

The role of a Catholic University

The Role of a Catholic University in the Formation of Whole Young Adults: Campus and Community Involvement and Social Awareness in University Students¹

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Abstract

The Youth Cultures study was conducted by IFCU's Center for Coordination of Research in the spring of 2012. Over 70 universities were invited to participate, including Loyola Marymount University. The survey assessed the values, aspirations, experiences and cultural backgrounds of first and fourth year students attending Catholic universities worldwide. In this paper we will examine the relationship between students' involvement in social-service/religious organizations and their degree of social awareness and orientation. We hypothesize that those students who are more involved in social-service/religious groups will tend to show a greater and more ethical sense of

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An early and preliminary version of this paper was presented at the International Federation of Catholic Universities' 4th IFCU International Psychology Congress held at Pontificia Universidad Católica Argentina in Santa María de los Buenos Aires, Argentina, 10-12 April 2013.

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social awareness and orientation. These differences will tend to increase from first year to fourth year. The results show that student involvement in service/religious oriented groups is significantly related to increased sense of social awareness and ethical and pro-social behavior. We observe that for those involved in service/religious activities, growth appears to occur from first to fourth year in Loyola Marymount students, in not only the expression of increased social awareness of issues and concerns of social equality but also in establishing a priority in their future plans to dedicate portions of their lives to real and meaningful social action. The strengths and limitations of the cross-sectional design of the survey are discussed. The findings are interpreted as supporting the important role that a value-driven education plays in the formation of “whole students” inspired to lead and create a more just society.

Keywords: Catholic higher education, Ignatian pedagogy, campus involvement, social awareness, development of the whole person, first year university students, fourth year university students.

The Role of a Catholic University in the Formation of Whole Young Adults: Campus and Community Involvement and Social Awareness in University Students

What is the proper role of a Catholic university in helping to form compassionate and ethical leaders for society? Is the primary role of a university simply to train competent students for successful jobs and careers or should there be an “added value” to a Catholic education in providing a supportive platform and experiences in order to inspire students to be agents of social change? The theme of this inaugural issue of EDUCA, the IFCU International Education Journal, is *distances or life journeys in education*. In a fragmented world of “haves” and “have nots”, materialism, consumerism, narcissism and self-entitlement, this theme of *distances or life journeys in education* challenges the audience to reflect on the following questions— how can higher education and Catholic institutions in particular, meaningfully contribute to educating young adults to grow into ethical, caring and competent leaders of tomorrow? How can higher education support the cognitive, social, emotional, and moral

development of “whole” students during their critical years of young adult formation? How can the programs and curricula of Catholic educations inspire our students to become the best versions of their potential selves along their *journey* in life?

This paper will examine how the mission of a Catholic University may help form whole students who will themselves be inspired to address the challenges and inequities of our contemporary society. We intend to examine the relationship between Loyola Marymount students’ involvement in social-service/religious organizations and their degree of social awareness and orientation in the context of the IFCU Youth Cultures study, a worldwide survey conducted under the auspices of the International Federation of Catholic Universities, Center for Coordination of Research.

The specific aims of this article are to:

- Examine the role of a Catholic university in training future leaders of tomorrow who will be inspired toward prosocial and altruistic solutions to social fragmentation and vulnerability
- Engage in a self study of Loyola Marymount University students through results from the IFCU/FIUC Youth Cultures study and to examine whether they reflect the aspirations of our Catholic, Jesuit and Marymount inspired mission
- Reflect on the mission of Catholic institutions and their critical role in helping train future leaders who will address the challenges and inequities of our contemporary society

Increasing Narcissism and Self-Entitlement in our Youth?

Recent findings point to a troubling trend in our society. Previous research by Konrath, O’Brien and Hsing (2011) notes that there seems to be a decline in empathy among college students who are less likely than those in the 1970’s and 1980’s to agree with statements indicating that they have empathy and concern for those less fortunate than themselves. The authors state that today’s cohort of young adults appear to be the most individualistic and self-centered in recent history. Research by Twenge and Foster (2010) found that from the 1980s to the first decade of the new millennium there has been growing levels of narcissistic personality traits in American college students, who tend to view others in terms of their usefulness instead of as equal partners in a

relationship. This can also be seen in recent societal behaviors and attitudes: in 2006, 81% of eighteen to 25 year olds stated that getting rich was among their generation's highest goals, while only 30% reported helping others as their most important goal (Pew Research Center, 2007). Bickford and Reynolds (2002) note that many college students lack the kind of social and historical awareness that eventually leads to social change, thinking of social change movements as things of the past and things that don't require human intervention.

There are not only troubling trends in attitudes but in actions as well. Sixteen to 24 year-olds in the U.S. are the least likely age group to volunteer (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Astin, Astin, and Lindholm's (2011) measure of Charitable Involvement, consisting of seven items assessing volunteerism and charitable actions, found that this measure shows a decline in the college years. They found that from freshman year to junior year there is a decrease in all types of community service activities.

In the present study we aim to examine the critical role of a higher education in relation to the promotion of more prosocial and altruistic factors among its students. In doing so, we aim to identify certain empathy-increasing aspects of a Catholic college education that, if implemented, might decrease the widening gap between the socially aware and the self-entitled.

Social Awareness

An appropriate construct to consider in the midst of these findings is social awareness. The ability to adopt one another's perspective, an aspect of social awareness, is key in being able to empathize with others (Davis, 1983). Greenspan (1981) states that people who are socially aware are able to behave in a more sensitive and effective manner than those who are not socially aware.

In past literature, social awareness does not appear to have a clear-cut definition. Greenspan (1981) offered the following definition of social awareness, "the individual's ability to understand people, social events, and the processes involved in regulating social events" (p. 18). He proposed a model of social awareness consisting of three component abilities; social sensitivity, social insight, and social communication. These components were further divided into the following constructs: role-taking, social

inference, social comprehension, psychological insight, moral judgment, referential communication, and social problem solving. Black and Langone (1997) attribute specific characteristics to each of the three components; *sensitivity* as a perceptual component, *insight* as an interpretation component, and *communication* as an action component. Sheldon (1996) developed a Social Awareness Inventory consisting of eight different kinds of social awareness but did so regarding social awareness as purely cognitive. On the other hand, researchers like Lucas and Schmitz (1988) regard social awareness as something closely tied to knowledge of current events and being well-informed citizens. Focusing only on the action and behavioral aspect of social awareness, Dinev (2008) defines social awareness in terms of citizens' behavior and active involvement in their communities and in government policies. Green and Kamimura (2003) similarly focus on the action component of social awareness, measuring it in terms of standing up for social justice, promoting environmental awareness, promoting social tolerance, and making purchasing decisions on the basis of a company's ethics. Tsui (2000) collected case study data on college students, school faculty, and administrators interpreting statements from students like "I have gained more of a world view, more of an understanding of people," to be indicative of social awareness and statements that the student body is "very active in social and political causes and interested in changing the world" and being "concerned about issues of social justice" to be reflective of socially aware students. Unlike some of the previously mentioned definitions and measures of social awareness, Tsui (2000) and Black and Langone (1997) regarded the concept as consisting of multiple components similar to Greenspan (1981). For the context of this paper, all definitions and measurements of social awareness have been considered but given that the latter two, in addition to Black and Langone (1997), regard social awareness in a broad manner and tap into its multiple facets, their work has been used as the primary references in this study's understanding of social awareness.

The Critical Role of Higher Education

Social awareness is important to develop especially during the impressionable college years when students are exposed to a variety of social issues and begin to shape who they are as adults. This period of adolescence is a crucial time period in terms of

social and ethical human development. How might higher education help address the decreasing societal empathy during the fruitful years of late adolescence and young adulthood? i.e., college years? Greene and Kamimura (2003) note the importance of higher education institutions motivating students to develop social awareness in order to enable them to reach out to their broader communities on social issues. Tsui (2000) found that a campus culture rich in social and political awareness seems to be conducive to the development of critical thinking skills. In a study conducted by Padgett (2012), it was found that the first year of an undergraduate education is a critical node, which furthers the development of altruistic and socially responsible behavior in college students. Padgett measured altruism and socially responsible behavior (ASR) scores in students, pre-college and post-first year. Various aspects of the college experience within the first year were shown to influence ASR scoring. For example, each one-unit increase in a students' integration of ideas, information, and experiences from the classroom into their daily lives significantly increased their ASR. This exemplifies the vitality of classroom information and experience into the personal development of students' social and ethical development. In addition, participation in diversity experiences was significantly and positively related to ASR. Thus, a balanced combination of both enriched classroom experiences and outside-of-classroom participation in diversifying activities and groups can enhance a "more whole" development of students.

A major study conducted by Astin, Astin and Lindholm (2011), with a national sample of over 14,000 U.S. students, has revealed that over the period of the college education from first year to third year, there are significant areas of personal growth and development related to social awareness and altruism. Participation in campus involvements such as living on campus, participating in student government, discussion of religion with others, and participating in clubs and organizations were correlated with enhanced qualities of caring and relatedness to others. Astin et al. reasoned that these findings could be due to the fact that all of these experiences are likely to expose students to others who may hold diverse perspectives. This is further supported by the correlation between growth in global citizenship with self-rated ability to get along with other races and cultures as well as a commitment to promoting racial understanding. As students were more exposed to others as well as their issues and concerns, they were more likely to integrate those issues as their own and develop a more altruistic perspective. Participation in offerings with a spiritual aspect such as service learning,

interdisciplinary courses, study abroad, self-reflection, and meditation were also shown to promote positive development.

The Critical Role of Campus and Community Involvement

Research has revealed that certain aspects of a higher education, such as service-learning courses, attend to these aspects of ethical and altruistic social development. One important aspect of education at a Catholic university is the integration and promotion of social justice into the lives and education of students. This is evident through the presence of service learning courses that integrate classroom concepts with real-world service experiences and solidify their relationship through personal and group reflection. It is from this aspect of engaging in service and reflection that we were interested in seeking to understand how the presence or lack of service in one's college career affects their growth in the area of social awareness and altruism. In a study conducted by Lies, Bock, Brandenberger & Trozzolo (2012), change in this area of development, most particularly in moral reasoning, was measured over the span of participation in a service-learning course. Results revealed no selection effect, such that students originally deemed to have higher moral reasoning scores were not more likely to choose to participate in a service learning experience. However, most interestingly, those enrolled in the service learning experience showed greater improvement in their moral reasoning scores than those not enrolled as compared to pre-test scores. This explicitly exemplifies that the presence of service and reflection, as a service-learning course would offer, improves students' social skills in the area of moral reasoning.

The IFCU Youth Cultures Study

The Youth Cultures study was conducted by IFCU's Centre for Coordination of Research in the spring of 2012. Over 70 universities worldwide were invited to participate, including Loyola Marymount University. The final sample included 16,588 students drawn from 54 universities in 33 countries. The survey assessed the values, aspirations, experiences and cultural backgrounds of first and fourth year students attending Catholic universities worldwide. After collecting additional institutional data

in spring 2013, results from this survey have allowed us to examine the potential role of the curriculum and learning experiences of first and fourth year students attending the Catholic university of Loyola Marymount. In this publication we will specifically examine the relationship between students' involvement in social-service/religious organizations and their degree of social awareness and orientation.

Hypotheses

We hypothesize that those students who are more involved in social-service/religious groups will tend to show a greater and more ethical sense of social awareness and orientation. These differences will tend to increase from first year to fourth year.

Method

Participants

Participants (60 males [29.4%] and 144 females [70.6%]) were comprised of first year (N=108; 52.9%) and fourth year (N=95; 46.6%) undergraduates (one student did not identify their year in school), between the ages of 18 and 26 ($M = 19.93$, $s.d. = 1.7$), attending Loyola Marymount University (LMU), a private Catholic institution in Los Angeles, California. Of these, 85 participated in the spring of 2012 and 119 participated in the spring of 2013. Of the spring 2012 participants, 8% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 9% were Black/African American (non-Hispanic), 54% were Caucasian/White, 1% was Native American, 23% were Latino/Hispanic (all races), and 5% identified as multiracial. Of the spring 2013 participants, 15% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 7% were Black/African American (non-Hispanic), 49% were Caucasian/White, 1% were Native American, 20% were Latino/Hispanic (all races), and 8% identified as multiracial. Ethnicity distribution seems to be similar between the spring 2012 and spring 2013 samples. In comparison to the general LMU population, our participant demographics were representative with regard to race/ethnicity; the sample contains a slight overrepresentation of females.

Three different methods were used to recruit participants in both spring 2012 and spring 2013 semesters- (1) the LMU Psychology Department's Human Subject Pool, in which participation is required of students enrolled in introductory psychology courses, as part of the social science portion of the university's required "Core Curriculum"; (2) students enrolled in various lower and upper division courses (for non-majors and majors) who were offered "extra credit"; or (3) a chance to win one of several \$50 raffles in exchange for participation.

Materials and Procedure

Participants were asked to complete the IFCU Youth Cultures survey online. Within this survey there are 85 sets of questions which include the following domains: Personal Data, Parental Background, Personal Activities and Interests, Satisfaction with Life and Self-Esteem, Perception of the World/Politics, Most Important Aspects in Life and Personal Identity, Family and Intergenerational Relations, Significant Others, Friends, Social Networks, Interactions with Others, Partner Relationships, Work, Value Orientation and Ethics, Religion, Confidence in Institutions, University, and The Future. Upon sign up, participants received an online link to this survey via email. All responses were recorded anonymously and kept in a password-protected database.

Results

In order to test our hypotheses, we conducted two types of analyses. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted in order to determine the effect of academic year (1st and 4th year) and involvement (no and yes) in a service/religious oriented group on social awareness levels. Chi square analyses were also conducted in order to assess the relationship between academic year and social awareness levels as layered by involvement in a service/religious oriented group. Degree of involvement in a service/religious oriented group was determined by examining the degree of involvement in the following social/religious groups: (1) religious group; (2) volunteer in a non-governmental organization (NGO) working for the poor, sick or other underprivileged groups; (3) defense of human rights organizations; (4) feminist

organization; and (5) ecologist/environmentalist organization. The distribution of degree of involvement is as follows: 42% (N=86) not involved at all; 31% (N=63) involved in only 1 activity; and 27% (N=55) involved in 2 or more activities. For purposes of the results that are presented below, we combined the values of 1 or more into one category of “yes involved” for purposes of increasing the power of the analyses. The results are comparable when analyses were conducted using no, little (1 activity) and high (2 or more) involvement in service/religious activities.

Social Awareness Analyses- Aims/Goals Having Meaning in Students' Lives:

Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement (on a scale from 1 to 6, 1 being least agreement and 6 being most agreement) with identifying “**contributing to change society**” as an aim which has meaning in their life. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for academic year on social awareness was found such that fourth year students ($M = 5.11$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than first year students ($M = 4.56$), $F(1, 198) = 12.4$, $p = .001$. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was also found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.09$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.43$), $F(1, 199) = 18.5$, $p = .0001$. We found no interaction between these variables, $F(1, 196) = 1.48$, $p = .23$.

Similarly, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with identifying “**help the poor and disadvantaged**” as an aim that has meaning in their life. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who were involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.00$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.04$), $F(1, 199) = 34.4$, $p = .0001$. No second main effect for year was found, $F(1, 198) = 2.7$, $p = .10$, nor was there an interaction, $F(1, 196) < 1.0$, $p = .40$.

In an effort to reverse-test our hypotheses, we analyzed participants' levels of agreement with identifying “**earning a lot of money**” as an aim that has meaning in their life. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are not involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 4.58$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.18$), $F(1, 199) = 5.4$, $p = .021$. A non-significant trend in the form of a main effect

for year was found such that first year students ($M = 4.50$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than fourth year students ($M = 4.17$), $F(1, 199) = 3.8$, $p = .053$. No interaction was found, $F(1, 196) < 1.0$, $p = .79$.

Likewise in a similar effort to reverse-test our hypotheses, we analyzed participants' levels of agreement with identifying "**the search for pleasure**" as an aim that has meaning in their life. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are not involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.16$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.80$), $F(1, 198) = 4.2$, $p = .042$. No second main effect for year was found, $F(1, 197) = 2.6$, $p = .109$, nor was there an interaction, $F(1, 195) < 1.0$, $p = .489$. The direction of these latter results is consistent with our primary hypotheses.

Social Awareness Analyses- Choices of Future Jobs: Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with identifying the aspect of "**allowing me to do something which helps to better the lives of others and solve some of their problems**" as important in their choice of a job. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for year on social awareness was found such that fourth year students ($M = 5.28$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than first year students ($M = 4.81$), $F(1, 195) = 9.7$, $p = .002$. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was also found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.32$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.62$), $F(1, 195) = 22.2$, $p = .0001$. We found no interaction between these variables, $F(1, 193) = 1.5$, $p = .22$.

Participants were also asked to rate their level of agreement with identifying the aspect of "**give me the certainty that I am doing something useful for others and contributing to make a better world for all**" as important in their choice of a job. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.28$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.77$), $F(1, 195) = 10.4$, $p = .002$. No significant main effect for year was found, $F(1, 195) = 3.1$, $p = .079$, nor was there an interaction, $F(1, 193) < 1.0$, $p = .322$.

In an effort to reverse-test our hypotheses, we analyzed participants' levels of agreement with identifying “**offer possibilities of earning a high salary and in time to accumulate a large fortune**” as important in their choice of a job. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for year on social awareness was found such that first year students ($M = 4.85$) tended to have a higher score of a agreement with this statement than fourth year students ($M = 4.46$), $F(1, 195) = 5.8, p = .017$. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are not involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 4.89$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.51$), $F(1, 195) = 5.1, p = .025$. No significant interaction was found, $F(1, 193) > 1.0, p = .623$. The direction of these latter results in consistent with our primary hypothesis.

Social Awareness Analyses- How the University Changed Students' Future Plans or Ways of Thinking: Participants were also asked to rate the extent to which their experience at the university has helped them to change their plans for the future and their ways of thinking and acting in the aspect of their “**commitment to help the socially disadvantaged.**” Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 4.67$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 3.26$), $F(1, 187) = 47.7, p = .0001$. No second main effect for year was found, $F(1, 187) = 2.4, p = .121$, nor was there an interaction, $F(1, 185) = 1.99, p = .16$.

Similarly, participants were asked to rate the extent to which their experience at the university has helped them to change their plans for the future and their ways of thinking and acting in relation to “**your understanding of the world's problems**”. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 4.40$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 3.47$), $F(1, 186) = 22.3, p = .0001$. Another main effect for year on social awareness was found such that fourth year students ($M = 4.33$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than first year students ($M = 3.74$), $F(1, 186) = 8.7, p = .004$. No significant interaction was found, $F(1, 184) > 1.0, p = .478$.

Finally, participants were asked to rate the extent to which their experience at the university has helped them to change their plans for the future and their ways of thinking and acting in relation to “**your understanding of social problems**”. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 4.61$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 3.65$), $F(1, 187) = 24.6$, $p = .0001$. Another main effect for year on social awareness was found such that fourth year students ($M = 4.52$) tended to have a higher score of agreement with this statement than first year students ($M = 3.95$), $F(1, 187) = 8.2$, $p = .005$. No significant interaction was found, $F(1, 185) > 1.0$, $p = .867$.

Social Awareness Analyses- Student Change Undergone at the University:

Participants were given a pair of statements which described possible changes that one may have undergone during the time they have been at college/university. They were asked to place their inclination toward either statement on a scale between 1 and 7; a 1 would indicate the greatest change at one end of the spectrum, while a 7 would indicate the greatest change in the other direction. It was determined that responses to the following items in the direction of the higher side of the scale (7) would indicate higher social awareness levels. On one item, participants were asked to place their agreement on a scale between “**I find more difficulties in relating to others than I used to**” on the 1 side and “**I now relate better to all kinds of people than I used to**” on the 7 side. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.53$) tended to have a higher rating on this question than those who are not involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.76$), $F(1, 184) = 10.0$, $p = .002$. A significant main effect for year on social awareness was found such that fourth year students ($M = 5.58$) tended to have a higher rating than first year students ($M = 4.91$), $F(1, 184) = 4.9$, $p = .028$. No significant interaction was found, $F(1, 184) = 1.7$, $p = .188$.

On another item, participants were asked to place their agreement on a scale between “**I now feel more than before that everyone should only look out for himself in life**” on the 1 side and “**I am now more certain than before that one should have concern for others and also count on them**” on the 7 side. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for

involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.10$) tended to have a higher rating on this question than those who are not involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.58$), $F(1, 186) = 5.2, p = .024$. A significant main effect for year on social awareness was found such that fourth year students ($M = 5.30$) tended to have a higher rating than first year students ($M = 4.53$), $F(1, 186) = 7.7, p = .006$. A significant two-way interaction between year and involvement on social awareness was also found, $F(1, 186) = 7.1, p = .009$. For first year students, those who are involved ($M = 4.49$) and not involved ($M = 4.57$) showed similar levels of agreement to fourth year students who are not involved ($M = 4.60$), whereas fourth year students not involved showed higher levels of agreement ($M = 5.67$).

On a final item, participants were asked to place their agreement on a scale between “**I have gained little understanding of the world’s problems since I started my studies**” on the 1 side and “**I have gained more understanding of the world’s problems since I am at college/university**” on the 7 side. Responses to this statement were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those who are involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 5.40$) tended to have a higher rating on this question than those who are not involved in these types of groups ($M = 4.83$), $F(1, 185) = 4.3, p = .039$. A significant main effect for year on social awareness was found such that fourth year students ($M = 5.65$) tended to have a higher rating than first year students ($M = 4.75$), $F(1, 185) = 14.0, p = .0001$. No significant interaction was found, $F(1, 185) > 1.0, p = .677$.

Social Awareness Analyses- Ranking of Top 3 Projects in the Next 15 Years:

Participants were asked to identify their top three projected main projects in the next 15 years from a list of 14 options. Options included areas such as attending graduate school, getting a job, starting a family, owning a home, traveling, etc. We flagged the following three responses as indicators of social awareness: 1) spending a few years in a poor country or in a disadvantaged area in my own country working towards bettering the life of the population in that area, 2) finding the way to work towards a more just and equal society, and 3) getting involved in human rights, peace, green or other social movements. Participants were given a score from 0 to 3 depending on the number of these three responses they chose, and mean scores between groups were analyzed using an ANOVA. A significant main effect for involvement on social awareness was found such that those involved in service/religious oriented groups ($M = 0.34$) tended to have a

higher score than those not involved in these types of groups ($M = 0.14$), $F(1, 201) = 7.4$, $p = .007$. There was no main effect for year on social awareness, $F(1, 201) = 2.4$, $p = .126$, nor an interaction, $F(1, 199) = 1.5$, $p = .216$.

Social Awareness Analyses- Choice Between Freedom or Equality: Finally, participants were asked to identify which of the following two opinions they felt is closer to their own: 1) I believe in freedom and equality have the same importance but if one has to choose between them I consider that **FREEDOM is more important**, that is, that each one may live freely and develop without obstacles, or 2) I believe in freedom and equality have the same importance but if one has to choose between them I consider that **EQUALITY is more important**, that is, no one be marginalized or excluded and that the gap between social classes be less wide. Results were analyzed using a Chi-square analysis, which determined a significant relationship between year and social awareness for those involved in service/religious oriented groups, Pearson $\chi^2(1) = 9.6$, $p = .002$, 2-sided tail test. For those involved, a significantly higher proportion of fourth year students (53% or 27 out of 51) endorsed the statement of **EQUALITY** as being more like their own beliefs than the proportion of first year students (21% or 9 out of 42) who also endorsed it. There were no differences for those not involved, Pearson $\chi^2(1) = 0.6$, $p = .438$, 2-sided tail test.

Discussion

The findings summarized above show that student involvement in service/religious oriented groups is significantly related to increased sense of social awareness and ethical and pro-social behavior. We observe that for those involved in service/religious activities, growth occurs from first to fourth year in Loyola Marymount students. This growth is seen in the expression of increased social awareness, concern for social equality, and in the priority that dedication of their lives to real and meaningful social action has when considering future plans. We interpret these findings as supporting the important role that a values driven higher education plays in the formation of “whole students” inspired to contribute to the improvement of social inequality and fragmentation.

We acknowledge the following limitations to our study. The design of the Youth Cultures study is cross-sectional in nature in that different first and fourth year students

were surveyed. In an ideal longitudinal methodology, the same first year students would have been followed until their fourth year in order to track relative changes in their behavior, values and attitudes. Another limitation is the correlational aspect of the survey. Our findings and its interpretations are tentative since we are not able to state with reasonable certainty that changes from first year to fourth year in our students are primarily due to exposure to the ethos of the Loyola Marymount University experience. But the direction of these findings is very encouraging. A major strength of our study is the relative representativeness of our sample, reflecting our general student population relative to Race/Ethnicity. There is slight overrepresentation of females in our sample relative to the overall male-female distribution however. Additionally, it appears that the survey provides a relatively good snapshot of the values, backgrounds and aspirations of our current first and fourth year students. Our findings reflect a match between institutional goals and mission with the growth observed in our students.

Our findings can be understood from a developmental perspective as well. Developmental psychologist Robert Kegan (1994), as part of his Constructive Developmental Theory, identified three stages of cognitive and social development, which coincide with the time period in which students are attending college. These adolescent stages of development are ‘the Socialized Mind’ (level 3), ‘the Self-Authoring Mind’ (level 4), and ‘the Self-Transforming Mind’ (level 5). Kegan’s work has shown that most students entering college are at the level of ‘the Socialized Mind,’ which is characterized by the ability to internalize the moral system, norms and expectations of their culture in order to be well-adjusted and functioning within society. Within the next stage of ‘the Self-Authoring Mind,’ full development is marked by the ability to internalize two different perspectives while simultaneously being able to author one’s own point of view. Kegan’s research has shown that about one-half to two-thirds of the adult population has not reached this stage in development. In the light of these developmental processes, Palmer, Zajonc and Scribner (2010) argue therefore that the main focus of a liberal college education should be to further students’ development between stages three and four. Our findings appear to provide some suggestive support for students who, as a likely result of a Loyola Marymount education and experience, have made strides toward more “Self-Authoring” minds, bodies and souls.

The work of Astin, Astin and Lindholm (2011) has shown the important role played by a “whole” university experience which seeks to integrate learning in the classroom with opportunities for student involvement and integration, especially

volunteer opportunities. These forms of “engaged learning” allow students to develop their self-awareness and awareness of others as well as instances for development of empathy towards others. These “outside the classroom” involvements can help promote awareness and constructive altruism, thus allowing students the opportunity to connect their academics with community and real world applications. The platform afforded by a values-centered university experience can then provide unique and suitable occasions for students to develop as leaders who are reflective, principled, and empathic. In a study by Ferrari and Jason (1996), students worked on community-based projects that focused on research on smoking and chronic fatigue syndromes. They were able to work closely with people who were dealing with these issues. The active involvement in these community-based research projects provided students with an integration of field experience and research application as well as a heightened sense of “constructive altruism” for their community. Having these opportunities appears to create a sense of social responsibility in students, as they are able to work in depth with the issues. They are also able to see how the application of research methodology can be effectively applied even to societal problems. University educators can inspire students to help create a better world by providing them with platforms, which allow for the integration of academic and scientific skills with service orientations focused on community issues. Thus it is possible that exposing students to activities they can experience and reflect upon first hand, can promote greater altruistic values and behaviors.

Conclusions, Synthesis and Final Reflections

We propose that universities should strive to create programs and curricula, which help bridge the transition to a more “whole” development— one that promotes diversity of perspectives and greater ethical sense in its students. We suggest that universities with a mission that strives to promote the development of the whole student and person (mind, body and soul), encourages learning (in all its forms), and supports the service of faith and the promotion of justice can be instrumental in helping students begin to move toward Kegan’s (1994) ideal and final 5th stage of social and cognitive development. In this ‘the Self-Transforming Mind’ stage, the person is not constrained by individualized viewpoints and is capable of multiple perspectives, even contradictory ones, and more nuanced and perhaps deeper understanding of social issues. And while

this final stage is relatively rare in the general population, mission and values based institutions of higher education (in particular Catholic ones) should strive to create sustaining platforms, bridges and scaffoldings that permit students to begin work toward that developmental ideal.

Kegan's work (1994) on the stages of "constructive development" points to the fertile soil that is represented by the minds, bodies and souls of our university students. This represents a unique and timely opportunity for our institutions of higher learning to prepare, to form and educate future leaders and parents who will carry on our respective missions and begin to solve the problems of our society.

Palmer, Zajonc and Scribner (2010) beautifully argue that the cultivation of university students outside of the classroom is quintessentially important. But is not enough just to simply encourage "engaged learning" opportunities. Such community-based learning has to be complemented with the Ignatian concept of "Contemplativus simul in actione" (*Latin* for, contemplative at the same time as in action), the notion of a thoughtful, creative and reflective engagement at the same time as one is "doing" and "serving" for the greater good (Barry & Doherty, 2002; Center for Ignatian Spirituality, 2012). And it is this striving for a seamless integration of thought, emotion, purpose and action for the greater good which may further in our students the internalization of social perspectives and perhaps help guide them towards Kegan's final stages of the "Self-Transforming Mind" (1994). Palmer, Zajonc and Scribner argue that it is through intellectual framing and reflection that students can truly create meaning in the experiences they encounter throughout the college years, and indeed for the rest of their lives (p. 108). And, they wisely remind us that, "long after [students] forget the content they learned, *who they have become* will endure and determine much of the character and quality of their contribution to society and the personal satisfaction they take in life" (p. 102; italics not in the original text but added for emphasis). And, as University educators and leaders, we must strive toward the development of our own "whole selves" and toward the development of our "whole institutions". And just as we seek to inspire our students to meaningfully live the spirit of "Contemplativus simul in actione", so to as institutions we must collectively practice this Ignatian key principle. This represents our greatest challenge, our greatest inspiration and our most noble mission—and finally, our greatest duty to our students, their children, and grandchildren to follow.

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