



2015

Developing Socially Responsible Leadership and Social Perspective-Taking in Fraternities and Sororities: Findings From a National Study

Matthew R. Johnson

Erica L. Johnson

John P. Dugan

Loyola University Chicago, jdugan1@luc.edu

Recommended Citation

Johnson, Matthew R.; Johnson, Erica L.; and Dugan, John P. Developing Socially Responsible Leadership and Social Perspective-Taking in Fraternities and Sororities: Findings From a National Study. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors*, 10, 1: 1-13, 2015. Retrieved from Loyola eCommons, School of Education: Faculty Publications and Other Works,

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Publications at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in School of Education: Faculty Publications and Other Works by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/).

© AFA, 2015.

DEVELOPING SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE-TAKING IN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES: FINDINGS FROM A NATIONAL STUDY

MATTHEW R. JOHNSON, ERICA L. JOHNSON, AND JOHN P. DUGAN

Using data from the 2009 Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, this study examines socially responsible leadership and social perspective-taking capacities disaggregated by council membership. Results show small but significant differences in developing these capacities. Implications for fraternity and sorority life professionals are discussed.

Background

Fraternities and sororities boast leadership and community development as hallmarks of their organizations, and several studies substantiate these claims (Astin, 1993; DiChiara, 2009; Kimbrough, 2003; Torbenson & Parks, 2009). Fraternity and sorority members participate in comprehensive leadership development, beginning with new member education programs and continuing with member development programs throughout their undergraduate experience. Leadership development in fraternities and sororities has evolved from a focus on position and hierarchy, which reflects a transactional or industrial approach, to a broader, shared, and inclusive approach reflective of transformational or post-industrial leadership (Burns, 1978; Rost, 1993). This evolution is evidenced by a larger shift in higher education leadership programs (Roberts, 2007) and a more focused shift in inter/national member education programs and campus-based initiatives that focus on leadership as a shared process as opposed to a position.

Accompanying this shift in leadership development foci is an increase in diversity among college students. As the diversification of students attending an institution of higher education continues to rise (Ryu, 2010), the importance of understanding others' perspectives becomes paramount (Dey & Associates, 2010). Understanding others' perspectives is especially rich for inquiry in fraternities and sororities because of the supposition that these organizations can be homogenous, which some studies have corroborated (Derryberry & Thoma, 2000; Pascarella &

Terenzini, 2005) and the emphasis on building community among organizations. The history of fraternities and sororities is especially important in understanding the climate for cultivating students' capacities for considering others' perspectives. Because of past exclusionary membership practices, many organizations, such as National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) groups, formed in opposition to dominant exclusionary organizations. This historical context, and the contemporary manifestations of these historical tensions, continues to create unique challenges for fraternity and sorority professionals today (Torbenson & Parks, 2009). These important distinctions suggest the need for students and student affairs professionals alike to better understand the differences between fraternities and sororities to create a more inclusive and stronger community.

Today, inter-council differences can account for significant tensions when students fail to understand and act upon others' perspectives. Students who identified as being part of multicultural organizations (used here as an umbrella term for fraternities and sororities outside of IFC and NPC) often express feelings of frustration in feeling excluded from community events such as Greek Week or speakers. Creating a more inclusive community requires increased capacities for understanding others' perspectives and leadership to work toward more inclusive chapters and fraternity and sorority communities. To date, researchers have not examined leadership development by fraternity and sorority type and their corresponding capacities for social perspective-taking. The current study seeks to bridge this gap in the literature.

Literature Review

Leadership development in fraternities and sororities has received considerable attention in research. In his landmark longitudinal study of more than 4,000 students, Astin (1993) found that fraternity and sorority membership accounted for large gains in leadership development. He also found that peer interactions were most important for leadership development, which he argued was likely the reason why fraternities and sororities were so impactful for leadership development. Caution is offered, however, in interpreting this finding as Astin measured leadership using variables associated with perceived popularity, ambition, and positional role attainment, all of which are more consistent with industrial approaches to leadership than the transformational models advanced in contemporary leadership theory. Looking more specifically at types of fraternity and sorority organizations, Kimbrough and Hutcheson (1998) found that historically Black fraternities and sororities were positively linked to leadership development. Finally, Pascarella and Terenzini's (2005) meta-analysis of college impact studies found that fraternity and sorority membership is generally associated with increased leadership development. Again, however, caution is encouraged in interpreting these findings as many of the reported studies employed similar approaches as Astin (1993) or used the same data set to measure leadership. This draws into question whether there are different influences on leadership as measured from an industrial versus contemporary perspective.

Conversely, several studies argue that fraternity and sorority members' gains in college outcomes are more attributable to precollege characteristics than their fraternity or sorority membership. Although dated, Wilder and McKeegan's (1999) meta-analysis of the effects of fraternity and sorority membership on social values deduced pre-college characteristics and experiences were more influential than fraternity or sorority affiliation. Because fraternities

and sororities tend to be comprised of more affluent students (Soria, 2013; Stuber, 2011), gains in leadership, for instance, may have more to do with background characteristics than organizational membership. Research examining gains derived from fraternity and sorority membership and what role background characteristics play remain limited and inconclusive.

Despite existing research on leadership development of fraternity and sorority members, few studies examine differences by membership or council. In a study of 300 fraternity and sorority members at one institution using the Student Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, 2006), DiChiara (2009) found no differences in leadership practices by membership in four governing councils, but some differences emerged when only Interfraternity Council (IFC) and Panhellenic Council groups were compared. Panhellenic Council groups were higher in fostering cooperative relationships with others, while IFC membership was more prone to foster competitive relationships. Another study identified significant differences in cognitive domains among fraternity and sorority members based on gender (Pascarella, Flowers, & Whitt, 2001), an important finding given the influences of cognition on leadership development (Komiwes, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005). Dugan (2008) also found that sorority members rated significantly higher than fraternity members on seven of the eight values on the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS). He argued that future research on leadership development in fraternity and sorority life should examine important differences by types of organization.

Social Perspective-Taking

In discussions about the purposes of higher education, educators frequently note the importance of preparing students to be thoughtful, engaged, and well-informed citizens capable of understanding and incorporating diverse viewpoints (Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007; Dey & Associates, 2010; King & Baxter

Magolda, 2005), which is sometimes called social perspective-taking. Social perspective-taking is the ability to take another person's point of view (Franzoi, Davis, & Young, 1985; Underwood & Moore, 1982) and/or accurately infer the thoughts and feelings of others (Gehlbach, 2004). King and Baxter Magolda (2005) posit that social perspective-taking undergirds most learning outcomes in higher education, thus highlighting the importance of this capacity.

A survey from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) of more than 33,000 students and campus professionals (Dey & Associates, 2010) explored perceptions of perspective-taking on college campuses. Dey and Associates found that just over half of students (58%) and three-fourths of campus professionals (77%) strongly agreed that helping students recognize the importance of social perspective-taking should be a major focus of their campuses. As a follow-up to that question, only 33% of students and campus professionals strongly agreed that their institutions make perspective-taking a major focus. This study also showed that only 53% of students believed they developed an increased ability to learn from diverse perspectives while in college. This study also reported that only around 7% of campus professionals believed that students came to college respecting diverse viewpoints. Finally, the study found that just under 30% of campus professionals believed that students were respectful when discussing controversial issues or perspectives. These results highlight the importance of social perspective-taking and the lack of students' perceived capacities to consider others' perspectives.

Critics of fraternities and sororities often point to their homogenous makeup, which can hinder the development of social perspective-taking. Derryberry and Thoma (2000) found that fraternity members tend to be more isolated than unaffiliated students and thus surround themselves with those unlikely to challenge their worldviews. Another study found that as leadership responsibilities increase for students within a fraternity or sorority, opportunities to interact with

students with diverse interests decrease (Porter, 2012). These results are particularly troubling because lack of exposure to diverse views can account for a lack of understanding and inaccurate views. In their review of college impact studies, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) stated, "With the exception of Asada, Swank, and Goldey (2003), the weight of evidence indicates that fraternity or sorority membership shapes student views on racial-ethnic diversity, and the effect is probably negative" (p. 310). While the research mostly focuses on racial and ethnic understanding, the culture for understanding others' perspectives in fraternal organizations is nonetheless contentious. However, some researchers contend that these results likely differ in organizations such as NPHC (Harper, Byars, & Jelke, 2005).

Research on the effects of fraternity and sorority membership on social perspective-taking is scarce. An AAC&U study, which examined over 23,000 students at 23 different institutions, found that fraternity or sorority members demonstrated slightly higher capacities for two of the three measures of social perspective-taking than non-members. This research did not account for other factors or disaggregate by type of fraternity or sorority. The author argued, "...the effect of participation in Greek-letter organizations was generally not deleterious, suggesting that engagement even in relatively homogeneous groups can be beneficial" (Reason, 2011, p. 10).

Understanding others' perspectives is critical to socially responsible leadership, as working with others inherently involves working with those who are different from oneself (Komives, Wagner, & Associates, 2009). Prior research using data from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) shows the critical role of social perspective-taking in developing students' leadership capacities, particularly those values in the group and societal domains (Dugan, Bohle, Woelker, & Cooney, 2014). Given its vital role in predicting leadership development and foundational nature for learning outcomes, understanding social perspective-taking in fraternities and sororities is pertinent. While many studies have

examined fraternity and sorority membership and leadership development, few researchers have analyzed differences by membership type, despite important considerations surrounding the historical and contemporary differences in organization types (Kimbrough, 2003; Sutton & Kimbrough, 2001). Further, social perspective-taking in fraternal organizations remains understudied, despite its importance in mission statements, learning outcomes, and campus professionals' viewpoints as well as its centrality in the leadership development process.

Methodology

Research Questions

The research questions guiding the current study were:

- Do members of traditionally White fraternities and sororities (i.e., IFC and National Panhellenic Council) differ from members who identified as being part of multi-cultural fraternities and sororities (e.g., NPHC) on the eight values and the omnibus measure of socially responsible leadership?
- Do members of traditionally White fraternities and sororities differ from members who identified as being part of multi-cultural fraternities and sororities (e.g., NPHC) on social perspective-taking?

Sample

Data from the 2009 Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) were used in this study. The MSL sample comprised 101 institutions representing 31 states and the District of Columbia. Sample sizes at each institution were determined using a desired confidence level of 95%. A total of 337,482 students were invited to participate in the study, of which 115,632 responded (34% response rate). Of this sample, only 45,999 participants answered the question about belonging to either a multi-cultural fraternity or sorority (e.g., NPHC) or a traditionally White fraternity or sorority (e.g., IFC, Panhellenic). For the current study, we further reduced this sample

because 44% of the sample who identified as being part of a multi-cultural organization was White. While White students can certainly be part of multi-cultural fraternal organizations as the question stem on the MSL stated, we believe confusion around these identification categories accounted for the disproportionate number of White students in this sample. Follow up to this phenomenon revealed that many members of traditionally White fraternities and sororities with a largely Jewish membership identified their organizations as multi-cultural, the same category as NPHC or Latino/a fraternities and sororities. We also learned that many students in IFC/Panhellenic groups believed their organizations were diverse, so they indicated membership in a multi-cultural organization. To account for this, we only used students of color in the multi-cultural fraternities and sororities organization sample. After further reduction for students who did not identify a gender, our total sample used for the first research question was 18,198 students (11,140 Panhellenic Council; 5,285 IFC; 1,053 multi-cultural-affiliated men; 720 multi-cultural-affiliated women). The sample comprised of students who identified as being part of multi-cultural fraternities and sororities were 1.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 31.3% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 23.8% Black/African American, 17.3% Latino/Hispanic, 2.7% Middle Eastern, and 18.7% Multiracial. The sample of students identifying membership in a multi-cultural organization was 40.6% female. Further, 17.8% were freshmen, 20.3% sophomores, 27.8% juniors, and 32.8% seniors. For the IFC/Panhellenic Council sample, 57.2% were female, and 18.7% were freshmen, 23.9% sophomores, 26.7% juniors, and 30.1% seniors. This was also comprised of 74% White students and 15.3% students of color (10.7% did not list a race).

The sample for the social perspective-taking analysis (second research question) was based on 7,619 students since this scale was a sub-study in the larger MSL. Sub-studies were only administered to a randomly selected 50% of cases

at each institution to reduce the overall length of the instrument. Of this sample, 4,385 were members of a Panhellenic Council organization, 2,381 were IFC, 506 identified as men in multi-cultural fraternities, and 347 identified as women in multi-cultural sororities. Racial and class year breakdown were similar to those in the larger sample, with a slightly higher female representation than the larger sample for the first research question (58.4%).

Method

A series of one-way ANOVAs were performed as opposed to a MANOVA because of the presence of an omnibus dependent variable (i.e., omnibus SRLS) and the high likelihood of a strong correlation among the dependent variables, which may result in multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). To account for increased Type I error across the number of dependent

variables and large sample size, a more conservative p-value of .001 was used for all analyses. Further, effect sizes were calculated using partial eta squared (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), which indicates the magnitude of significant differences. Cronbach alphas for the eight scales in the SRLS were calculated for the larger fraternity and sorority sample, which yielded acceptable rates from 0.75 to 0.95. The reliability calculation for the measure of social perspective-taking was .81 in the sample for the first research question and .79 in the sample for the second research question. Table 1 provides definitional parameters for all measures included in the study, while Table 2 lists reliability levels for each scale. Additionally, all composite measures employed in this research underwent rigorous psychometric testing to confirm their validity (Dugan, Komives, & Associates, 2009).

Table 1
Dependent Variable Definitional Parameters

Variable	Definition
Consciousness of self	General self-awareness with particular attention toward the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions that motivate one to take action.
Congruence	Thinking, feeling, and behaving with consistency, genuineness, authenticity, and honesty towards others; actions are consistent with most deeply-held beliefs and convictions.
Commitment	The psychic energy that motivates the individual to serve and that drives the collective effort; implies passion, investment, and follow-through directed toward both the group activity as well as its intended outcomes.
Collaboration	The ability to work with others effectively in a common effort; constitutes the cornerstone value of the group leadership effort because it empowers self and others through trust and shared responsibility.
Common purpose	To work with shared aims and values; facilitates the group’s ability to engage in collective analysis of issues at hand and the task to be undertaken.
Controversy with civility	Recognition of two fundamental realities of any group effort: that differences in viewpoint are inevitable, and that such differences must be aired openly, but with civility.
Citizenship	Occurs when one becomes responsibly connected to the community/ society by working for positive change interdependently with others.
Social Perspective-Taking	The ability to take another person’s point of view and/or accurately infer the thoughts and feelings of others.

Adapted from Franzoi et al. (1985), Gehlbach (2004), HERI (1996), Komives et al. (2009), and Underwood & Moore (1982).

Table 2*Cronbach Alpha Values of Scales*

	SRLS Sample (n=18,198)	SPT Sample (n=7,619)
Composite Measures/Scales	Cronbach Alpha	Cronbach Alpha
Consciousness of Self	.82	.83
Congruence	.85	.85
Commitment	.84	.84
Collaboration	.82	.81
Common Purpose	.84	.82
Controversy with Civility	.75	.75
Citizenship	.92	.93
Change	.79	.81
Omnibus SRLS	.95	.95
Social Perspective-Taking	.81	.79

Limitations

The results of this study should be viewed in light of three important limitations. The first relates to classification terminology. Because of the question stem on the MSL, we were not able to identify specific type of fraternity or sorority membership for students who indicated membership in multi-cultural fraternities and sororities such as NPHC organizations. The 2009 MSL asked students to identify as members of either a “social fraternity or sorority (ex. Panhellenic or Interfraternity council group such as Sigma Phi Epsilon or Kappa Kappa Gamma)” or a “multi-cultural fraternity or sorority (ex. NPHC group such as Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., or Latino Greek Council group such as Lambda Theta Alpha).” We struggled in this analysis to find or create an overarching term to classify the diverse fraternities and sororities that exist outside of IFC and Panhellenic organizations. Given these issues, we relied on the wording used in the original MSL survey and carefully noted this limitation here. We used the term “multi-cultural” with a hyphen to indicate the diverse fraternity and sorority organizations, comprised primarily of students of color, which students join as part of

their college experience. Just as fraternity and sorority members are not a monolithic group, neither are their organizational structures (Gregory, 2003). Future research should seek to disaggregate specific fraternity and sorority membership for a more nuanced examination. Second, the MSL is a quasi-experimental design that relies on student self-report data. Although common in college impact research, further research might implement a longitudinal design and find more robust ways to measure student outcomes. Lastly, the research design did not address the effect of pre-college characteristics, other college experiences, or institutional effects on the dependent variables. Future research should address these unique effects to better discern their impact.

Results

A series of one-way ANOVAs found significant differences ($p < .001$) on seven of the eight socially responsible leadership values and the omnibus measure. The only domain with no significant differences was controversy with civility. Women who belonged to Panhellenic Council organizations scored significantly higher than

their peers on five of the eight socially responsible leadership values and the omnibus measure. The other two measures with significant differences ($p < .001$) were the citizenship and change values. Women who identified as belonging to multi-cultural organizations were highest on citizenship and men in multi-cultural organizations were highest on change. IFC men did not score the highest on any of the eight domains. Women in multi-cultural organizations were higher than men in similar organizations on six of the nine domains. Panhellenic Council women were higher than IFC men in eight of the nine domains.

The significant differences found in the ANOVAs should be interpreted in light of their corresponding effect sizes, which were mostly small or trivial (Cohen, 1998), and ranged from less than .01 to .02 (partial eta squared). Small effect size differences were found for congruence, commitment, and citizenship. Significant group differences are often found in large sample sizes such as those in this study, so effect size interpretations should be considered alongside these differences. Table 3 provides means, standard deviations, significance test results, and effect size calculations for all analyses.

Table 3
Socially Responsible Leadership Capacities by Membership

	Multi-(W) n=720		Multi-(M) n=1,053		IFC n=5285		Panhellenic Council n=11,140		F	p	Effect Size
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Consciousness of self	3.90	.610	3.89	.591	3.99	.530	4.00	.470	22.89	*	trivial ($<.01$)
Congruence	4.11	.695	4.01	.601	4.11	.412	4.21	.448	103.73	*	small (.01)
Commitment	4.27	.712	4.12	.599	4.24	.542	4.36	.432	128.72	*	small (.02)
Collaboration	4.08	.665	4.07	.572	4.04	.515	4.11	.413	27.38	*	trivial ($<.01$)
Common purpose	4.06	.666	4.02	.564	4.02	.506	4.08	.405	23.01	*	trivial ($<.01$)
Controversy with civility	3.76	.518	3.77	.456	3.80	.460	3.79	.391	2.99		-
Citizenship	4.00	.703	3.92	.628	3.81	.604	3.97	.497	107.23	*	small (.02)
Change	3.80	.570	3.84	.533	3.82	.503	3.78	.468	11.18	*	trivial ($<.01$)
Omnibus SRLS	3.96	.579	3.92	.501	3.95	.438	4.01	.354	38.15	*	trivial ($<.01$)

Note. These domains were measured on a 5-point agree/disagree Likert scale

These findings are remarkably similar to the 2007 MSL data set (Dugan & Komives, 2007), which found that women reported higher scores than men in seven of the eight socially respon-

sible leadership domains (except change). Of particular note was the lack of differences in controversy with civility, which also contained the lowest scores across the eight values and the

omnibus measure. These low scores are similar to prior MSL research (Dugan & Komives, 2007). However, caution with this interpretation is encouraged as these are simple descriptive differences as the effect size tests did not yield meaningful variations in scores on this scale.

In examining the highest mean scores, commitment and congruence were the top two domains. The lowest capacities were controversy with civility and change. Students in fraternities and sororities demonstrated stronger capacities for values in the individual domain than the group and societal domains, suggesting that individual leadership capacities are either 1) easier to develop than those capacities required for working with others, or 2) precede the development of group-level capacities. This is consistent with literature suggesting that leader development typically precedes leadership development as students build the requisite individual knowledge and skills necessary for effective and meaningful engagement in-group processes (Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2009; Komives et al., 2005). These results also suggest that students may be reluctant or uncomfortable with change and may demonstrate incivility in the change process.

These results indicate differences in socially responsible leadership capacities based on membership type. These differences, however, are quite small. In other words, membership type seems to only account for small differences in the development of leadership capacities. Despite assumed differences in the mission and structures of these different organizations, our find-

ings suggest there seems to be little difference in terms of their effect on leadership development outcomes. It is fairly surprising that more meaningful differences were not found between types of fraternities and sororities given significantly different missions often yield different experiences for students. However, perhaps the structure of the experiences has more in common than expected. Different organization types provide students with similar opportunities for high-impact leadership development practices like community service, organizational involvement, and opportunities to build leadership efficacy. Different types of organizations may also reflect homogenous environments, but findings from MSL research has found that a primary predictor of leadership gains is not just interactions across difference, but interactions about difference as well (Dugan, Kodama, Correia, & Associates, 2013).

Results of a one-way ANOVA on the social perspective-taking scale indicated significant differences ($F=140.73, p < .001$) across fraternal membership. Panhellenic Council women ($M=3.79$) rated significantly higher than IFC men ($M=3.44$); the same was true for students who identified as being part of multi-cultural organizations, which showed women ($M=3.82$) had higher capacities for social perspective-taking than men ($M=3.69$). These differences were found to have a moderate effect size (.05). Table 4 provides statistical results from the second research question.

Table 4
Social Perspective-Taking by Membership

	Multi- (W) n=347		Multi- (M) n=506		IFC n=2,381		Panhellenic Council n=4,385		F	p	Effect Size
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Social Perspective-Taking (Omnibus)	3.82	.674	3.69	.621	3.44	.866	3.79	.568	140.73	*	moderate (.05)

Note. This is a 5-point Likert scale, with 1=Does Not Describe Me Very Well and 5=Describes Me Very Well

Discussion and Implications

This study illuminated important differences in fraternity and sorority members' capacities for socially responsible leadership and social perspective-taking. Most importantly, this study compared these capacities by membership in different organizational types and disaggregated membership in multi-cultural organizations (e.g., NPHC, Latino/a organizations) by gender.

This study yielded trivial and small effect size differences in the eight domains of the SRLS across councils. It stands to reason that fraternity and sorority students would benefit similarly from the host of leadership development programs and services offered through these organizations' inter/national offices, alumni chapters, advisors, and fraternity and sorority life offices. Campus-based fraternity and sorority life advisors provide community-wide programs, often bringing diverse perspectives to the entire community via speakers, retreats, Greek Week events, and philanthropic events. These experiences often encourage cross-council collaboration. These functions provide members of different councils exposure to the same ideas, which could explain the mostly similar results across the eight domains. These results differ slightly from DiChiara's (2009) analysis, which found no significant differences for leadership practices across four councils. Although the effect size differences were quite small, the development of leadership capacities appears to differ by council membership, but only slightly.

Those domains with small effect size differences include congruence, commitment, and citizenship. Within these three domains, women in Panhellenic organizations demonstrated higher capacities than the other three council memberships on congruence and commitment, but women who identified as belonging to multi-cultural organizations had higher capacities for citizenship. Higher capacities for congruence and commitment within Panhellenic Council organizations may be a result of increased conver-

sations and programming around values within these organizations. These higher capacities may also be a result of women having higher capacities prior to joining sororities. That citizenship was higher in women's multi-cultural organizations is likely a result of the increased emphasis these organizations place on service, which is measured in the citizenship domain. These results are in line with other research examining more democratic, shared conceptions of leadership, which shows a mostly consistent pattern that women and people of color tend to demonstrate higher capacities than their peers (Asel et al., 2009; Dugan, 2008; Dugan & Komives, 2007).

In examining mean scores across the SRLS domains, commitment and congruence were the highest self-reported scores. Commitment refers to an intrinsic passion and investment of energy toward action (Komives et al., 2009). Students in fraternities and sororities invest a significant amount of time in their organizations, often living amongst members, which indicates one possible reason this domain was so high. Similarly, congruence was the second highest, indicating that students have identified clear values, beliefs, and attitudes and live them relatively consistently in their lives. Whether these internally-derived attributes align with the stated purposes of their organizations is quite another matter beyond the scope of these data, but the extent to which fraternity and sorority members self-report acting congruently with their personal values appears strong. This is likely the result of wide-spanning programming at the local and inter/national levels designed to help fraternity and sorority members act in accordance to their organizational values. Student affairs professionals struggle in challenging fraternity and sorority members to live their lives in accordance with their respective organization's values, however. With such high levels of self-reported congruence to their own values, students may demonstrate significant resistance to aligning their personal values to those of their organiza-

tion or fraternity and sorority community. Educators should consider first exploring students' personal values before examining congruencies with organizational or community values to help combat this resistance.

Conversely, the two lowest domains were controversy with civility and change. These descriptive data show that fraternity and sorority students have room for growth as it relates to understanding and integrating diverse viewpoints and demonstrate less comfort with transition and ambiguity in the change process. These lower capacities sometimes manifest with impassioned disagreements about new policy changes, lack of cross-council collaborations, and clinging to past practices in new member education. Educators who incur these problems should note that students' capacities for integrating diverse viewpoints and openness to change are lower than other leadership capacities. Leveraging higher capacities such as commitment and collaboration might be a useful strategy. If students understand their increased capacity for working with others (collaboration), but struggle with integrating diverse viewpoints when working together (controversy with civility), they may understand challenges in their community more clearly. Fraternity and sorority life professionals may also seek to implement activities that increase students' capacities for working with diverse others or increase partnerships with diversity and multicultural educators on campus.

The differences in the social perspective-taking measure across councils add to a growing research base on social perspective-taking. Prior research has shown that women and students of color demonstrate higher capacities for social perspective-taking (Dey & Associates, 2010), which these data support. Panhellenic Council women were higher than IFC men on social perspective-taking. As previously mentioned, this trend parallels other research that shows women demonstrate higher capacities for social perspective-taking than men (Dey & Associates, 2010) and that IFC tends to foster more com-

petitive relationships (DiChiara, 2009). Panhellenic Council membership for women, as a result of their shared recruitment process, might positively affect social perspective-taking. Since Panhellenic Council women are forced to think about how recruitment practices affect small or struggling chapters, there may be an increased likelihood for developing increased social perspective-taking. This process provides a framework for women to consider the community as a whole, through standard rules of recruitment dictated by the National Panhellenic Conference. IFC recruitment, conversely, tends to be more decentralized with little opportunity or requirement to consider others' perspectives. Women who identified as being part of multi-cultural organizations were higher than men in similar organizations, which is in line with research showing women tend to demonstrate greater perspective-taking than men (Dey & Associates, 2010). Also, given that IFC men were the lowest among the four groups, their ability to see others' perspectives may be most challenging. This finding highlights the importance of working with this population to understand others and incorporate their perspectives for the betterment of their personal leadership development and the entire fraternity and sorority community.

Increasing social perspective-taking in fraternities and sororities remains an important endeavor, especially across councils. Facilitating discussions about different social identities and organizational histories, for instance, will likely bolster students' capacities for considering others' perspectives. Fraternity and sorority life advisors should intentionally facilitate these discussions and they could occur at council meetings or retreats. Guest speakers from diverse backgrounds and councils may help bolster students' social perspective-taking. The AAC&U report referenced earlier (Dey & Associates, 2010) noted the importance of diverse co-curricular programming coupled with intentionally structured learning activities for bolstering social perspective-taking. While events and programs within

the fraternity and sorority community hold much potential for learning and growth about others, their ability to bolster social perspective-taking appears tied to increasing exposure to diverse viewpoints and educators' ability to help students make meaning of these experiences.

Conclusion

This study sought to examine differences in students' capacities for socially responsible leadership and social perspective-taking based on council membership. The results showed many similarities across councils with a few important differences. When exploring the eight domains of the SRLS, the study resulted in significant differences with small effect sizes for three domains, highlighting the many similarities across the different council members in their capacities for socially responsible leadership. The domains of congruence, commitment, and citizenship yielded significant differences with small effect sizes, thus highlighting some noteworthy between council differences that may inform practice. Significant differences in social perspective-taking across the councils were found with IFC men reporting the lowest capacities.

The results of this study highlight the importance of community-wide programming to ensure that all councils benefit from resources and

are able to continue to develop within the eight domains of socially responsible leadership since significant differences in these domains were quite small. This study also highlights the work to be done to improve social perspective-taking among fraternity men and sorority women via programming and advising efforts. Administrators will find it particularly helpful to consider programming that reaches IFC men and men in multi-cultural organizations. Increased social perspective-taking skills within a fraternity and sorority community may lead to better relations among councils, chapters, and a stronger, more inclusive community.

Understanding how fraternity and sorority members develop capacities for socially responsible leadership and social perspective-taking are important endeavors given the mission of fraternities (Kimbrough, 2003; Torbenson & Parks, 2009) and an ever-increasing diversification of college students and the larger United States population (Ryu, 2010). Increasing fraternity and sorority members' capacities in these two areas remains critical. This study hopes to influence practice in these endeavors by providing baseline data for their development examined by council. The results might inform discussions about how to best build students' capacities for socially responsible leadership and social perspective-taking.

References

- Asada, H., Swank, E., & Goldey, G. (2003). The acceptance of a multicultural education among Appalachian college students. *Research in Higher Education, 44*, 99-120.
- Asel, A. M., Seifert, T. A., & Pasarella, E. T. (2009). The effects of fraternity/sorority membership on college experiences and outcomes: A portrait of complexity. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors, 4*(2), 1-15.
- Astin, A. (1993). *What matters in college? Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Cohen, J. W. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Colby, A., Beaumont, E., Ehrlich, T., & Corngold, J. (2007). *Educating citizens: Preparing America's undergraduates for lives of moral and civic responsibility*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Day, D. V., Harrison, M. M., & Halpin, S. M. (2009). *An integrative approach to leader development*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Derryberry, P. W., & Thoma, S. J. (2000, May-June). The friendship effect: Its role in the development of moral thinking in students. *ABOUT CAMPUS*, 13-18.
- Dey, E. L., & Associates. (2010). *Engaging diverse viewpoints*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges & Universities.
- DiChiara, A. N. (2009). Fraternal leadership: Differences in leadership practices among four governing councils. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors*, 4(2), 16-29.
- Dugan, J. P. (2008). Exploring relationships between fraternity and sorority membership and socially responsible leadership. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity Advisors*, 3(2), 16-25.
- Dugan, J. P., Bohle, C. W., Woelker, L., & Cooney, M. A. (2014). The role of social perspective-taking in developing students' leadership capacities. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 51(1), 1-15.
- Dugan, J. P., Kodama, C., Correia, B., & Associates. (2013). *Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership insight report: Leadership program delivery*. College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs.
- Dugan, J. P., & Komives, S. R. (2007). *Developing leadership capacity in college students: Findings from a national study*. A Report from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership. College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs.
- Dugan, J. P., Komives, S. R., & Associates. (2009). *Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership 2009: Institutional reports*. College Park, MD: National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs.
- Franzoi, S., Davis, M., & Young, R. (1985). The effects of private self-consciousness and perspective taking on satisfaction in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48, 1584-1594.
- Gehlbach, H. (2004). A new perspective on perspective taking: A multidimensional approach to conceptualizing an aptitude. *Educational Psychology Review*, 16(3), 207-234.
- Gregory, D. (2003). The dilemma facing fraternal organizations at the millennium. In D. E. Gregory & Associates (Eds.), *The administration of fraternal organizations on North American campuses: A pattern for the new millennium* (pp. 3-25). Asheville, NC: College Administration.
- Harper, S. R., Byars, L. F., & Jelke, T. B. (2005). How Black Greek-Letter Organization membership affects college adjustment and undergraduate outcomes. In T. L. Brown, G. S. Parks, & C. M. Phillips (Eds.), *African American fraternities and sororities: The legacy and the vision* (pp. 393-416). Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Kimbrough, W. M. (2003). Historically Black fraternal organizations. In D. E. Gregory & Associates (Eds.), *The administration of fraternal organizations on North American campuses: A pattern for the new millennium* (pp. 77-94). Asheville, NC: College Administration.
- Kimbrough, W. M., & Hutcheson, P. A. (1998). The impact of membership in Black Greek-Letter Organizations on Black students' involvement in collegiate activities and their development of leadership skills. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 67(2), 96-105.
- King, P. M., & Baxter Magolda, M. B. (2005). A developmental model of intercultural maturity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46(6), 571-592. doi:10.1353/csd.2005.0060
- Komives, S. R., Owen, J. E., Longerbeam, S., Mainella, F. C., & Osteen, L. (2005). Developing a leadership identity: A grounded theory. *Journal of College Student Development*, 46, 593-611.
- Komives, S. R., Wagner, W., & Associates (2009). *Leadership for a better world: Understanding the social change model of leadership development*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Kouzes J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2006). *Student leadership practices inventory* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Pascarella, E., Bohr, L., Nora, A., & Terenzini, P. (1996). Is differential exposure to college linked to the development of critical thinking? *Research in Higher Education*, 37, 159- 174.
- Pascarella, E., Flowers, L., & Whitt, E. (1999). *Cognitive effects of Greek affiliation in college: Additional evidence*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Iowa, Iowa City.
- Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Porter, H. D. (2012). Interactional diversity opportunities through involvement: Fraternity and sorority student leaders' experiences. *Oracle: The Research Journal of the Association of Fraternity/ Sorority Advisors*, 7(1), 54-70.
- Reason, R. D. (2011). Encouraging perspective-taking among college students. *Diversity & Democracy*, 14(1), 8-10.
- Roberts, D. C. (2007). *Deeper learning in leadership: Helping college students find the potential within*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Rost, J. C. (1993). *Leadership for the twenty-first century*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Ryu, M. (2010). *Minorities in higher education: Twenty-fourth status report*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- Soria, K. M. (2013, May). Social class reconsidered: Examining the role of class privilege in fraternities and sororities. *AFA Essentials*, 1-4.
- Stuber, J. (2011). *Inside the college gates: How class and culture matter in higher education*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Sutton, E. M., & Kimbrough, W. M. (2001). Trends in Black student involvement. *NASPA Journal*, 39, 30-40.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Torbenson, C., & Parks, G. (Eds.). (2009). *Brothers and sisters: Diversity in college fraternities and sororities*. Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.
- Underwood, B., & Moore, B. (1982). Perspective-taking and altruism. *Psychological Bulletin*, 91, 143-173.
- Wilder, D., & McKeegan, H. (1999). Greek-letter social organizations in higher education: A review of research. In J. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. 14, pp. 317-366), New York, NY: Agathon.

Author Biographies

Matthew Johnson is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at Central Michigan University and teaches graduate courses in leadership. He is a member of Sigma Pi fraternity, worked as an educational leadership consultant, and currently serves as a faculty advisor.

Erica Johnson is the Assistant Director of the Mary Ellen Brandell Volunteer Center at Central Michigan University. She was previously the Coordinator of Greek Life at Central Michigan University. She is a member of Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority.

John P. Dugan is an Associate Professor of Higher Education at Loyola University Chicago. He is the Principal Investigator of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership. He is a member of Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity.