*What make nonprofit service organizations more active in their civic roles? The national survey of nonprofit arts organizations*

## WORKING PAPER

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**Abstract**

Nonprofits serve communities by providing arts and culture, education, human services, health care, and many more. Yet, little is known about the factors associated with some nonprofits that are more civically active while operating within a market economy. This study draws on the results of an original survey of 909 nonprofit arts organizations across the United States as well as 21 qualitative interviews with leaders of civically engaged arts organizations. The descriptive findings suggest that the nonprofit arts and cultural sector is much more engaged in market-oriented activities than activities contributing to strong civil society. The analytic results suggest that more civically active arts nonprofits have diverse networks, perceive that peer organizations place strong emphasis on civic affairs, and are consciously aware of their nonprofit status. This study has implications for nonprofits in general that want to balance equally important nonprofit functions.

**Introduction**

There have been increasing calls for more meaningful citizen participation (King & Stiver, 1998; Schachter, 1997; Verba et al., 1995). Nonprofit organizations are conventionally thought of as entities that cultivate active civic participation and nurture reciprocal cooperation (Cooper et al., 2006; Putnam, 2000; Warren, 2001). The reality, however, is that nonprofit organizations increasingly operate like professional service agencies in the face of a changing environment and perform less as stewards of civil society (Salamon, 2012). Nonprofit organizations bring community arts and cultural programs, care for elders, train the workforce, and give food and shelter to the homeless. Even though federal funding and private giving have slowed, the U.S. nonprofit sector grew 25 percent during the past decade (Blackwood et al., 2012; Salamon, 2012; Young et al., 2012). That means competition over limited funding has intensified, and as a result, nonprofit organizations have sought more commercial income in order to survive (Young et al., 2012). To remain competitive, nonprofits increasingly apply business principles to their operations (Dart, 2004; Dees & Anderson, 2003; Hammack & Young, 1993; Young et al., 2012).

As the sector becomes more professional and commercialized in its operations, scholars have expressed concern that nonprofit contribution to social justice and community building has diminished (Backman & Smith, 2000; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Grønbjerg & Salamon, 2012; Skocpol, 2003). Eikenberry and Jensen (2012) note that recent changes in the nonprofit sector have shifted attention to serving specific clients, rather than the well-being of the general society. Such change may be necessary for nonprofits to survive. In short, nonprofit organizations face a discrepancy between their traditional image as stewards of civil society and their new reality as organizations with marketized service delivery models. There has been yet little empirical assessment of how nonprofit organizations fulfill different roles at the same time.

Scholars emphasize the significance of balancing various nonprofit functions (Frumkin, 2005; Jäger & Beyes, 2010; Salamon, 2012; Sanders, 2012). Especially there are certain roles aimed toward civic purposes and other types of roles borne out of economic reasons. In order to retain their civic roots and remain distinct from for-profit organizations, nonprofits must manage a balance between their civic- and market-oriented roles. These dual roles create a managerial challenge, but no studies have empirically assessed the steps taken to balance their functions. There have been extensive studies on individual aspects of nonprofit functions, and prominent nonprofit scholars such as Frumkin (2005) and Salamon (2012) have attempted to synthesize the individual aspects of nonprofit functions theoretically. However, the literature still lacks empirical research that simultaneously measures multiple dimensions of nonprofits' roles.

To assess how nonprofits are managing their dual roles, researchers must have a means to measure their involvement in various functions. Moulton and Eckerd (2012) developed a Nonprofit Role Index to assess nonprofit performance in six distinct role dimensions and to explore the relationship between certain revenue sources and nonprofit roles. Their findings are limited because they were drawn from a single geography (Columbus, OH) and from a relatively small sample size (105 nonprofits). Nonetheless, their index is well-constructed and reliable.

Thus, this study adopted the index to analyze a large, national sample of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations with regard to their involvement in various roles. It also contributes to the literature by identifying the organizational characteristics that civically active nonprofit organizations share. The goal of the study is to identify the organizational characteristics that, if understood better, may help nonprofit managers balance their organizations' presence in civil society and in the market.

First, the paper reviews the extant literature that discusses multiple nonprofit roles. The next section describes the theoretical conceptual framework for this study, followed by a discussion of why the nonprofit arts and cultural sector was chosen as a focus and why some nonprofits are more civically engaged than others. The paper then describes the national survey that provides data for the study, and in particular, data on the six distinct role dimensions that characterize nonprofit organizations as more active in either civil society or the market economy. Lastly, the empirical model is tested to find common features of civically engaged nonprofit arts organizations. The paper concludes with a discussion of the finding's relevance for practitioners and policy makers.

**Literature Review on Nonprofit Roles**

Nonprofit organizations play various roles in a community. Frumkin (2005) summarizes that nonprofits foster civic and political engagement, deliver necessary public services, function as a mechanism to express personal values and beliefs, and provide a space to test innovative ideas that use both commercial and charitable means to address social issues. Similarly, Salamon (2012) sees five categories of nonprofits' activities: service, advocacy, expressive, community-building, and value guardian. Based on Frumkin (2005) and Salamon (2012), the present study focuses on six nonprofit roles: service delivery, social entrepreneurship (innovative), advocacy, citizen engagement, creating social capital, and value expression. The present study also conceptually categorizes the six roles as either "instrumental" or "expressive" (Frumkin, 2005; Mason, 1996). Nonprofit organizations are instrumental because they generate tangible social outcomes; they provide services and find innovative ways to address social problems. Nonprofits are expressive because they are places where individuals can manifest their beliefs and commitments by engaging in collective, voluntary actions. This dichotomy also captures whether a particular nonprofit function is primarily grounded in the market economy (instrumental role) or civil society (expressive role). This study uses the dichotomous distinction to help define civically engaged versus market-oriented nonprofits, a categorization that allows for a comprehensive, empirical assessment of the dual roles occupied by nonprofits.

Service delivery and social entrepreneurship are instrumental nonprofit roles and exist because of the principle of the market economy and the limitation of government services. The service delivery role captures the indispensable public services that nonprofits provide when a

service gap exists in the market. The government failure theory explains that nonprofits supplement government and provide public goods and services that cannot be exchanged through markets but are not fully satisfied by government programs (Douglas, 1987; Weisbrod, 1988). In these cases, nonprofits are considered to provide reliable public services due to non-distribution constraints (Hansmann, 1987). Voluntary failure theory highlights the complementary relationship of government and nonprofits: governments gain more social service capacity and nonprofits gain necessary resources (Salamon, 1995). Social entrepreneurship is another instrumental role. Nonprofits provide relatively flexible spaces for visionaries to implement innovative ideas for social issues (Frumkin, 2005; Light, 1998). It is because, compared to businesses and government agencies, nonprofits are less constrained by the need to make profits or satisfy political considerations. The need to initiate new approaches for social goods and services creates a niche for nonprofits to fill as places of flexibility.

The social capital, value expression, citizen engagement, and political advocacy roles characterize the expressive aspect of nonprofit functions. Associational life strengthens social capital and improves the individual's capacity for civic and political participation. Historically, nonprofits were found to be essential in cultivating this type of thriving community (Putnam, 2000; Verba et al., 1995). The nonprofit sector also affords a mechanism for donors, volunteers, trustees, and staff to translate their commitments and values into concrete actions (Jeavons, 1992). Social capital promotes civic engagement, and vice versa, but these two concepts are still distinct (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Schneider, 2007). Nonprofits translate social capital and civic engagement into direct political activities to "correct imbalanced political representation by ensuring that a broader set of interests are voiced" (Jenkins, 2006, P.308). These roles are altogether fundamental to nurture a civil society, and the term "civically engaged nonprofits" in this study is referred to those organizations actively involved in the expressive functions.

The conceptual framework for this study also draws on Salamon (2012). The four forces that he identifies as shaping the nonprofit sector are voluntarism, civic activism, professionalism, and commercialism. Voluntarism is the foundation for building a community, and civic activism is an impulse to advocate for the voiceless through challenging the underlying structure of social, economic, and political power. This study views voluntarism and civic activism are the main forces that nurture the nonprofit roles in value expression, community-building, citizen engagement, and advocacy. The growing forces of professionalism and commercialism explain nonprofits' involvement in these instrumental roles: public service delivery and social entrepreneurship. Growing professionalism is partly attributable to burgeoning nonprofit involvement in government funded activities, which have resulted in an increasingly hierarchical, rule-bound, formal structure within nonprofits. Commercialism, perhaps the most rapidly growing force, is the pressure to operate like a business and provide services to customers in exchange for fees.

Table 1 summarizes the conceptual framework for this study that helps to define a nonprofit as either civic- or market-oriented based upon their level of engagement in different roles. Of course, it is difficult to draw a clear line between the two because many nonprofit

organizations are simultaneously engaged in various functions. For example, a nonprofit arts organization that presents Russian Americans performing arts contribute to civic life by serving as a site for community dialogue about a particular culture. While doing so, it works within the market economy. In addition to presenting professional performances, it could operate a subsidiary restaurant to generate self-sustainable income or hire a professional fund-raiser to make the organization more competitive in the donor market.

**Table 1. Conceptual Framework for Nonprofit Roles**

| Context | | Civil Society | | Market Economy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Functions | Value Expression | Edwards & Foley, 2001; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Jeavons, 1992; Mason, 1996; Moulton & Eckerd, 2012; Salamon, 2012 | Social Entrepreneurship (innovative) | Frumkin, 2005; Light, 1998; McDonald, 2007; Moulton & Eckerd, 2012 |
| | Community Building (Social Capital) | Anheier, 2009; Bryce, 2006; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Frumkin, 2005; Moulton & Eckerd, 2012; Putnam & Feldstein, 2003; Salamon, 2012 | | |
| | Citizen Engagement | Alexander, Nank, & Stivers,1999; Anheier, 2009; Berger & Neuhaus ,1988; Brady, Verba, & Schlozman ,1995; Edwards & Foley, 2001; Eikenberry, 2009; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Frumkin, 2002; LeRoux, 2007, 2009; Moulton & Eckerd, 2012 | Service Delivery | Anheier, 2009; Edwards & Foley, 2001; Frumkin, 2005; Kim, 2013; Moulton & Eckerd, 2012; Hansmann, 1987; Salamon, 1995; 2012; Weisbrod, 1988; Young, 2006 |
| | Advocacy | Anheier, 2009; Berry, 2005; Chaves et al., 2004; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Hwang & Suarez, 2008; LeRoux & Goerdel, 2009; Moulton & Eckerd, 2012;  Mosley, 2011, 2012; Nicholson-Crotty, 2007, 2009; Salamon, 2012; Suarez, 2009 | | |
| Impulse (Salamon, 2012) | | **Voluntarism & Civic Activism** | | **Commercialism  & Professionalism** |

 Note: This table does not provide an exhaustive list of literature but carefully selected studies that discuss each role**.**

The hypothesis of this study is that despite the difficulty of drawing a clear distinction, such a categorization is crucial to understand the factors that more civically oriented nonprofit organizations share. A number of nonprofit scholars recognize the inherent tension that arises when nonprofit organizations attempt to balance both orientations. Operating within the market forces and providing crucial civic functions often cannot be resolved without one compromising the other (Frumkin, 2005; Jäger & Beyes, 2010; Jäger & Kreutzer, 2011; Salamon, 2012; Sanders, 2012). Such a challenge is not new. Salamon (2012) observes, "from earliest times nonprofits have been what sociologists refer to as 'dual identity' or even 'conflicting multiple identity' organizations" (p. 3). With the growing pressure for nonprofits to become competitive in commercial and government markets with professional services, understanding the characteristics that civically engaged nonprofits share can help nonprofit managers who want to balance two seemingly conflicting goals.

**Nonprofit Arts Sector**

This study focuses on 501c3 public charities in the arts and cultural sector, which is one of the five nonprofit main subsectors (Blackwood et al., 2012). Arts nonprofits are essentially cultural service providers that offer a wide range of positive social benefits such as strengthening community ties, raising awareness of local issues, and expressing values of particular community groups (For more discussion, see McCarthy et al., 2004 and Putnam & Feldstein, 2003). People who attend artistic exhibits or performances build social capital by interacting with others who shared the same experience. While doing so, they often get involved in public discourse about community issues. Putnam and Feldstein (2003) argued that arts organizations have great capacity to bring together people from diverse backgrounds and open up public conversations about significant civic concerns. Arts programs educate the public on community history and culture, and they provide venues where community members volunteer and express their commitment to certain values. Not surprisingly, the nonprofit arts sector has witnessed an increased interest in civic engagement. For example, Americans for the Arts, one of the major arts service organizations in the United States, created a subsidiary organization called "Animating Democracy" to strengthen an arts organization's ability to address community challenges and advocate for social change.

The funding structure of nonprofit arts organizations also make them ideal for this study. Arts nonprofits generally receive half of their revenue from contributed sources and the other half comes from ticket sales (Americans for the Arts, 2013). In comparison, many human service organizations receive substantial public support and universities and hospitals rely largely on tuition fees and service charges (Hall, 2010). Having such revenue structure means that most arts organizations confront the issue this study is concerned with: How to simultaneously maintain marketable programs and share responsibility for the well-being of their community.

**Potential Factors that Predict Active Civic Involvement of Nonprofits**

This section draws mainly on the theories of networks, institutional isomorphism and resource dependency to identify characteristics that may be associated with civically active nonprofit arts organizations. When organizations are embedded in a wide variety of networks, they gain values through informational communication and constant interaction with others (Agranoff, 2007). In other words, forming and maintaining partnerships or network relations with organizations in other service areas often expands the scope of issues a nonprofit organization covers through its programs. For instance, a symphony orchestra that has a contract to play at a children's hospital may end up with greater awareness of children's health and continued interest in supporting that cause. Organizations that actively cooperate with others can have broadening and deepening awareness of the important issues (Larson, 1992). *As such, this study posits that nonprofit arts and cultural organization that work with various types of organizations, whether formally or informally, will show a greater level of involvement in civic functions.*

To overcome challenges associated with uncertainty, organizations often emulate the practices and procedures of established industry-leading organizations, which results in institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Organizations also seek legitimacy and political power within the industry by conforming to industry norms (Meyer & Scott, 1992). If a theater company notices that other successful theaters increasingly offer "talk-back sessions" after performances in order to generate community discussion on social issues, for example, that theater is likely to consider implementing similar programs. *As such, this study posits that nonprofit arts organization will show a greater level of involvement in civic functions if it perceives peer organizations place a greater emphasis on civic duties.*

The growing professionalism in the nonprofit sector contributes to a hierarchical, segmented organizational structure (Grønbjerg, 1993; Salamon, 2012). Nonprofits also have an increasing number of professionally trained staff, which may inadvertently crowd out volunteers (Goldsmith et al., 2010). In other words, nonprofit organizations that are governed in a non-democratic, bureaucratic way are less likely to cultivate active citizenship, a participatory culture, and associational life (Schachter, 2011). *As such, this study posits that a more bureaucratic arts organization will show a lower level of involvement in civic functions.*

Nonprofit program success is largely contingent on its financial capacity and available resources (Calabrese, 2012; Carroll & Stater, 2009; Froelich, 1999; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Profit-making programs and community-building activities are pulled by different forces. The former is largely driven by the forces of commercialism and professionalism, whereas the latter is grounded in civic activism and voluntarism (Salamon, 2012). For instance, providing free quality arts programs to the less affluent can counter the application of market principles that require organizations to charge fees. *As such, this study posits that a nonprofit relying on program fees to a greater extent will show a lower level of involvement in civic functions.*

A wide range of interests are represented in the arts and cultural sector. There are theaters, dance companies, ballets, opera companies, symphony orchestras, museums, galleries, arts

education institutes, and festivals. Considering such program diversity, this study expects the extent of civic engagement will vary for the type of arts programs and classifies the organizations into 10 categories—arts services, ethnic/community groups/arts education, media, arts museum, other museum, performing arts, dance/ballet, theater/opera, and music/symphony. (see Appendix A).

**Data and Methods**

This study takes a mixed method approach given the relative paucity of empirical research on the topic. The first step was conducting qualitative interviews with 21 organizations that have been praised by the media or advocacy groups for their active civic engagement in order to construct a theory. Animating Democracy (n.d.) was a primary source and its website provides a list of "organizations that foster and support civic engagement and social change through the arts." This kind of purposeful sampling can provide good insight into an issue that little is known about (Patton, 2002). Throughout 2013, calls to participate were e-mailed to executive directors of selected organizations that were invited to participate in phone or on-site interviews. Phone interview allows including organizations from across the country (Gratton & O'Donnel, 2011; Harvey, 2011; Stephens, 2007) and are even preferable because it helps to avoid stereotypical assumptions that occur during in-person interviews (Holt, 2010). The interview sample covers a balanced mix of arts and cultural nonprofits located in rural, urban, and metropolitan areas from eight different states across the country. Semi-structured interviews typically lasted for 30 to 40 minutes; a few interviews lasted more than one hour. With the permission of the participants, audio-recorded interviews were transcribed, which generated 97 single-spaced pages of text. Interview transcripts were supplemented with archival documents, media coverage, websites, and organizational 990 forms. This qualitative data was analyzed to explore the study's hypotheses, and in conjunction with the literature described above, used to develop an original survey questionnaire.

The second step was an online survey, which was conducted in March 2014 and generated the data for the main analysis. Using a stratified sampling procedure, the sample was drawn from arts and cultural organizations registered as 501c3 public charities that filed 990 forms with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The 2011 core files compiled by the National Center for the Charitable Statistics (NCCS) provided the list. The sample excluded organizations that do not directly serve the general public (e.g., arts councils and alliances) and historical sites, because they are unique cases. All organizations in the sample were stratified into 10 groups (see Appendix A). The sample was randomly selected, and participants were well informed of the confidential nature of the survey to minimize self-report bias (Dillman, 2000).

Executive directors (or someone in the equivalent position) at 3,129 randomly selected organizations received online survey invitations. Their email addresses were manually collected from each organization's website. If the leader's contact information was not available, which was the case for a quarter of the random sample, the company email address was used. The study

used many of Dillman's (2000) data collection strategies to maximize the response rate. That is, each Executive Director received a pre-notice of the survey via postal letter about a week before the initial invitation to the online survey. Two reminders were sent, one and two weeks later. By the close of data collection, 1,049 arts and cultural nonprofit organizations participated out of the 3,015 that received the survey (114 emails bounced back). Of those, there were 909 fully completed responses, representing 50 U.S. states, an overall response rate of 30%. Survey data collected through Qualtrics were then augmented by each organization's corresponding IRS 990 financial information, which was obtained from the NCCS 2011 core files. The result was a unique and unusually rich dataset of survey-based measures and financial information for a geographically diverse and nationally representative set of nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.

Table 2 shows that the proportions of stratified groups in the sample align closely with the distribution in the target population. According to the NCCS 2011 core data, the average budget size of organizations in the sample was $914,978, compared to $896,812 for all arts and cultural organizations that filed the 990 forms. Also, over 90% of surveyed groups reported that they counted on fees from services to some extent, which supports the relevance of this sample for this study.

**Table 2. Summary of Sample Organization Type Statistics**

| Organization Type | Sample | | Population | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Freq. | Percent | Freq. | Percent |
| Arts Services | 80 | 8.80 | 2,535 | 8.65 |
| Ethnic/Community Groups | 94 | 10.34 | 3,603 | 12.29 |
| Arts Education | 63 | 6.93 | 1,818 | 6.20 |
| Media | 72 | 7.92 | 2,856 | 9.74 |
| Arts Museums | 97 | 10.67 | 3,430 | 11.70 |
| Museums | 57 | 6.27 | 1,800 | 6.14 |
| Performing Arts | 50 | 5.50 | 1,479 | 5.05 |
| Dance/Ballet | 59 | 6.49 | 1,894 | 6.46 |
| Theatrical Arts | 159 | 17.49 | 4,321 | 14.74 |
| Music Organization | 178 | 19.58 | 5,578 | 19.03 |
| Total | 909 | 100 | 29,314 | 100 |

**Descriptive Findings**

*Nonprofit Role Involvement*

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the extent their organization has been involved in each of the 18 statements in Moulton and Eckerd's (2012) index, using a slider bar ranging from 0 to 100. Nonresponses to any of the 18 statements were recoded as 0, assuming respondents skipped items that felt irrelevant. The statements were shown to respondents in random order. Figure 1 lists the shortened version of these statements and indicates the conceptual role domain for each item based on Moulton and Eckerd (2012); note there are three items for each domain. Figure 1 shows the results of the average engagement levels, in rank order. It is noteworthy that three items related to service delivery were ranked on the top of the list, most likely because service delivery is central for organizations that offer cultural services and receive a substantial portion of their income from program fees. The indexes for citizen engagement and political advocacy fell very low on the list. Value expressive items, such as engaging volunteers, appeared in the middle of the ranking. This finding indicates steady participation in traditional functions.

The 18 role items are divided into the two conceptual groups for this study: civic functions (dark-colored) and market roles (light-colored). Recall the civic role was constructed from twelve items covering four role dimensions—advocacy, value expression, social capital creation, and citizen engagement. Twelve items were combined into a summative index of civic role with an internal reliability coefficient of 0.78. The market role was constructed from the remaining six items covering two role dimensions: service delivery and innovation. This summative index also shows good internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.81). The average civic role index of 34.09 (SD =16.36) is about half of the market role index average of 68.45 (SD = 21.66). Not surprisingly, these organizations generally reported a much greater level of involvement in market relevant roles than civic roles. After all, the primary goal of most organizations is presenting arts and cultural programs. It is interesting, however, that civic and market role indexes were moderately correlated, as indicated by a bivariate correlation of $r = 0.47$ that is statistically significant at the 1% level. This correlation suggests that civically active organizations also tend to be active in the market, and vice versa, which reflects the reality that successful organizations often cross-subsidize their operation through active engagement in both.
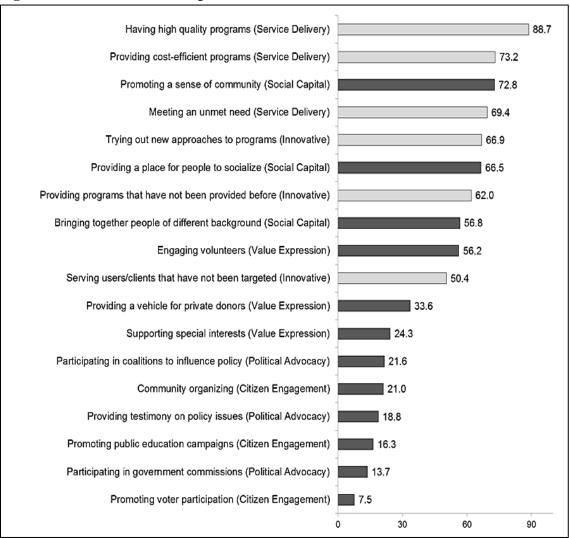
**Figure 1. Rank Order of Nonprofit Role Index**



| Role | Value |
|------|-------|
| Having high quality programs (Service Delivery) | 88.7 |
| Providing cost-efficient programs (Service Delivery) | 73.2 |
| Promoting a sense of community (Social Capital) | 72.8 |
| Meeting an unmet need (Service Delivery) | 69.4 |
| Trying out new approaches to programs (Innovative) | 66.9 |
| Providing a place for people to socialize (Social Capital) | 66.5 |
| Providing programs that have not been provided before (Innovative) | 62.0 |
| Bringing together people of different background (Social Capital) | 56.8 |
| Engaging volunteers (Value Expression) | 56.2 |
| Serving users/clients that have not been targeted (Innovative) | 50.4 |
| Providing a vehicle for private donors (Value Expression) | 33.6 |
| Supporting special interests (Value Expression) | 24.3 |
| Participating in coalitions to influence policy (Political Advocacy) | 21.6 |
| Community organizing (Citizen Engagement) | 21.0 |
| Providing testimony on policy issues (Political Advocacy) | 18.8 |
| Promoting public education campaigns (Citizen Engagement) | 16.3 |
| Participating in government commissions (Political Advocacy) | 13.7 |
| Promoting voter participation (Citizen Engagement) | 7.5 |

Note: N=909, Minimum=0, Maximum= 100

To examine the extent of civic engagement for each of 10 groups, Figure 2 shows a plot of the organization types with the civic and market indexes as axes. Groups plotted on the right side of the chart had an average market scores above that of the entire sample (68.5). Groups plotted on the upper side of the chart had average civic scores above that of the entire sample (34.1). The differences in mean values confirm that the degree of civic role engagement varied from one group to another. It is notable that some groups ranked relatively high on both role indexes, while other groups ranked relatively low for both. This provides evidence that many nonprofit programs simultaneously contribute to their civil society presence and market competency. This also points to some organizations that are highly engaged in both. Public radio stations, for example, must advertise their programs to compete with corporate radio stations, but they distinguish themselves from for-profit media groups by advocating important community issues. Art museums generally have less flexibility to change the contents of their programs and civically engaged programs can help them attract populations who are not viewed as major art patrons, at least in the traditional sense. Interestingly, these two types also include many organizations that receive a substantial amount of funding from the federal and state governments such as NPR or a state Art museum. Figure 2 also indicates that ethnic groups ranked higher than average on the civic role index, but below average for the market role index. Finally, none of the organization types rated lower on the civic index if their market index was higher than average.
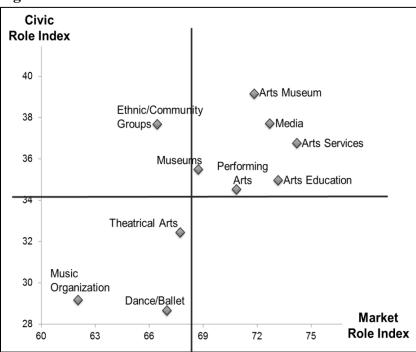
**Figure 2. Matrix of Civic Role Index versus Market Index Scores**

*Factors Relevant to Nonprofit Civic Role Involvement*

Table 3 provides the data source and descriptive findings for each of the factors hypothesized to be associated with civically engaged nonprofit arts organizations. Network diversity is an additive index of organization types that responding organizations said they had worked with in the past 12 months (McCarty et al., 2001). The 12 organization types were: 1) another arts & cultural organization, 2) arts council or other arts support organization, 3) business / commercial group, 4) public or private library, 5) community or neighborhood organization, 6) human or social service organization, 7) youth or after school center, 8) senior center, 9) college or university, 10) public school, 11) public agency (other than libraries and schools), and 12) religious institution. High index scores represented greater network diversity while low scores represented little diversity in the network. The organizations in the sample had an average score of 6.

Second, to operationalize the perceived industry norm, the survey asked, "For most [type of organization], how important are civic issues?" Organization type was auto-filled using whatever organization type the respondent selected at the beginning of the survey. Four-point likert-style responses ranged from one (not important) to four (extremely important). Third, to operationalize the degree of an organization's bureaucratic culture, respondents rated their agreement on a four-point likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree) to the following statement: "My organization is a very formalized and structured place. Bureaucratic procedures generally govern what people do." This question is a well-known organizational culture question that has been used in prior studies (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Zammuto & Krakower, 1991). Overall, the responses were skewed toward disagreement with the statement. Respondents also rated whether an organization is entrepreneurial (My organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.), values stability (My organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficient, smooth operations are important.), and growth-oriented (My organization emphasizes growth and acquiring new resources. Readiness to meet new challenges is important.). The growth and entrepreneurial variables showed a moderate, positive correlation ($r = 0.41$) with each other. Being entrepreneurial was negatively correlated with bureaucratic index ($r = -0.17$) whereas stability was positively correlated with the bureaucratic indicator ($r = 0.28$). These correlations provide some support for the reliability of bureaucratic culture measure.

Fourth, Table 3 shows that, based on the NCCS data, slightly less than 40% of organizations' total revenue was from program fees. NCCS data also provided some demographic control variables; organization size was measured by the natural logarithm of total revenues (Froelich, 2000; Calabrese, 2012), and age was estimated using the year the organization obtained the 501c3 status. Finally, the survey asked respondents: "If you had to choose, which of these two you would say best identifies your organization: *community nonprofit organization* or a *professional arts organization?*" The survey included this question because in the qualitative interview phase, a theme that arose was the conscious awareness of needing to "live up to" the 501c3 nonprofit status. For example, one interviewee said, "[We] had to file with

the New York State's Charities Bureau. So, I was thinking, okay, that's an interesting combination, it's a theater company but it's also a charity and we better live up to that." In the survey, more than 60 percent of organizations identified as community nonprofit organizations rather than professional arts organizations, which is noteworthy because even though the sector appears to be overshadowed by market-relevant roles, community identity is still strong. It should be noted that about 4% of the respondents opted not to answer this "forced-choice" question.

**Table 3. Variable Definitions and Descriptive Statistics**

| Variable | Definition | Source | N | Mean | Std. Dev. | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Network Variety | The number of organization types they have worked with in the past twelve months (a list of 12 types provided) | Survey | 909 | 6.29 | 2.91 | 0 | 12 |
| Industry Norm | The degree of importance peer organizations place on civic issues (1= not important, 4= extremely important). | Survey | 902 | 2.50 | 0.84 | 1 | 4 |
| Bureaucratic Culture | My organization is a very formalized and structured place. Bureaucratic procedures generally govern what people do. (1= strongly disagree, 4= strongly agree). | Survey | 895 | 1.91 | 0.76 | 1 | 4 |
| Share of Program Fees | The proportion of total program revenue out of total revenue | NCCS | 907 | 0.37 | 0.29 | 0 | 1 |
| Community Nonprofit Identity | Identify as a "community nonprofit organization" instead of a "professional arts organization" if forced to choose one out of two options. | Survey | 871 | 0.62 | 0.49 | 0 | 1 |
| Size | Natural logarithm of total revenue | NCCS | 905 | 12.30 | 1.67 | 3 | 18 |
| Age | 2014 - the IRS ruling year | NCCS | 909 | 23.47 | 15.66 | 2 | 86 |
| Region | The location of organization | NCCS | | Proportion (N=909) | | | |
|     Northeast | | | 313 | 34.43% | | | |
|     Midwest | | | 182 | 20.02% | | | |
|     South | | | 164 | 18.04% | | | |
|     West | | | 250 | 27.50% | | | |

## Regression Results

Table 4 presents the results of ordinary least squares regression aimed at answering the main research question: What organizational and contextual factors predict the active civic engagement of nonprofit arts organizations? To help interpret the regression results, some in-depth interview results are also reported. Correlations among independent variables are not substantial enough to raise concerns about multicollinearity (see Appendix B).

**Table 4. Regression Results Explaining Civically Active Nonprofit Arts Organizations**

| Civic Role Index | Model 1 Standardized coefficients (Beta) | Model 2 Standardized coefficients (Beta) |
|---|---|---|
| Market Role Index | | 0.341 *** |
| Network Variety | 0.333 *** | 0.238 *** |
| Industry Norm | 0.329 *** | 0.276 *** |
| Bureaucratic Culture | 0.037 | 0.070 ** |
| Community Nonprofit Identity | 0.158 *** | 0.159 *** |
| Share of Program Fees | -0.065 ** | -0.025 |
| Size | 0.034 | 0.050 |
| Age | -0.013 | 0.023 |
| Region | | |
|   Midwest | -0.030 | -0.028 |
|   Northeast | 0.010 | 0.012 |
|   West | -0.005 | -0.010 |
| Group | | |
|   Arts Services | 0.010 | -0.022 |
|   Ethnic/Community Groups | 0.072 ** | 0.061 * |
|   Arts Education | 0.061 ** | 0.017 |
|   Media | 0.021 | 0.007 |
|   Arts Museums | 0.053 | 0.031 |
|   Museums | -0.026 | -0.039 |
|   Performing Arts | 0.031 | 0.010 |
|   Dance/Ballet | -0.002 | -0.013 |
|   Theatrical Arts | 0.084 ** | 0.047 |
| F-Statistics | 20.850 | 30.890 |
| R-Squared | 0.351 | 0.445 |

N = 852; Significance tests based on robust standard errors;
*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, and * $p < 0.1$;
Reference region = South, Reference group = Music organization

Model 1 in Table 4 shows that network variety and industry norm were the strongest predictors of civically active nonprofit arts organizations. Specifically, a one-standard deviation increase in network diversity is associated with a third standard deviation increase in the civic role index score. Industry norm results were similar, in other words, the civic role index was higher for organizations that felt peer organizations placed a heavy weight on civic issues. This statistically significant relationship is consistent with the theory of institutional isomorphism. Organizations mirror the operations of desirable peer organizations and follow industry trends. The effect sizes of network diversity and industry norm were more than twice that of the third strongest predictor, community nonprofit identity. The share of program revenue is negatively associated with the civic role index, but its effect size is marginal.

Considering that civically engaged organizations are also likely to be active in the market, Model 2 includes the market role index as a predictor. Including market role explained 9.4% more variation in the civic role index and was the strongest predictor in the model. The effect of network variety decreased substantially. It suggests that nonprofits with highly diverse networks, those frequently interact with other types of organizations, are active in both civil society and in the market. Also in this model, bureaucratic culture showed a statistically significant relationship with the civic role index. The portion of program fees was no longer statistically significant after controlling for the level of market engagement.

Several interview results support the association between network diversity and civic involvement; that is, nonprofits become interested in civic issues through working with other types of organizations. For example, the director of a craft-art organization located in rural Pennsylvania described initiating a program with a state arts council to promote a specific social goal, after discovering a common interest during an informal lunch meeting. In another case, a director of a theater in a suburban area of New York State recounted that after having worked with a local high school for some time, the organization became aware of the serious consequences of school bullying and created a play about it to facilitate conversations among community members. A theater company in New Jersey presented a play to openly talk about racial issues in their community and they collaborated with several different kinds of local organizations.

The interview data also lend support to the statistically significant and positive relationship between community nonprofit identity and civic role index. In other words, interview data show civically active arts organizations are mindful of their 501c3 status. Interview data also indicate a subset of civically active arts organizations appear to eschew formal, hierarchical organizational structures and have a decentralized management culture. However, in the survey analysis, bureaucratic culture was not found to have a statistically significant association with the civic role index. Thus, nonprofit organizational culture may be an area that requires further research. Finally, the regression results suggest that ethnic organizations, arts education institutions, and theaters tend to report higher levels of civic involvement than other groups.

**Discussion and Implications**

This study contributes new knowledge about what nonprofit arts groups can do to position themselves more moderately between their market-based activities and their contributions to civil society. Given the growing forces of commercialism and professionalism within the nonprofit sector, this study sought to identify factors that accompany civic engagement. With the better understanding of these factors, nonprofit organizations may gain some guidance on how to reinvigorate their central role in civil society, and in essence, keep the "nonprofit-like"(Light, 2001; Sanders, 2013) operation of their organizations.

This study's findings around industry norms suggest that industry leaders have a strong role to play in keeping the nonprofit sector grounded in its civic mission. If industry-leading organizations such as the New York Philharmonic or the Metropolitan Museum of Art visibly engage in more proactive civic activities, other nonprofits will emulate their approach. For instance, creating cultural events that promote voter participation or influence public discussion about important policy issues can send a signal to other organizations about the importance of bringing civically-relevant artistic experiences to the public. Allowable political activity for 501c3 nonprofits is somewhat limited (Boris & Maronick, 2012), but they can conduct fairly wide-ranging, nonpartisan activities that can profoundly impact civic awareness and stimulate political participation (Avner, 2010; Berry, 2005; Berry & Arons, 2005; Boris & Maronick, 2012; Jenkins, 2006). Berry (2005) argues that widespread misunderstanding about the scope of nonprofit participation in political affairs unnecessarily limits the nonprofit sector from functioning as an effective mechanism to raise public attention on important social issues. One comment from a survey participant supports his argument: "Some of the political activities you are asking about are specifically prohibited for 501c3 organizations." Leading nonprofit arts groups could cultivate a norm that not only appreciates civically engaged arts programs but also increases understanding among arts administrators about the actual limits of 501c3 status. Policy makers should support the nonprofit civic engagement by making the 501c3 tax code less ambiguous concerning allowable political engagement. Making a list of do's and don'ts for nonprofit advocacy more widely available and a hotline to inquire about legitimate activities would be beneficial. Public managers also need to make nonprofits more aware of (h) election available for 501c3 public charities.

Similarly, organizations can also strengthen their civic engagement by finding ways to interact with various types of organizations in the community. As the results of this study indicate, these network connections could be the first step to offering more civically engaged programs. Public managers should also seek ways to collaborate with nonprofits on crucial community issues. As many have argued (Berry, 2005; Boris, 1999; Schachter, 2011), nonprofit organizations are an effective mechanism for individuals to engage in public affairs. The development of networks with public agencies and other community entities can maximize nonprofits' potential as vehicles for citizen participation. One possible way is convening public officials, public managers, and nonprofit leaders together on a regular basis in order to discuss solutions for imminent community issues. Holding such conventions will also create a signal to

the general public that the nonprofit sector is a key player in the public affairs. Such recognition could then solidify the nonprofit organizations' identification of their civic role.

There are several limitations of this study that must be acknowledged. First, this cross-sectional survey is not sufficient to establish causal relationships for the factors in the model. Second, the measurement of network diversity covers the variety of partnering organization types, but it does not measure the intensity of network relationships. If measured, those variables could lead to additional explanations for network effects on organizational civic engagement. Third, despite the best effort in this study's design, it is still hard to ignore the potential self-report bias. Future research could examine if the identified factors are associated with the actual outcome of nonprofit arts organizations' civic involvement although it can be challenging to identify comparable measures of role engagement across a large number of organizations. Finally, the empirical model for the analysis only looked at the share of earned revenue, which is the inverse measure of the share of contributed revenue. In that way, it does not differentiate the effect of public versus private contributions. Whether an organization has closer ties to the federal and state government especially with regard to funding can differentiate their approach to the community issues.

Despite these limitations, this study made the first attempt to empirically measure the nonprofit arts organizations' level of engagement in various role dimensions. It also serves as a first step towards exploring the factors that predict more civically engaged nonprofit organizations. Although this study focused on the arts and cultural sector, its outcomes are relevant for other nonprofit types including hospitals, universities, and human service organizations because they also face a challenge in managing dual roles. Future studies should extend this study's analytic approach to other service areas and determine if the same factors are strongly associated with active civic engagement in those sectors. Certainly, much more research is needed to explore other potential factors that are associated with civic engagement.

**Appendix A. Classification of Nonprofit Arts Groups**

| Arts Services | Ethnic/Community Groups | Arts Education | Media | Arts Museum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A20 (Arts & Culture), A70 (Humanities), A90 (Arts Services) | A23 (Cultural & Ethnic Awareness), A24 (Folk Arts), A27 (Community Celebrations) | A25 (Arts Education), A6E (Performing Arts Schools) | A30 (Media & Communications), A31 (Film & Video), A32 (Television), A33 (Printing & Publishing), A34 (Radio) | A40 (visual arts), A50 (Museums), A51 (Art Museums) |

| Other Museum | Performing Arts | Dance/Ballet | Theater/Opera | Music/Symphony |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A52 (Children's Museums), A54 (History Museum), A56 (Natural History & Natural Science), A57 (Science & Technology Museums) | A60 (Performing Arts), A61 (Performing Arts Centers) | A62 (Dance), A63 (Ballet) | A65 (Theater) A6A (Opera) | A68 (Music), A69 (Symphony Orchestras), A6B (Singing & Choral Groups), A6C (Bands & Ensembles) |

**Appendix B. Correlation Matrix of Key Variables**

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Civic Role Index | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 Market Role Index | 0.47 *** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 Network Variety | 0.43 *** | 0.28 *** | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 Industry Norm | 0.47 *** | 0.25 *** | 0.31 *** | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 Bureaucratic Culture | 0.06 * | -0.12 *** | 0.03 | 0.01 | | | | | | | | |
| 6 Share of Program Fees | -0.11 *** | -0.14 *** | -0.05 | -0.15 *** | -0.02 | | | | | | | |
| 7 Community Nonprofit Identity | 0.17 *** | 0.01 | -0.03 | 0.09 *** | 0.09 *** | 0.01 | | | | | | |
| 8 Size | 0.14 *** | 0.04 | 0.38 *** | 0.12 *** | -0.01 | 0.05 | -0.23 *** | | | | | |
| 9 Age | 0.00 | -0.15 *** | 0.12 *** | -0.03 | 0.17 *** | 0.04 | -0.04 | 0.37 *** | | | | |
| 10 Midwest | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.10 *** | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.02 | 0.00 | 0.06 | | | |
| 11 Northeast | -0.04 | -0.03 | 0.01 | -0.06 * | -0.02 | -0.03 | -0.17 ** | 0.03 | 0.10 *** | -0.36 *** | | |
| 12 West | 0.00 | 0.00 | -0.12 *** | 0.05 | -0.03 | 0.01 | 0.06 * | 0.00 | -0.09 *** | -0.31 *** | -0.45 *** | |
| 13 South | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.00 | 0.03 | -0.02 | 0.12 *** | -0.04 | -0.08 ** | -0.23 *** | -0.34 *** | -0.29 *** |

*** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, and * p < 0.1

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