part of parents or guardians. Political action items such as "direct action or protests for a political cause" and "held a job that involved working with or providing services to oppressed people" were ranked on a 3-item scale ("never", "sometimes" and "often"). Based on the Youth in Action sample (N=221), Alpha for PSS was .74.

Peer Activism. This control variable was assessed using the 6-item Peer Opportunity Scale (POS) (Watts & Guessous, 2006). This scale was developed for the Youth in Action study as a subjective measure of opportunities for civic and political involvement that are available to participating youth. The score for this variable is the total number of friends in the student's social network who they know to be active in civic and political activities divided by the total number of friends they report. Friends are defined as school and neighborhood peers who they spend time with at least biweekly. Based on the Youth in Action sample (N=221), Alpha for POS was .97.

Plan of Analysis

An analysis of frequencies and descriptive statistics was conducted to check for errors in the data set, such as minimum and maximum values, an excessive number of missing cases, and outliers (Pallant, 2001). Preliminary analyses rendered descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all variables. To address the research questions structural equation modeling (SEM) was used. SEM allows for the testing of both measurement models and path models, and the use of latent variables in SEM (i.e., structural regression models) limits measurement error in

examinations of causal pathways (Kline, 2005). Two alternative measurement models were examined through a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA). Measurement invariance of latent factors was tested by using multi-group CFAs for 2 different age groups created from the existing sample using a median split. Once the measurement model was established, the structural model was tested.

Multi-group modeling was used to test whether age moderated the association between the latent social responsibility factor and the observed dependent variables of political and civic activism. When testing age as a moderator, young and old age groups were determined by dividing the sample at the median age, such that participants at or below the median comprised the young group and those youth above the median comprised the old group. A model in which all parameters were free to vary was compared to models in which cross-group equality constraints were placed on the parameters forcing equal parameter estimates for each group. If the fit of the constrained model had a significantly worse fit, as evidenced by a significant loglikelihood difference test, this indicated that the parameters were not equal among the groups and constraints on model paths should be released. Once determining that age did not moderate the relationship between social responsibility and civic and political activism, path coefficients were generated for a single group path model to measure the unique effect of the latent social responsibility factor on the two dependent variables when controlling for the two covariates of parental activism and peer activism.

RESULTS

The results section is organized into three sections: Preliminary analyses, measurement models, and path models. Descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations are described in the preliminary analyses section. The results of two confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) that were conducted in order to determine the measurement structure of social responsibility are presented in the measurement models section. The path models section reports the results of path analyses conducted to test for the unique effects of social responsibility on activism, explores whether age moderates the association of social responsibility and activism, and describes the contributions of the covariates that were included in the final path model.

Preliminary Analyses

Sample demographics and descriptive statistics are presented in Tables 1 and 2. Correlations between all variables of interest are provided in Table 3. As expected, the observed social responsibility indicators were significantly correlated ($p<.01$) suggesting an underlying latent factor(s) that represent the construct; there was one exception to the social responsibility indicators being significantly correlated. Age was significantly correlated with eight of the indicators that make up the latent factor, but it was uncorrelated with the covariates and dependent variables. The two dependent variables of Depth of Political Activism and Depth of Civic Activism were significantly and positively correlated with each other ($r=.36$, $p<.001$). One of the covariates, Parental Activism, was significantly and positively correlated with Depth of Political Activism ($r=.18$, $p<.05$). Additionally, Little's (Little & Rubin, 1990) missing completely at random (MCAR) test was conducted to assess the distribution of missing values and indicated that all missing values were missing completely at random ($p=.45$); as such, cases were deleted listwise in Mplus resulting in a complete sample of N=196 that was used in the major analyses.

Table 1
Sample Demographics

	N	%
Gender		
Male	81	36.7
Female	140	63.3
Ethnicity		
African American	175	79.2
Caucasian	36	16.3
Asian	1	.5
Other	6	2.3
Unknown	3	1.4
Age		
18 and older	24	10.8
17	23	10.3
16	45	20.2
15	63	28.7
14	42	18.8
13 and younger	24	10.8

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	SD	Range	Min	Max
Age	223	15.33	1.49	7	12	19
Youth Social Responsibility Scale	214	3.00	.45	1.75	2.13	3.88
You and Your Neighborhood Scale	217	2.95	.481	2.20	4	2.95
Parental Activism	211	1.56	.46	2	1	3
Peer Opportunity Structure	204	3.49	3.87	22.5	0	22.5
Depth of Civic Activism	209	2.62	1.01	4	1	5
Depth of Political Activism	212	2.54	.93	4	1	5

Table 3
Correlations Between Variables of Interest

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1	Age	-																		
2	YSRS 1	.18**	-																	
3	YSRS 3	.13	.61**	-																
4	YSRS 8	.09	.56**	.43**	-															
5	YSRS 11	.16*	.44**	.39**	.54**	-														
6	YSRS 14	.03	.40**	.45**	.54**	.43**	-													
7	YSRS 16	.19**	.57**	.52**	.55**	.50**	.45**	-												
8	YSRS 18	.15*	.60**	.58**	.61*	.52**	.56**	.71**	-											
9	YSRS 22	.11	.37**	.25**	.41**	.37**	.28**	.36**	.31**	-										
10	YSRS 25	.14*	.40**	.31**	.31**	.36**	.35**	.39*	.45**	.21**	-									
11	YSRS 27	.18**	.54**	.54**	.47**	.51**	.39**	.52**	.59**	.30**	.44**	-								
12	YSRS 29	.14*	.47**	.54*	.38**	.44**	.41**	.47**	.57*	.25**	.32**	.42**	-							
13	YYN 1	.17*	.42**	.37**	.51**	.42**	.40**	.52**	.50**	.32**	.33**	.42**	.31**	-						
14	YYN 7	-.02	.30**	.33**	.40**	.26**	.45**	.33**	.38**	.26**	.19**	.29**	.44**	.30**	-					
15	YYN 8	.09	.27**	.35**	.28**	.26**	.35**	.34**	.32**	.21**	.12**	.24**	.44**	.34**	.38**	-				
16	Parental Activism	-.07	.16*	-.04	.12	.13	.03	.12	.06	.20**	.09	.13	.01	.06	-.06	-.01	-			
17	Peer Opp. Structure	.03	.01	-.04	.01	.07	.12	.01	.07	.09	.15*	-.05	-.01	-.01	.07	-.11	-.01	-		
18	Depth of Civic Activism	.06	.09	.07	.12	.09	.09	.10	.07	.13	.03	.08	.03	.05	.07	.13	.06	-.06	-	
19	Depth of Political Activism	-.03	.11	.09	.06	.08	.12	.01	.07	.14	.10	.09	.16*	.05	.12	.09	.18*	.01	.36**	-

*p<.05 **p<.01

Measurement Models

The structure of social responsibility was assessed utilizing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with MPlus software (Muthén & Muthén, 2007a). Latent constructs are measured using a priori defined observed variables in CFA. A full information, robust maximum likelihood estimator (MLR) was employed for the present study's analyses given the study's small sample size and the categorical nature of the observed social responsibility indicators; MLR also provides parameter estimates that are robust to non-normality. Additionally, a numerical integration algorithm was necessary to obtain maximum likelihood estimates given the incorporation of ordinal indicators for the social responsibility factor; given these certain technical aspects of this model, model fit tests and indices were not available (Muthén & Muthén, 2007b). Relative model fit was indicated by comparing model loglikelihood values, with the scaled Chi-square difference test, the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), and the sample-size adjusted Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) between nested models (Satorra & Bentler, 2001). Significant increases in the log likelihood statistic and smaller values for the AIC and BIC statistics would indicate better model fit.

Two Factor Model

To address Question 1 a two factor solution was tested (see Figure 1). Fourteen items for the two latent constructs were selected from the YSRS and YYN scales based on face validity and a shared conceptual distinction of the items to represent either Global Social Responsibility or Neighborhood Social Responsibility (See Appendix A for a list of the items). For instance, items that referenced values and actions applied to the world or society (e.g., "Young people have an important role to play in making the world a better place") were included as part of Global Social Responsibility and items that referenced values and actions applied to one's community or neighborhood (e.g., "It is important to give something back to the community by

helping others") were included as part of Neighborhood Social Responsibility. All factor loadings were in the expected direction. Eighteen items from the YSRS and seven items from the YNN were excluded from the model as they did not meet the criteria described above. For the two-factor model, LL=-2800.51, AIC=5715.01, BIC=5908.19, Free Parameters = 57. Additionally, the two latent factors were strongly correlated (r=.99, p<.01).

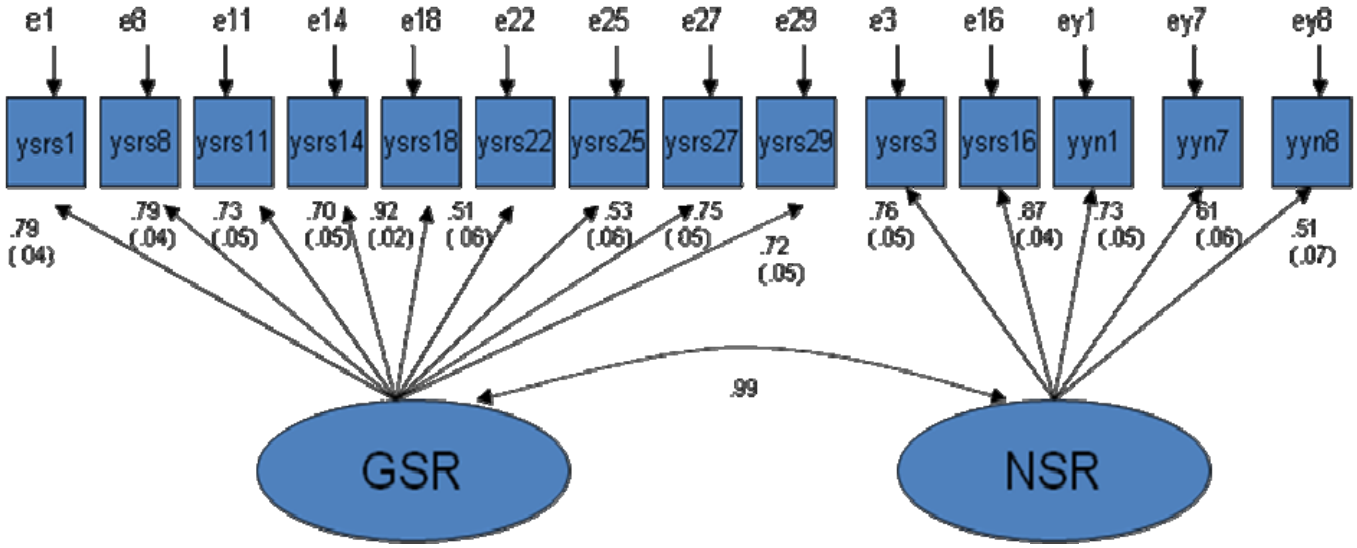

Figure 1. Model of Social Responsibility with two latent factors. Values on the paths represent standardized factor loadings. Values in parentheses represent standard errors. Solid lines (i.e., all paths) indicate p<.001.

To ensure that the latent constructs were measured similarly across groups, measurement invariance for the two-factor model was tested by running a multi-group CFA in which the model was simultaneously run for 2 different age groups – a young group (12-15 yrs., N=129) and an older group (16-19 yrs., N=92) – created from the existing sample using a median split. The two factor solution failed to converge when it was tested for measurement invariance. Coupled with the high correlation of the two factors, this failure suggests that a one-factor model for social responsibility may be a better solution.

One Factor Model

Using the two factor model as a starting point in testing a more parsimonious single factor model, a one-factor solution was created by using the observed indicators from the two-factor model (see Figure 2). For the one-factor model, LL=-2800.60, AIC=5713.19, BIC=5902.98, Free Parameters = 56. All standardized factor loadings were in the expected direction (λ ranged from .51-.92). To systematically assess the fit of the single factor solution to the two factor solution, relative model fit was determined by comparing model log likelihood values, the AIC, and the sample-sized adjusted BIC between the two models. Overall statistics of model fit are not available when using MLR estimation with categorical data (Muthén & Muthén, 2007b). As seen in Table 4, a log likelihood test comparing the original two-factor model to the one-factor model did not indicate change in fit. Because of the very high correlation between the latent constructs observed in the two factor model and the fact that the one factor model fit the data about as well as the two factor model, the more parsimonious 1-factor model was selected as better representing the data. These results refute the hypothesis concerning Questions 1.

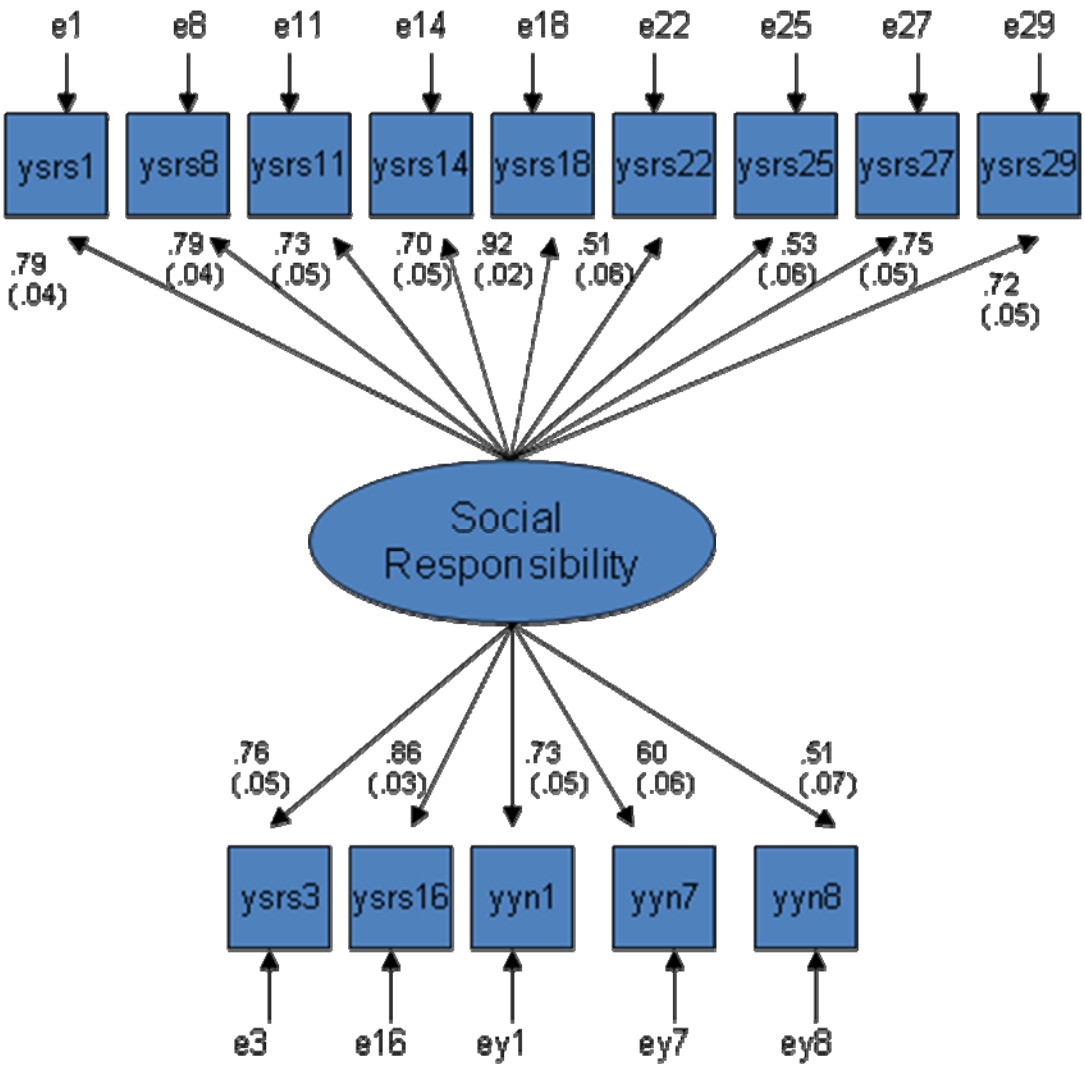

Figure 2. Model of social responsibility with one latent factor. Values on the paths represent standardized factor loadings. Values in parentheses represent standard errors. Solid lines (i.e., all paths) indicate p<.001.

Table 4
Loglikelihood Difference Test Comparing Two Factor Model to One Factor Model

	One Factor Model	Two Factor Model
Loglikelihood Value	-2800.597	-2800.506
Correction Factor	1.039	1.04
Free Parameters	56	57
Chi-square Difference Test	.17	
Degrees of Freedom	1	
p value	0.68	

To determine whether measurement invariance of the one-factor solution was tenable across age groups a multi-group CFA was conducted. The single factor solution was simultaneously run as a model with no equality constraints (i.e., free) and compared to a model that forced the factor loadings in each group to be equal (i.e., constrained) for 2 different age groups –a young group (12-15 yrs., N=129) and an older group (16-19 yrs., N=92). Results indicated both models adequately fit the data as there were no significant differences in fit between models (see Table 5). These findings indicated that the latent construct of social responsibility was measured similarly for youth in each group.

Table 5
Loglikelihood Difference Test of Measurement Invariance for One Factor Model

	Free Model	Constrained Model
Log likelihood Value	-2902.538	-2911.985
Correction Factor	1.03	1.016
Free Parameters	113	100
Chi-square Difference Test	16.61	
Degrees of Freedom	13	
p value	0.22	

Path Models

Examining Moderation by Age

Prior to examining a single group structural path model (see Figure 3), age was tested to determine if it moderated the association between social responsibility and the dependent variables. To test for moderation, multi-group analyses were run to compare the model fit of an unconstrained structural model to models with equality constraints on structural paths to both DVs. The Age Moderation model was run unconstrained (i.e., free), allowing for separate estimates for the young and older groups. For this free model LL =-3034.34, AIC=6298.69, BIC=6675.67, Free Parameters = 115. The free model was then compared to a model that constrained the path to Depth of Political Activism, to a model that constrained the path to Depth of Civic Activism, and to a model that included equality constraints on both structural paths to the DVs. The results of the log likelihood tests comparing the free model to the constrained models can be found in Table 6. The findings show that no significant change to model fit

occurred and indicate that age does not moderate the relationship between social responsibility and the DVs.

Table 6
Loglikelihood Difference Tests of Moderation by Age

	Free Model	Political Path Constrained	Civic Path Constrained	Fully Constrained Model
Loglikelihood Value	-3034.344	-3036.059	-3035.148	-3036.321
Correction Factor	.987	.985	.987	.986
Free Parameters	115	114	114	113
Chi-square Difference Test	-	2.82	1.63	3.80
Degrees of Freedom	-	1	1	2
p value	-	.09	.20	.15

Unique Effect of Social Responsibility on Depth of Political Activism and Depth of Civic Activism. A final single group structural model (N=196) was tested to determine the unique effect of Social Responsibility on Depth of Civic Activism and Depth of Political Activism while controlling for the two covariates of Parental Activism and Peer Activism. The decision to treat the sample as a single group and not include age as a covariate was based on the measurement invariance of the Social Responsibility latent factor, the absence of moderation due to age, and due to the fact that age did not correlate with either of the DVs. The standardized path coefficients from Social Responsibility to Depth of Political Activism and Depth of Civic Activism are shown in Figure 3. For this model, LL=-2937.70, AIC=6009.40, BIC = 6229.04, Free Parameters=67. As the use of MLR estimation with categorical indicators did not provide model fit tests and indices for this model, an alternative solution to this model utilizing a weighted-least squares estimator (WLSMV) is presented in Appendix B.

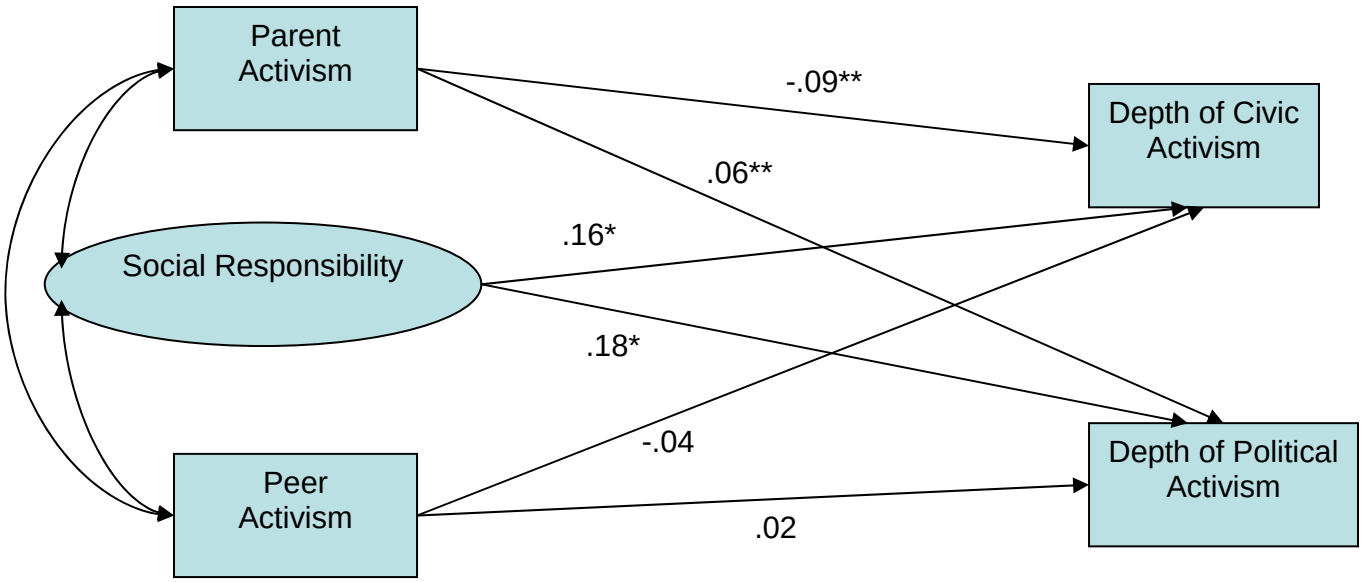

Figure 3. Model of social responsibility predicting depth of civic activism and depth political activism controlling for parent activism and peer activism; *p<.05, **p<.01

As seen in Table 7, the findings indicate that Social Responsibility was a significant predictor of both Depth of Political Activism (*b=.18, p<.05*) and Depth of Civic Activism (*b=.16, p<.05*) when controlling for the effects of Parental Activism and Peer Activism. Despite the significant associations between Social Responsibility and the dependent variables, a large amount of variance was still not accounted for in Depth of Political Activism (R^2*=0.04, p>.05)* nor in Depth of Civic Activism (R^2*=0.04, p>.05)*. According to this model, Parental Activism significantly predicted both Depth of Political Activism (*b=.06, p<.01*) and Depth of Civic Activism (*b=-.09, p<.01*) when controlling for the effects of Social Responsibility and Peer Activism. Conversely, Peer Activism did not significantly predict Depth of Political Activism (*b=.02, p=.75*) nor Depth of Civic Activism (*b=-.04, p=.48)* while controlling for Social Responsibility and Parental Activism.

Table 7
Associations Between Latent Variable Predictor, Covariates, & Activism Outcomes

	Depth of Civic Activism			Depth of Political Activism		
	b	*SE*	*p*	*b*	*SE*	*p*
Social Responsibility	.16	.074	.03	.18	.079	.02
Parental Activism	-.09	.01	0	.06	.01	0
Peer Activism	-.04	.06	.48	.02	.06	.75

DISCUSSION

The primary goals of this study were to identify the underlying structure of an attitude of social responsibility for urban adolescents and to determine the association between social responsibility and depth of involvement in both political and civic activism. Few studies have explored the structure of a social responsibility attitude. Moreover, this dissertation is the first study to use CFA strategies to delineate between latent neighborhood and global factors of social responsibility. By elucidating the structure of social responsibility the nature of the construct's relationship with engagement in activist behaviors can be better understood.

Social Responsibility Measurement Model

It was hypothesized that social responsibility would consist of two distinct components. One factor would consist of measures related to social responsibility for one's neighborhood and immediate community (i.e., Neighborhood Social Responsibility) and the other component would consist of measures related to social responsibility for society-at-large and the world (i.e., Global Social Responsibility). The results of this study refute the hypothesis that an attitude of social responsibility is best explained by two distinct factors of neighborhood social

responsibility and global social responsibility. Although the two factor solution fit the data well with all indicators loading significantly on the respective factors, the model failed to converge when testing for measurement invariance. This model failure was most likely due to the significantly high correlation of the two factors and the small size of this study's sample which when taken together suggested a better fitting model was likely. These findings suggest that two distinct factors could not be extracted from the data and that a more parsimonious, single-factor solution provides a better representation of the factor structure of social responsibility. Moreover through a test for measurement invariance, this single factor proved to be reliable measure of social responsibility for both younger and older adolescents in the present study.

Previous studies have relied on the inter-reliability of social responsibility scales for specific topics without validating factors of the construct (Pancer et al., 2000, Flanagan et al., 1998; Berkowitz and Lutterman, 1968; Gough et al., 1952). As the structure of social responsibility was not a focus of previous research, these prior studies were satisfied with treating social responsibility as a single factor construct that captured this individual attitude. In this regard, the confirmation of a single social responsibility factor in the current study is consistent with past research.

Only Starrett (1996) has used CFA to confirm a social responsibility factor bound by a socio-environmental level (i.e., Global Social Responsibility); however his study examined the experiences of adults. Despite the tangent the present study makes from existing research regarding social responsibility, these findings on the structure of the construct provide a starting point from which to further explore the true structure of social responsibility attitudes. Additionally, the confirmation of the social responsibility construct made it possible to explore the relationship of the construct with the dependent variables of interest in this study.

Social Responsibility and Activism Variables

The results indicated that social responsibility significantly predicts depth of involvement in both political and community activist behaviors when controlling for levels of parental activism and peer activism. In other words, adolescents who indicated higher levels of social responsibility also reported deeper levels of engagement in both types of activist behaviors. The value in determining this relationship is that with a single factor structure, social responsibility provides us with a single quality to examine and pursue when intervening with young people to promote activism in the civic and political arenas.

These findings are consistent with the results of previous studies that have examined the relationship of social responsibility and activism. The youth in this study who reported higher levels of social responsibility also engaged in activist behaviors on a deeper level in the same way that youth in other studies who reported higher levels of social responsibility were more likely to be active in civic affairs (Flanagan et al., 1998), characterized as "activists" or "helpers" (i.e., more active in political or community activities than those characterized as "responders or "uninvolved") (Pancer et al., 2007), or more likely to be psychologically engaged when participating in community service projects (McGuire & Gamble, 2006) than youth who reported lower levels of social responsibility. This same link between social responsibility and activism has also been observed in adults in other studies. For instance, Verba and colleagues (1995) found that adults who engage in political activism do so because of a sense of social responsibility.

The significance of the identified relationship between social responsibility and activism is more compelling when considering that two central predictors of youth engagement in activist behaviors were controlled for in this study. A number of studies have demonstrated how parental engagement in activist behaviors accounts for significant amounts of variance in youth

participation in civic and political affairs (Flanagan et al., 1998; Donnelly, Atkins & Hart, 2006). Still, other studies have stressed the need to account for opportunity structure in determining whether or not youth engage in activist behaviors (Keeter, Zukin, Andolina, & Jenkins, 2002; Watts & Guessous, 2006). Even when accounting for the effects of both parental activism and peer activism (a proxy variable for opportunity structure) on the depth of involvement in political and community activities, social responsibility significantly predicts depth of involvement in both types of activism.

Interestingly, parental activism was significantly associated with both DVs. Parental activism was positively correlated with depth of political activism and negatively correlated with depth of civic activism. Consistent with the work of Donnelly, Atkins, and Hart (2006), these findings suggest that children of politically active parents are more likely to be politically active than children of less active parents. Interpreting the negative correlation of parental activism and community activities, however, should be done cautiously. Given the role parental activism plays in youth activism, it is not likely that as parents are more active that their children become less active in their community. A more probable interpretation is that since the children of politically active parents are more likely to engage in social activism that is considered more political that these same children have less time and desire to engage in community activities that are deemed less political such as volunteering at an animal shelter or helping organize a neighborhood clean-up day.

In addition to helping determine the unique effect of social responsibility on youth activism, accounting for parental activism and peer activism also helped to clarify how the relationship of social responsibility and activism can be interpreted. Likewise, accounting for age in this study makes an interpretation of social responsibility more generalizable to adolescents of all ages. The impact of age in interpreting the role of social responsibility was

minimized by the finding that age did not moderate the association between social responsibility and depth of involvement in political and civic activities. The absence of moderation suggests that the development of a socially responsible attitude and its relationship to depth of engagement in activist behaviors may be consistent throughout adolescent developmental phases.

Implications for Theory

The findings from this study highlight some important implications for theoretical perspectives and for organizations that serve young people. The relationships that were observed between the variables of interest in this study present theoretical propositions related to the political development of adolescents. Specifically, the structure of social responsibility, its relationships to the DVs, and the observed role of the covariates in this model both lend support to and challenge the constructs and causal pathways of Sociopolitical Development theory (SPD) as described by Watts, Michaels, and Jagers (2003).

Consistent with SPD theory, social responsibility is demonstrated to be an important variable to consider when attempting to understand the activist behaviors of young people; additionally, the value of social responsibility in predicting the depth of involvement in activist behaviors supports Watts and Guessous' (2006) conjecture that societal commitment (i.e, social responsibility) is an acceptable proxy for measuring engagement in activist behaviors. In other words, as social responsibility has been shown in this study to significantly predict depth of involvement in both community and political behaviors, one may find it acceptable to measure social responsibility in place of behaviors when measurement of behaviors proves to be a challenge or unreliable. Measurement of social responsibility as a single construct appears to be acceptable, although pursuits to further determine the structure of the attitude should continue given that the findings regarding the structure of social responsibility in this study are simply an initial foray into understanding the nature of the construct.

Where the findings of this study diverge from SPD theory is with the role of opportunity structure in determining engagement in activist behaviors. Watts and colleagues (2003) theorize that opportunity structure moderates the relationship of social analysis and societal involvement. While not entirely refuting this theoretical proposition, the lack of significance in opportunity structure (i.e., Peer Activism) in predicting depth of involvement in community and political behaviors challenges the weight placed on the construct. Furthermore, the current study demonstrates that as social responsibility increases the depth of youth involvement in activist behaviors increases even when controlling for the availability of opportunities for action that their peers are engaged in. In other words, youth who develop deeper levels of social responsibility may actively seek out ways to get involved and deepen their involvement despite the experiences and opportunities of their peers. The "real world" challenge to this proposition is that youth who experience greater levels of oppression than others may not be able to participate or have the resources to seek out opportunities to become active no matter how socially responsible they are. It is this reality and not the findings of this study alone that should spur researchers to continue to seek out other ways to measure, understand, and change opportunity structures.

Implications for Practice

In addition to contributing to theory, the relationships between the variables of interest in this study can help to guide youth serving organizations in their efforts to create an active and just citizenship. In particular, this study has demonstrated that pursuing activities which increase the social responsibility of adolescents is a worthwhile endeavor for organizations that seek to promote youth activism. The effects of social responsibility on depth of political and civic activism, although small, are significant and should provide some level of confidence to practitioners that activities such as popular education or service-learning opportunities which

help youth recognize their connection to and role in their community and society may lead to deeper engagement by young people in civic and political activism. As the findings demonstrate that social responsibility can predict depth of involvement in both community and political activities, application of this study's findings need not be restricted to either conventional or radical youth serving organizations. Efforts to improve youth involvement in both civic and political arenas can be informed by this study.

The findings related to the role of age can be particularly useful to practitioners. Given that age did moderate the relationship between social responsibility and depth of engagement in activism, promoting social responsibility does not have to be restricted to older adolescents in the same way that popular education about oppression and injustice sometimes is. Concerns about the cognitive abilities of youth to develop a critical consciousness through exposure to popular education and personal experiences of injustice may not apply to efforts at promoting social responsibility. Moreover, the measures identified to make up the structure of social responsibility proved to be reliable across the age range of this study suggesting that the construct of social responsibility may be meaningful to both younger and older adolescents. Thus in light of the findings related to age, pursuing education and activities that engenders social responsibility can begin during early adolescence and continued throughout adolescence in schools and programs that work with young people if the promotion of activism is a goal.

In addition to findings related to age, practitioners may also draw two additional recommendations from this study's findings. Given the significant relationship between social responsibility and youth activism, a focus on promoting socially responsible attitudes should be paramount to those organizations seeking to increase youth engagement in activist behaviors. Utilizing education by developing curricula, immersion experiences, or service-learning opportunities that help youth recognize their connection to and role in their community and

society at large may prove to be an effective strategy towards the end of promoting an attitude of social responsibility. Yates and Youniss (1998) have explained how meaningful service learning projects can promote a responsibility for the well-being of society. Likewise as this study identified how parental activism is related to youth activism, engaging parents in programmatic activities may be an effective strategy to increase youth activism. Youth serving organizations should consider developing roles and opportunities for parents to become active and involved in political and community activities. The more active parents are in politics and civic affairs, the more likely it will be that their children will also be active (Donnelly, Atkins & Hart, 2006).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the current study utilized the robust analytical procedures of SEM to discern the structure of social responsibility and estimate pathways, this study is not without limitations. Most notably, the small sample size of this study is a limitation. Although the sample size of this study is sufficient per Kline's (2005) recommendation of a minimum sample size of 10 to 15 per observed variables for SEM, findings for a larger sample would lend greater support for the reliability of the identified factor structure of social responsibility. The sample size limited the power associated with the findings for testing measurement invariance of the social responsibility factor; the lack of significant difference between the models may have been due to the model being underpowered.

Another limitation of this dissertation is due to the cross-sectional design of the study. Although this study did answer questions related to the directional pathways and relationships between social responsibility and depth of involvement in activism, the extent to which causal inferences can be made about the path coefficients is limited by the cross-sectional design of the study. The sequence of development that is essential to developmental studies is absent from this dissertation and could be better understood in future studies that are longitudinal. A

longitudinal study could also help to determine the antecedents to the structure of social responsibility identified in this study. A potential antecedent to social responsibility that is alluded to, but not examined in the current study is that of engagement in activist behaviors. Although this study determined the effects of social responsibility on the DVs, it did not examine any reciprocal effects. A nonrecursive model should be examined in future studies to better understand the relationship between social responsibility and activism.

In light of the findings regarding Peer Activism, it must be noted that sociopolitical development theory (SPD) hypothesizes that Opportunity Structures moderate the relationship between Social Analysis and Societal Involvement (Watts et al., 2003). This study demonstrated that when controlling for Social and Parental Activism, Peer Activism did not significantly affect Depth of Civic Activism nor Depth of Political Activism; however the potential for Peer Activism, which serves as a proxy for opportunity structures in SPD theory, to moderate the relationship between Social Responsibility and Depth of Political and Civic Activism was not examined. Thus as noted in the discussion, whereas this study's findings challenge the significance of opportunity structures in predicting youth activism, the findings do not refute sociopolitical development theory's claim. As such, the examination of Opportunity Structures as a moderator between Social Responsibility and Youth Activism remains a direction for future research.

Lastly while the associations between social responsibility and parental activism with the dependent variables were significant, this study's model did not account for a significant amount of variance in either outcome variable, suggesting that other factors are related to youth activism but not accounted for in this model. This finding is expected given the myriad of factors existing research has identified as affecting youth activism. Factors ranging from social analysis (Watts & Guessous, 2006), sense of agency (Yates & Youniss, 1996), civic knowledge (Sherrod, 2003),

to school climate and teacher behavior (Flanagan & Tucker, 1999) are all important to consider in predicting youth activism. Past research should not minimize the present study's findings given the significant relationship between social responsibility and youth activism that was identified; however the factors not included in this study represent directions for future research to fully understand how to influence youth activism.

Conclusions

This study represents an important first step towards fully understanding the structure of social responsibility in adolescents. While not validating the two hypothesized neighborhood and global factors of social responsibility, establishing a stable structure for the construct allowed for an examination of how social responsibility is related to activist behaviors. This study confirmed how social responsibility can predict depth of involvement in civic and political activism, supporting the assumption that promoting an attitude of social responsibility will lead to adolescents becoming more engaged in social activism.

Considering past studies that demonstrate how participation in activist behaviors can have positive developmental effects on youth (Hart & Kirshner, 2009; Pancer, Pratt, Hunsbeger, & Alisar, 2007), and in light of more recent studies that demonstrate how an active citizenship leads to positive social outcomes such as the strengthening of responsive and accountable governments and the development of inclusive and cohesive societies (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010), the significance of youth activism cannot be emphasized enough. The benefit of youth activism to both the individual and society is clear and this study lends to the knowledgebase of how best to promote activism in young people. Given the persistence of poverty, the ever-widening gap between the rich and poor, and the increasing polarization of political ideologies, the potential for youth to improve society through service and activism is one that should not be taken lightly, but rather actively pursued and promoted.

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APPENDIX A

List of Indicators for Global Social Responsibility and Neighborhood Social Responsibility

Global Social Responsibility

- ysrs 1 - People in their teens should know about how their country is governed, even if they're too young to vote.
- ysrs 8 - It's important for people to speak out when an injustice has occurred.
- Ysrs 11 - We have a responsibility to future generations to keep the environment healthy.
- ysrs 14 - Young people have an important role to play in making the world a better place.
- ysrs 18 - It's important for people in their teens to know what's going on in the world.
- ysrs 22 - More young people should become active in political parties and organizations
- ysrs 25 - People should help one another without expecting to get paid or rewarded for it
- ysrs 27 - By helping others, parents set an important example for their children.
- ysrs 29 - Helping others gives a person a tremendous feeling of accomplishment

Neighborhood Social Responsibility

- ysrs 3 - Everybody should volunteer some time for the good of their community
- ysrs 16 - It is important for people to know what's going on in their communities
- yyn 1 - It is important to "give something back" to the community by helping others
- yyn 7 - Knowing I was doing something to improve my neighborhood would make me feel good.
- yyn 8 - If the people who really care about my neighborhood worked together on it things would be a lot better.

APPENDIX B

Estimating Model Fit with WLSMV Estimation

This appendix contains figures for the final structural model utilizing WLSMV estimation. The use of WLSMV estimation provided model fit indices and unstandardized path coefficients for the model. The results indicate that model fit was good as seen in Figure B, although the path coefficients from Social Responsibility and Parent Activism to both DVs are not significant.

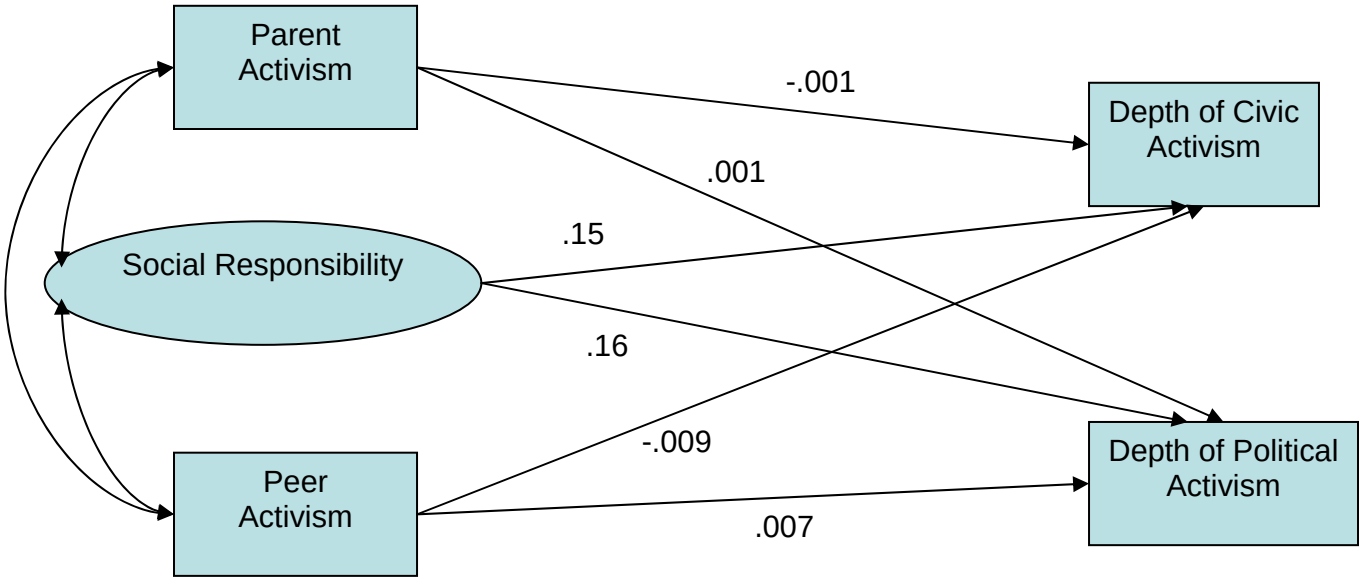

Figure B. Model of social responsibility predicting depth of civic activism and depth political activism controlling for parent activism and peer activism utilizing WLSMV estimation; Path coefficients are unstandardized; *p<.05. The fit statistics for this model are: $\chi 2$ (131) = 240.07, *p* =.00, RMSEA = .065 (90% CI: .052 - .078), CFI = .916, SRMR = .059, AIC = 6926.72, BIC = 7100.46.