

**AN INVESTIGATION OF ARTS-BASED RURAL COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

(working paper)

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Abstract

Using data collected from random samples of individuals in rural communities across Texas, we tested the following eight hypotheses: (1) satisfaction with arts/cultural activities is independently and positively associated with community attachment and community satisfaction; (2) there is a positive association between perceived community capacity for the arts and satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities; (3) there is a positive association between satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities and community attachment; (4) there is a positive association between satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities and community satisfaction; (5) there is a positive association between community attachment and arts participation; (6) there is a positive association between community satisfaction and arts participation; (7) there is a positive association between satisfaction with arts/cultural activities and arts participation; and. (8) there is a positive association between arts participation and community-oriented action. Multivariate linear and logistic regression analyses revealed support for seven of the eight hypotheses. The only hypothesis these data failed to support was the one which stated that there is a positive association between community satisfaction and arts participation. The findings also indicate that the variables of age, gender, and size of place are significantly related to one or more of the dependent variables. Possible implications of these results for community developers, public leaders, and other practitioners are addressed. Recommendations for incorporating the arts into community development strategies are also advanced.

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is a brief synopsis of the report that follows. The overall purpose of this research was to quantitatively investigate the arts as a potential rural development strategy. The data used for this investigation primarily come from the 2014 Texas Rural Survey on Arts and Culture. Prior to the administration of the 2014 Texas Rural Survey on Arts and Culture, data from the 2012 Texas Rural Survey (TRS) and the 2013 TRS were used to conduct preliminary investigations on pertinent variables. The empirical research described below, which used data drawn from the 2012 and 2013 TRS and the 2014 Texas Rural Survey on Arts and Culture, is rooted in various disciplines (i.e., arts, sociology, and community development) and thus operationalizes applicable measures for vague concepts including community, community development, community satisfaction, community attachment, quality of life, and community capacity around art.

The hypotheses that drove our analyses were as follows:

From the 2012 and 2013 Texas Rural Survey:

H_{TRS}: Satisfaction with arts/cultural activities is independently and positively associated with community attachment and community satisfaction.

From the 2014 Texas Rural Survey on Arts and Culture:

H₁: There is a positive association between perceived community capacity for the arts and satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities.

H₂: There is a positive association between satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities and community attachment.

H₃: There is a positive association between satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities and community satisfaction.

H₄: There is a positive association between community attachment and arts participation.

H₅: There is a positive association between community satisfaction and arts participation.

H₆: There is a positive association between satisfaction with arts/cultural activities and arts participation.

H₇: There is a positive association between arts participation and community-oriented action.

Key findings from this research include:

- Approximately seven in ten respondents from the 2012 and 2013 TRS reported that arts/cultural activities were available in their communities.
- Higher levels of satisfaction with arts and cultural activities are linked to higher levels of both community attachment and community satisfaction.
 - Of the respondents who indicated availability of arts/cultural activities, individuals who were more satisfied with the arts/cultural activities in their

communities were more likely to express higher levels of *community attachment* and *community satisfaction* than those who were less satisfied with local arts/cultural activities.

- Gender and age appear to play an important role regarding community attachment: females and older respondents had significantly higher levels of community attachment.
- Population size seems to impact community satisfaction; residents of places with populations ranging between 2,000 and 10,000 and places with populations ranging between 500 and 1,999 had significantly lower levels of community satisfaction than did residents of places with populations of less than 500.
- Individuals who held higher levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities exhibited higher levels of community attachment than their counterparts who held lower levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with the arts/cultural activities in their communities.
- Individuals who held higher levels of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities were more likely than those with lesser levels of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities to indicate that they were very satisfied with life in their communities.
- Perceived community capacity to support arts/cultural activities contributes to satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities.
 - Individuals who perceived their community to hold greater capacity for the arts were more likely than their counterparts who perceived their community to hold lesser capacity for the arts to exhibit higher levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities.
- Higher levels of community attachment is associated with arts participation.
 - Community attachment was positively and significantly associated with arts participation. Those respondents with higher levels of community attachment were more likely to participate in local arts/cultural activities than those with lower levels of community attachment.
- Community satisfaction is not associated with arts participation.
 - No support was found for the hypothesis that community satisfaction is positively associated with arts participation.
- Satisfaction with arts/cultural activities is associated with arts participation.
 - Domain-specific satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with arts participation.
 - General satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with arts participation.
 - Respondents who were more satisfied with domain-specific arts/cultural activities and general arts/culture activities in the community were more likely to participate in art/cultural activities than those with lower levels of satisfaction.
- Arts participation is associated with community-oriented action.
 - Individuals who have participated in one or more arts-related activities within the last 12 months were more likely than those who have not participated to have engaged in community-oriented actions.

Taken as a whole, the findings lend support for the assertion that arts may be a potential strategy for rural community development. Community development, as we define it, involves “purposive action undertaken with positive intentions at improving community structure” (Theodori 2005:666). Accordingly, from our perspective, community development refers to the creation and maintenance of *community* as a social characteristic of a local population. The process of community development involves purposive, positive, structure-oriented actions, and exists in the efforts of people working together to address their shared interests and solve their common problems (Theodori 2005, Wilkinson 1991). As Theodori (2008:92) stated

... the substantive element of community development is social interaction. The process of community development, therefore, depends largely on the intentional actions of people in a locality coming together and interacting with the intent of solving their local problems, improving their quality of life, and shaping their future well-being.

In this study, such actions were referred to as community-oriented actions.

Based upon the findings from this research, we propose that community developers, public leaders, and other practitioners working in the area of rural community development should assess the *perceived community capacity* for the arts among local residents, as well as the levels of arts/cultural *satisfaction* and *participation* in the community. Then, if/when applicable, public leaders and community development practitioners should identify and invite those residents who actively participate in arts-related activities to become involved in local community development projects/programs. According to these data, residents who participate in the arts are, in fact, those residents trying to purposively alter the structure of their community in a positive manner (i.e., engaging in community-oriented actions).

In conclusion, an increased understanding of (a) the factors related to arts participation and (b) the effects of arts participation on community-oriented action is especially beneficial for community developers, public leaders, and other practitioners (e.g., Cooperative Extension Service personnel) seeking an arts-based strategy to rural community and economic development processes/projects. Such knowledge is pertinent, as well, for national and state policy-makers and local and regional organizational leaders seeking to fund and promote arts-based and related initiatives.

Introduction

Research indicates that the social and economic fabric of rural areas throughout the United States has been progressively weakened by a number of regional, national, and global changes over the past few decades (Brown and Schafft 2011). Transformations in economic, demographic, social, and spatial organization have had profound effects on rural areas all across this country.

For rural communities experiencing social and economic decline, the arts may be a novel and exciting possibility for community revitalization. In fact, current trends indicate that the arts are increasingly being pursued at local and regional levels as a type of culture-based revitalization effort (Cary and Sutton 2004; Stern and Seifert 2008). Even though the arts have been primarily pursued for economic reasons (Phillips 2004), the social impacts of the arts at the place-level have also been recognized (Grodach 2010; Kay 2000; Stern and Seifert 2008; Wali, Severson, and Longoni 2002). However, research on the social impacts of arts is mostly anecdotal and based largely on case studies (e.g., Stuver, van der Jagt, van Erven, and Hoving 2012). Quantitative research demonstrating the tangible benefits of the arts are often economic focused (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, and Brooks 2004; McHenry 2009; Reeves 2002). Furthermore, studies examining the benefit of the arts to communities has traditionally focused on metropolitan areas or has failed to make a distinction between geographical differences (metropolitan, regional, urban, or rural) (Guetzkow 2002; Marceau and Davidson 2004; McHenry 2009; NEA 2012).

This report outlines the results from a quantitative research project investigating the arts as a potential rural development strategy. Understanding the factors related to sustainable arts participation, specifically as a community-level action pursued for the larger purpose of rural community and economic development, could be especially beneficial for local practitioners and stakeholders seeking this route to revitalization and resilience as well as national and state policy makers and organizations seeking to fund and promote related initiatives. The empirical research described below drew from various disciplines (i.e., arts, sociology, and community development) and thus operationalized and brought together applicable measures for vague concepts including community, community development, community satisfaction, community attachment, quality of life, and community capacity around art.

Texas Rural Survey 2012 and 2013 – Preliminary Investigation

Prior to the administration of the Texas Rural Survey on Arts and Culture, data from the 2012 Texas Rural Survey (TRS) and the 2013 TRS were used to conduct preliminary investigations on the association of satisfaction with arts/cultural activities with levels of community attachment and satisfaction. The 2012 TRS and 2013 TRS were self-administered surveys conducted by researchers affiliated with the Center for Rural Studies at Sam Houston State University. The 2012 data were collected between July 2012 and October 2012 from a random sample of Texas residents living in 22 rural places using mail questionnaire procedures. The 2013 data were collected between June 2013 and August 2013 from a random sample of Texas residents living in 22 rural places using mail and online questionnaire techniques. Survey respondents provided extensive information on several major topics, including economic development strategies and efforts, public services and community amenities, environmental hazard issues, and medical and healthcare services.

To select the random samples of rural residents in both studies, researchers at the Center for Rural Studies began by identifying all places – both incorporated places and census designated places – throughout Texas with populations of 10,000 or less as possible study sites. Then, in accordance with the predetermined research design, one place within each of three population categories (499 or fewer, 500-1,999, and 2,000-10,000) was randomly selected as a study site within each of the seven Rural Economic Development Regions classified by the Texas Department of Agriculture. Because there are a large number of places in the 499 or fewer population category in the West Region, an additional study site was added to the sample. In total, 22 places were randomly selected both years as study sites. The study sites included both incorporated places (concentrations of populations with legally defined boundaries) and census designated places (concentrations of populations that are locally identifiable by name but not legally incorporated). A list of the 2012 and 2013 study sites are shown in Figures 1 and 2, respectively.

Figure 1: Study Sites – 2012 Texas Rural Survey

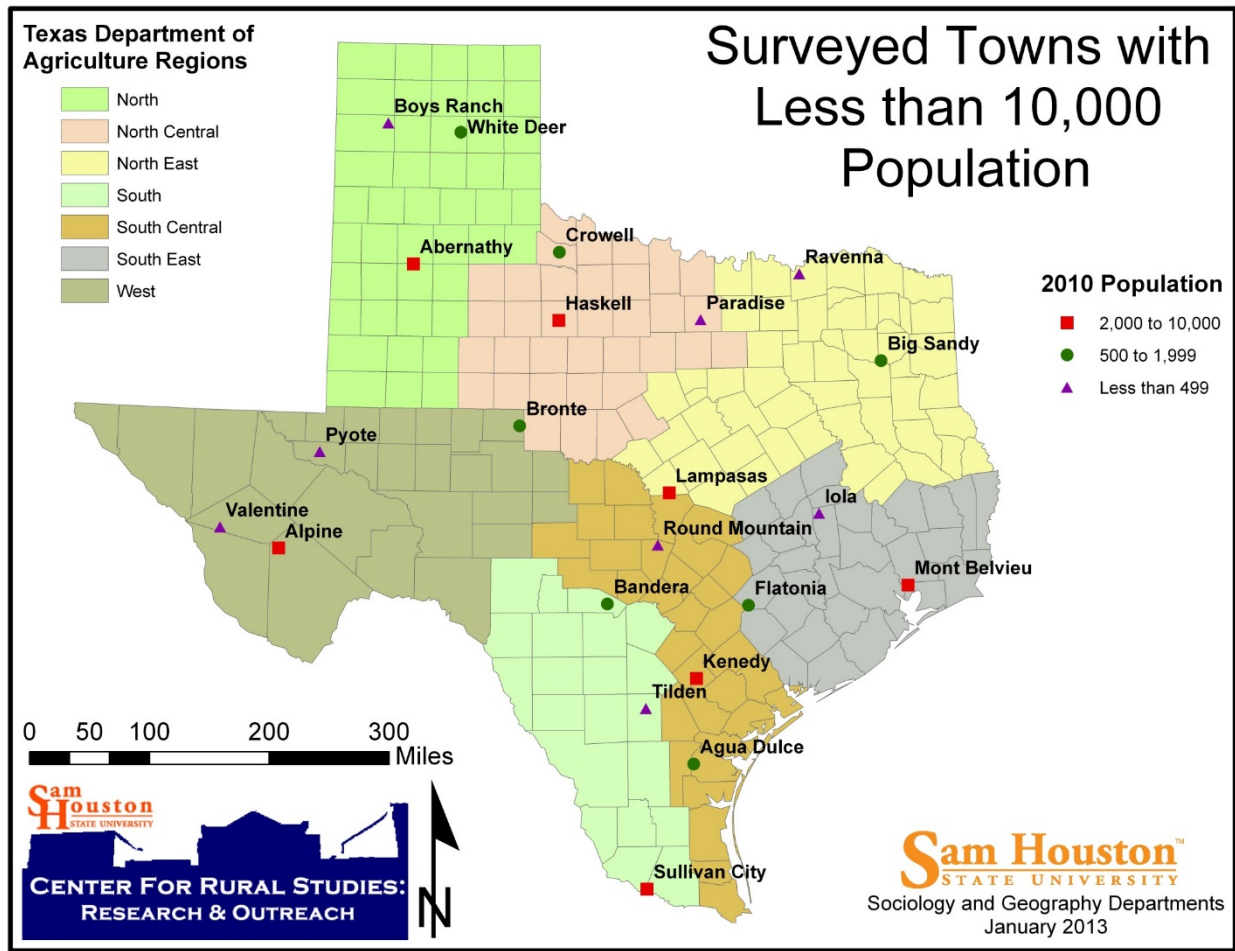
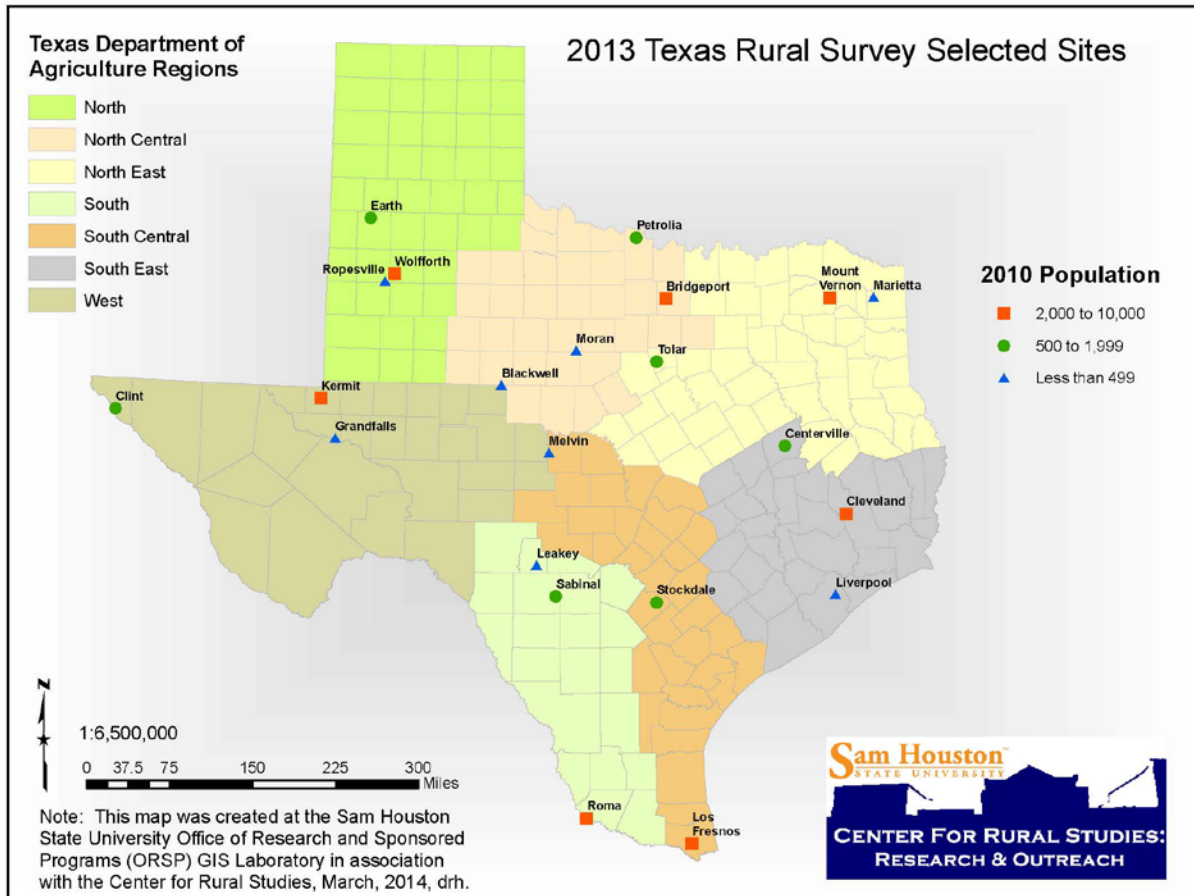


Figure 2: Study Sites – 2013 Texas Rural Survey



2012 TRS Data Collection

The methodological procedures espoused by the tailored design method (TDM) (Dillman, Smyth, and Christian 2009), which incorporates repeated mailings to sampled individuals, were used to gather the 2012 and 2013 data. In July of 2012, an informational letter was first mailed to a stratified random sample of 4,124 households across the 22 study sites. The informational letter, which was printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other side, informed residents that their household was randomly selected for participation in an upcoming study on rural Texas. Included with the letter was a pre-paid addressed postcard. Residents were instructed to return the postcard if they preferred to receive a copy of the questionnaire printed in Spanish. Instructions on the postcard were printed in both English and Spanish. Thirteen households requested that the survey questionnaire not be sent. Those 13 addresses were not replaced. Hence, the final sample size was 4,111. In August of 2012, the survey questionnaire was mailed to the sampled households. To obtain a representative sample of individuals within households, a response from the adult who most recently celebrated his/her birthday was requested in the cover letter. The survey questionnaire, organized as a self-completion booklet, contained 46 questions and required approximately 50 minutes to complete. After the initial survey mailing and two follow-up mailings during September and October of 2012, a total of 712 completed questionnaires were returned.

2013 TRS Data Collection

In early June 2013, an informational letter was mailed to a stratified random sample of 5,608 households across the 22 study sites. The informational letter, printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other, notified residents that their household had been randomly selected to participate in an upcoming study focused on rural Texas. The letter contained instructions for completing the questionnaire in one of two ways: (1) online at the provided URL, or (2) by returning the mailed questionnaire they would soon receive. Of the selected households, no rejections to participation in the study nor mistaken addresses were identified. Therefore, the final sample size remained at 5,608. Later in June 2013, the survey questionnaire was mailed to the sampled households. In order to obtain a representative sample of individuals within the households, the cover letter requested that the adult in the household who had most recently celebrated his or her birthday would be the one to complete and return the survey. The 52-item survey questionnaire was offered in English and Spanish as a self-completion booklet and online, and it required approximately 50 minutes to complete. After the initial survey mailing and two follow-up mailings during July and August, 757 completed questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 13.5 percent.

Hypothesis, Conceptual Model, and Measurement of Variables – TRS

Hypothesis

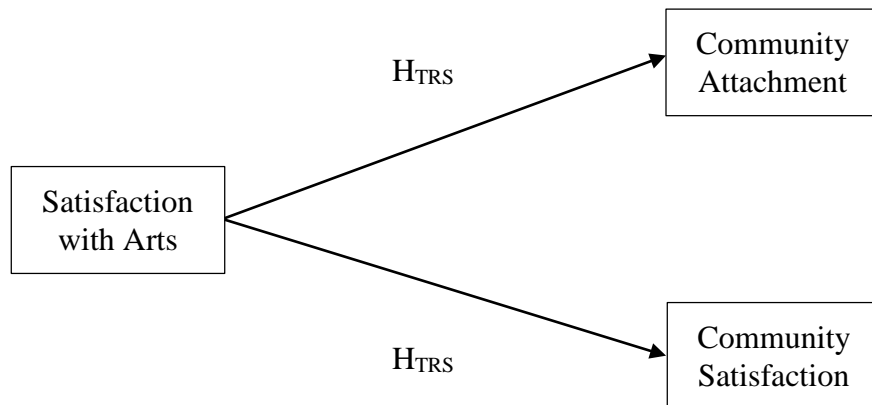
The working hypothesis that drove our preliminary analyses was as follows:

H_{TRS}: Satisfaction with arts/cultural activities is independently and positively associated with community attachment and community satisfaction.

Conceptual Model

Our conceptual model for our preliminary analyses is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Conceptual Model – Preliminary Analyses 2012 and 2013 TRS



Measurement – Independent Variable

Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities

The independent variable of interest in the preliminary analyses using the 2012 and 2013 TRS data was level of satisfaction with arts/cultural activities. Arts/cultural activities was one of 26 public services and community amenities upon which respondents were asked to assess their level of satisfaction. Respondents were instructed to think about availability, cost, quality, and any other considerations they deemed important and then rate the level of satisfaction with each of the 26 services/amenities. Response categories for all 26 items included: (1) very dissatisfied; (2) somewhat dissatisfied; (3) neither dissatisfied nor satisfied; (4) somewhat satisfied; and, (5) very satisfied. Respondents also had the option to select the response category of “not applicable” if that particular public service/community amenity was not available in their place of residence.

Measurement – Dependent Variables

Community Attachment

Community attachment was addressed using Theodori’s (2004) community attachment scale. Respondents in 2012 and 2013 were asked to respond to the following eleven statements: (a) overall, I am very attached to this community; (b) I feel like I belong in this community; (c) the friendships and associations that I have with other people in this community mean a lot to me; (d) if the people in this community were planning something, I’d think of it as something WE were doing rather than THEY were doing; (e) if I needed advice about something, I could go to someone in this community; (f) I think I agree with most people in this community about what is important in life; (g) given the opportunity, I would move out of this community; (h) I feel loyal to the people in this community; (i) I plan to remain a resident of this community for a number of years; (j) I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this community; and (k) the future success of this community is very important to me. In the 2012 study, response categories included (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) disagree, and (4) strongly disagree. To calculate a composite community attachment score, items “a” through “f” and items “h” through “k” were reverse coded and the responses for the individual items were averaged. In the 2013 survey, response categories were scored as (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree. To calculate a composite community attachment score, item “g” was reverse coded and the responses for the individual items were averaged. Thus, in both data sets, high scores indicated high levels of community attachment, whereas low scores reflected low levels of community attachment. A principal-axis factor analysis with oblique rotation revealed that these measures of community attachment were unidimensional and, in both studies, explained roughly 54% of the variance. Cronbach’s alpha for this attachment scale in both years was 0.93. Factor loadings for community attachment are presented in Table 1.

Community Satisfaction

Community satisfaction was assessed using a single measure of general satisfaction. Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied, in general, they were with life in their community. Following previous research using this measure (Theodori 2004, 2008), responses were dichotomized as 0 (very dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, and somewhat satisfied) and 1 (very satisfied).

Control Variables

Age, Gender, Size of Place of Residence, and Year of Survey

Age, gender, size of place of residence, and year of survey were included as control variables. Age was measured in years. Gender (0 = female; 1 = male) and year of survey (0 = 2012 and 1 = 2013) were both dummy coded. Two dummy variables were created to measure size of place of residence – one for places with populations that ranged between 500 and 1,999 (1 = yes) and one for places with populations that ranged between 2,000 and 10,000 (1 = yes). The comparison category for both variables was places with populations of 499 or fewer.

Table 1: Factor Analyses for Community Attachment Scale (TRS)

Items	Factor loadings 2012 TRS	Factor loadings 2013 TRS
a. Overall, I am very attached to this community.	.84	.82
b. I feel like I belong in this community.	.85	.84
c. The friendships and associations I have with other people in this community mean a lot to me.	.74	.75
d. If the people in this community were planning something, I'd think of it as something WE were doing rather than THEY were doing.	.73	.75
e. If I needed advice about something, I could go to someone in this community.	.73	.71
f. I think I agree with most people in this community about what is important in life.	.70	.67
g. Given the opportunity, I would move out of this community.	.60	.59
h. I feel loyal to the people in this community.	.79	.84
i. I plan to remain a resident of this community for a number of years.	.64	.66
j. I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this community.	.75	.77
k. The future success of this community is very important to me.	.70	.71
Eigenvalue	6.42	6.45
% of variance	54.43	54.68
Cronbach's alpha	.93	.93

Analyses

Applicability of Arts/Cultural Activities in the 2012 and 2013 TRS

We began by examining the applicability of arts/cultural activities in the TRS 2012 data set, as reported by the respondents. In the 2012 TRS, approximately three in ten respondents (30.8%; n = 203) indicated that arts/cultural activities were not applicable in their community. Conversely, roughly seven in ten respondents (69.2%; n = 457) indicated that arts/cultural activities were available in their communities.

As with the TRS 2012 data set, we began by examining the applicability of arts and cultural activities in the TRS 2013 data set, as reported by the respondents. Similarly to the 2012 TRS, approximately three in ten respondents (30.3%; n = 201) in the 2013 TRS indicated that arts/cultural activities were not applicable in their community, whereas roughly seven in ten respondents (69.7%; n = 462) indicated that arts/cultural activities were available in their communities.

Associations of Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities with Community Attachment and Satisfaction: Combined 2012/2013 TRS Data Set

Using data only from those individuals who indicated arts/cultural activities were available in their communities in 2012 and 2013, we assessed the associations of satisfaction with arts/cultural activities with community attachment and community satisfaction using multivariate linear and logistic regression analyses. In the models, age, gender, size of place of residence, and year of survey were included as control variables.

Community Attachment

As shown in Table 2, satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with community attachment. Individuals who were more satisfied with arts/cultural activities in their communities were more likely than those who were less satisfied with arts/cultural activities in their communities to express higher levels of community attachment. The results also indicated that females and older respondents had significantly higher levels of community attachment than males and younger respondents.

Table 2: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of Community Attachment on Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities and Control Variables for TRS 2012 and 2013 (n = 827)

Variables	b		β
Satisfaction with arts/cultural activities	.126	***	.272
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	.003	*	.072
Gender (1 = male)	-.120	**	-.099
Size of place of residence			
Population between 2,000 and 10,000	-.101		-.084
Population between 500 and 1,999	-.013		-.010
Year (1 = 2013)	-.067		-.056
Constant	2.662		
F-test	14.492	***	
R^2	.096		

*significant at .05; ** significant at .01; ***significant at .001.

Community Satisfaction

As shown in Table 3, satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with community satisfaction. Individuals who were more satisfied with arts/cultural activities in their communities were more likely than those who were less satisfied with arts/cultural activities in their communities to report higher levels of community satisfaction. The results also indicated that residents of places with populations ranging between 2,000 and 10,000 and places with populations ranging between 500 and 1,999 had significantly lower levels of community satisfaction than did residents of places with populations of less than 500.

Table 3: Multiple Logistic Regression Analysis of Community Satisfaction on Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities and Control Variables for TRS 2012 and 2013 (n = 891)

Variables	B		Exp(β)
Satisfaction with arts/cultural activities	.472	***	1.604
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	.009		1.009
Gender (1 = male)	-.098		.907
Size of place of residence			
Population between 2,000 and 10,000	-.517	*	.596
Population between 500 and 1,999	-.415	*	.660
Year (1 = 2013)	-.261		.770
Constant	-1.463		
-2log-likelihood	1133.566		
Chi-square	91.041	***	
Nagelkerke R^2	.130		

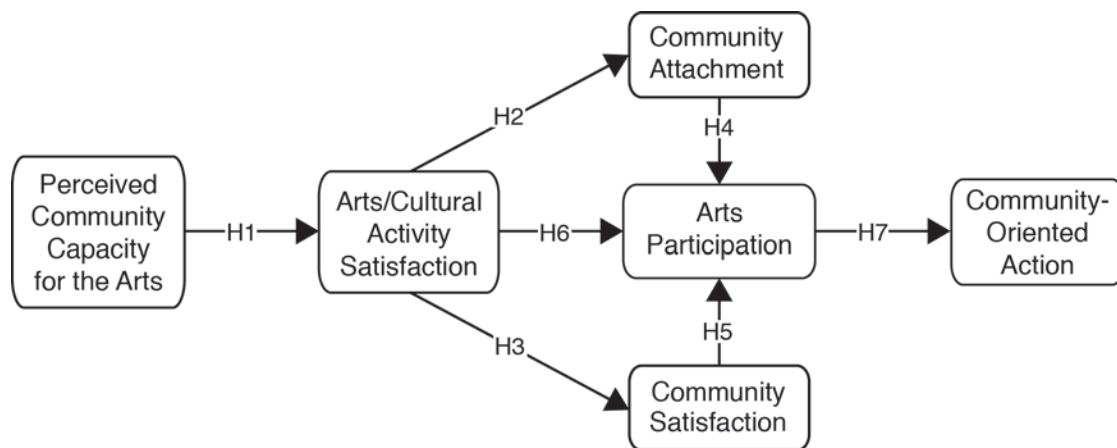
*significant at .05; ** significant at .01; ***significant at .001.

Texas Rural Survey on Arts and Culture: Extending the Texas Rural Survey Model

Background: Study Site Selection and Data Collection Techniques

With funding acquired from the National Endowment for the Arts (grant #: 14-3800-7013), we were able to extend our conceptual model and empirically examine additional hypotheses pertaining to the arts as a potential rural community development strategy. Our extended conceptual model is shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Conceptual Model – Texas Rural Survey on Arts and Culture (NEA)



A standard self-administered mail survey following the methodological procedures espoused by the tailored design method (TDM; Dillman, Smyth, and Christian 2009), which incorporates repeated mailings to sampled individuals, was used to gather the data needed to test the hypotheses presented in Figure 4. In early August 2014, an informational letter was mailed to a stratified random sample of 2,100 households across six study sites. The six places were selected according to two criteria: 1) places designated as cultural districts and 2) places with high levels of arts-based economic activity (as determined by specialists who are familiar with the Texas Cultural Districts and other art-active towns). Three selected places were designated cultural districts (Alpine, Smithville, and Clifton) and the other three selected places were not-cultural districts but were identified by experts as having some kind of arts-based economic activity (Albany, Post, and Navasota).¹

The informational letter mailed in early August 2014 notified residents that their household had been randomly selected to participate in an upcoming study focused on arts and culture in rural Texas. The letter contained instructions for completing the mailed questionnaire they would soon receive. Twelve households requested that the survey questionnaire not be mailed to their address. Those twelve addresses were not replaced. Hence, the final sample size was 2,088.

In late August 2014, the survey questionnaire was mailed to the sampled households. In order to obtain a representative sample of individuals within the households, the cover letter requested the adult (age 18 or older) in the household who had most recently celebrated his or her birthday to complete and return the survey. The 23-item survey questionnaire was offered in English as a self-completion booklet, and it required approximately 20 minutes to complete. After the initial survey mailing and two follow-up mailings during September and October, a total of 191 completed questionnaires were returned.

Hypothesis and Measurement of Variables

Hypothesis

H₁: There is a positive association between perceived community capacity for the arts and satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities.

Measurement

Perceived Community Capacity for the Arts

Perceived community capacity for the arts was measured using a multi-item scale. Respondents were asked to respond to the following twelve items: (a) there are a range of diverse arts and cultural organizations and activities in this community; (b) participation in arts and cultural organizations is increasing; (c) arts and cultural organizations are active in this community; (d) arts and cultural organizations in this community have been successful in planning and carrying out activities here; (e) anyone can get involved in the arts and cultural organizations and activities in this community; (f) it is easy to find more information about the arts and cultural activities here and what the organizations are doing; (g) this community is known for the arts and

¹ House Bill 2208 of the 79th Legislature of the State of Texas enabled the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) the authority to designate cultural districts in cities across Texas. Cultural districts are special zones that harness the power of cultural resources to stimulate economic development and community revitalization (Texas Commission on the Arts n.d.).

cultural activities offered here; (h) people in this community are willing to donate money to the local arts and cultural organizations; (i) arts are cultural organizations here support the local community and its interests; (j) local organizations and businesses often provide support to arts and cultural activities in this community; (k) local citizens often volunteer for the arts and cultural organizations and activities in this community; and (l) the arts and cultural activities here effectively bring people together in this community.

To calculate a composite perceived community capacity for the arts score, response categories of (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree were averaged. High scores indicated high levels of perceived community capacity for the arts, whereas low scores reflected low levels of perceived community capacity for the arts. A principal-axis factor analysis with oblique rotation revealed that these measures of perceived community capacity for the arts were unidimensional and explained roughly 64% of the variance. Cronbach's alpha for this perceived community capacity for the arts scale was 0.95. Factor loadings for community attachment are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Factor Analysis for Perceived Community Capacity for the Arts

Items	Factor loadings
a. There are a range of diverse arts and cultural organizations and activities in this community.	.78
b. Participation in arts and cultural organizations is increasing.	.80
c. Arts and cultural organizations are active in this community.	.90
d. Arts and cultural organizations in this community have been successful in planning and carrying out activities here.	.94
e. Anyone can get involved in the arts and cultural organizations and activities in this community.	.70
f. It is easy to find more information about the arts and cultural activities here and what the organizations are doing.	.82
g. This community is known for the arts and cultural activities offered here.	.78
h. People in this community are willing to donate money to the local arts and cultural organizations.	.78
i. Arts are cultural organizations here support the local community and its interests.	.72
j. Local organizations and businesses often provide support to arts and cultural activities in this community.	.81
k. Local citizens often volunteer for the arts and cultural organizations and activities in this community.	.78
l. The arts and cultural activities here effectively bring people together in this community.	.77
Eigenvalue	8.02
% of variance	64.00
Cronbach's alpha	.95

Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities

Satisfaction with arts and cultural activities was assessed with both a multi-item domain-specific arts/cultural satisfaction scale and a single measure of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities. Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with following 14 arts/cultural activities: (1) art museums, galleries, or exhibits; (2) craft fairs or visual arts festivals; (3) outdoor festivals that feature performing arts; (4) buildings or neighborhoods with historical or cultural significance; (5) historic monuments or markers; (6) film festivals; (7) book readings or poetry or story telling events; (8) book clubs or reading groups; (9) movie theater; (10) amateur or professional sports events; (11) art classes or lessons; (12) musical performances; (13) theatrical performances (live plays); and (14) dance performances. Responses ranged from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Respondents also had to option to indicate that the activity/event was not available in their community. A principal-axis factor analysis with oblique rotation revealed that these measure of arts/cultural satisfaction were unidimensional and explained 70.48 percent of the variance (Table 5). Cronbach's alpha for this satisfaction scale was .97.

Table 5: Factor Analysis for Domain-Specific Arts/Cultural Activities Satisfaction Scale

Items	Factor loadings
Art museums, galleries, or exhibits	.81
Craft fairs or visual arts festivals	.91
Outdoor festivals that feature performing arts	.86
Buildings or neighborhoods with historical or cultural significance	.85
Historic monuments or markers	.85
Film festivals	.83
Book readings or poetry or story telling events	.88
Book clubs or reading groups	.87
Movie theater	.58
Amateur or professional sports events	.74
Art classes or lessons	.88
Musical performances	.91
Theatrical performances (live plays)	.92
Dance performances	.82
Eigenvalue	9.87
% of variance	70.48
Cronbach's alpha	.97

A general measure of satisfaction with arts/cultural activities asked: Thinking about availability, cost, quality, and any other considerations important to you, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the arts and cultural activities in your community? Response categories ranged from (1) very dissatisfied to (5) very satisfied.

Analyses

The association between perceived community capacity for the arts and satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities was assessed using multiple regression techniques.

As shown in Tables 6 and 7, perceived community capacity for the arts was positively and significantly associated with both the domain-specific and general measure of satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities. Individuals who perceived their community to hold greater capacity for the arts were more likely than their counterparts who perceived their community to hold lesser capacity for the arts to exhibit higher levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities.

Table 6: Multiple Linear Regression of Domain-Specific Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities on Perceived Community Capacity for the Arts and Control Variables (n = 39)

Variables	b	β
Perceived Community Capacity for the Arts	.633 *	.361
<i>Control variables</i>		
Age	-.020 *	-.348
Gender (1 = male)	.033	.020
Constant	2.744	
F-test	4.455 **	
R ²	.276	

*significant at .05; ** significant at .01.

Table 7: Multiple Linear Regression of General Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities on Perceived Community Capacity for the Arts and Control Variables (n = 88)

Variables	b	β
Perceived Community Capacity for the Arts	1.096 ***	.651
<i>Control variables</i>		
Age	-.002	-.031
Gender (1 = male)	.045	.022
Constant	.573	
F-test	20.990 ***	
R ²	.428	

***significant at .001.

Hypotheses and Measurement of Variables

Hypotheses

H₂: There is a positive association between satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities and community attachment.

H₃: There is a positive association between satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities and community satisfaction.

Measurement

Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities

See description above.

Community Attachment

As in the 2012 and 2013 Texas Rural Surveys, community attachment was addressed using Theodori's (2004) community attachment scale. Respondents were asked to respond to the eleven statements listed in Table 8. Response categories were scored as (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree. To calculate a composite community attachment score, item "g" was reverse coded and the responses for the individual items were averaged. Thus, high scores indicated high levels of community attachment, whereas low scores reflected low levels of community attachment. A principal-axis factor analysis with oblique rotation revealed that these measures of community attachment were unidimensional and explained roughly 60% of the variance. Cronbach's alpha for this attachment scale was 0.94. Factor loadings for community attachment are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Factor Analysis for Community Attachment Scale (NEA)

Items	Factor loadings
a. Overall, I am very attached to this community.	.85
b. I feel like I belong in this community.	.86
c. The friendships and associations I have with other people in this community mean a lot to me.	.82
d. If the people in this community were planning something, I'd think of it as something WE were doing rather than THEY were doing.	.76
e. If I needed advice about something, I could go to someone in this community.	.77
f. I think I agree with most people in this community about what is important in life.	.65
g. Given the opportunity, I would move out of this community.	.58
h. I feel loyal to the people in this community.	.86
i. I plan to remain a resident of this community for a number of years.	.78
j. I like to think of myself as similar to the people who live in this community.	.78
k. The future success of this community is very important to me.	.77
Eigenvalue	7.01
% of variance	60.34
Cronbach's alpha	.94

Community Satisfaction

As in the 2012 and 2013 Texas Rural Surveys, community satisfaction was assessed using a single measure of general satisfaction. Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied, in general, they were with life in their community. Responses were dichotomized as 0 (very dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, and somewhat satisfied) and 1 (very satisfied).

Analyses

The associations of satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities and community attachment and satisfaction were assessed using multiple linear and logistic regression techniques.

As shown in Tables 9 and 10, both the domain-specific and general measures of satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities were positively and significantly associated with community attachment. Individuals who held higher levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities exhibited higher levels of community attachment than their counterparts who held lower levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with the arts/cultural activities in their communities.

As shown in Tables 11 and 12, whereas the domain-specific measure of satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities failed to reach statistical significance, the general measure of satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with community satisfaction. Individuals who held higher levels of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities

in their communities were more likely than those with lesser levels of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities to indicate that they were very satisfied with life in their communities.

Table 9: Multiple Linear Regression of Community Attachment on Domain-Specific Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities and Control Variables (n = 73)

Variables	b		β
Domain Specific Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities	.314	***	.445
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	.006		.121
Gender (1 = male)	.296	*	.219
Constant	1.503		
F-test	7.979	***	
R^2	.258		

*significant at .05; *** significant at .001.

Table 10: Multiple Linear Regression of Community Attachment on General Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities and Control Variables (n = 159)

Variables	b		β
General Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities	.287	***	.475
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	.004		.081
Gender (1 = male)	-.012		-.009
Constant	1.833		
F-test	16.074	***	
R^2	.237		

*** significant at .001.

Table 11: Multiple Logistic Regression of Community Satisfaction on Domain-Specific Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities and Control Variables (n = 70)

Variables	b	Exp(β)
Domain Specific Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities	.593	1.810
<i>Control variables</i>		
Age	.022	1.022
Gender (1 = male)	-.033	.968
Constant	-3.795	
-2 log-likelihood	88.246	
Chi-square	5.087	
Negelkerke R^2	.095	

Table 12: Multiple Logistic Regression of Community Satisfaction on General Satisfaction with Arts and Cultural Activities and Control Variables (n = 153)

Variables	b		Exp(β)
General Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities	1.181	***	3.259
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	.022		1.022
Gender (1 = male)	-.866	*	.421
Constant	-5.507		
-2 log-likelihood	166.842		
Chi-square	43.788	***	
Negelkerke R^2	.333		

*significant at .05; *** significant at .001.

Hypotheses and Measurement of Variables

Hypotheses

- H₄: There is a positive association between community attachment and arts participation.
- H₅: There is a positive association between community satisfaction and arts participation.
- H₆: There is a positive association between satisfaction with arts/cultural activities and arts participation.

Measurement

Community Attachment

See description above.

Community Satisfaction

See description above.

Arts Participation

Arts participation was measured using six individual survey items. Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they participated in any of the following arts-related activities in their communities within the last 12 months. These activities included: (1) attending a live musical stage play; (2) attending a live performance of a non-musical stage play; (3) attending any other music, theater, or dance performance; (4) visiting an art museum, gallery, or exhibit; (5) visiting a craft fair or visual arts festival; and/or, (6) visiting historic monuments, buildings, or neighborhoods for the historical architecture or design value. Respondents also had the option to select “not available in my community” if a particular arts-related activity was not applicable.

For purposes of analysis, the arts participation variable was dichotomized as (1) the respondent participated in one or more arts-related activities in his/her community within the last 12 months or (0) respondent did not participate in any arts-related activity in his/her community over the course of the last year.

Overall, roughly 76% of respondents participated in at least one arts-related activity during the past year; 24% did not partake in any arts-related activity. Participation rates for each of the six arts-related activities are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Participation Rates for Each of the Six Arts-Related Activities

Arts-Related Activity	Participated	Did Not Participate	Not Available in My Community
Visited an art museum, gallery, or exhibit	54%	40%	6%
Visited a craft fair or visual arts festivals	54%	41%	5%
Visited historic monuments, buildings, or neighborhoods for the historical architecture or design value	47%	45%	8%
Attended a live musical stage play	37%	52%	11%
Attended any other music, theater, or dance performance	37%	54%	9%
Attended a live performance of a non-musical stage play	35%	56%	9%

Analyses

The associations between community attachment, community satisfaction, satisfaction with arts/cultural activities (domain-specific and general) and arts participation (Tables 14, 15, 16, and 17, respectively) were assessed using multiple logistic regression techniques.

As shown in Table 14, community attachment was positively and significantly associated with arts participation. Individuals with stronger attachments to their communities were more likely than their counterparts with weaker attachments to their communities to have participated in one or more arts-related activities within the last 12 months.

As shown in Table 15, community satisfaction was not statistically associated with arts participation. In other words, individuals who reported high levels of community satisfaction were as likely as those individuals who reported low levels of community satisfaction to have participated (or not participated) in arts-related activities during the past year.

As shown in Table 16, domain-specific satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with arts participation. Individuals who held higher levels of domain-specific satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities were more likely than those with lesser levels of domain-specific satisfaction with arts/cultural activities to indicate that they have participated in one or more arts-related activities within the last 12 months.

As shown in Table 17, general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with arts participation. Individuals who held higher levels of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities were more likely than those with lesser levels of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities to indicate that they have participated in one or more arts-related activities within the last 12 months.

Of the control variables, age consistently reached statistical significance. According to these data, younger individuals were more likely than older individuals to report having participated in one or more arts-related activities within the last 12 months.

Table 14: Multiple Logistic Regression of Arts Participation on Community Attachment and Control Variables (n = 160)

Variables	b		Exp(β)
Community attachment	0.92	**	2.51
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	-0.04	*	0.96
Gender (1 = male)	0.07		1.07
Constant	1.23		
-2 log-likelihood	151.44		
Chi-square	14.08	**	
Negelkerke R^2	.13		

*significant at .05; ** significant at .01.

Table 15: Multiple Logistic Regression of Arts Participation on Community Satisfaction and Control Variables (n = 154)

Variables	b		Exp(β)
Community satisfaction	0.07		1.07
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	-0.04	*	0.96
Gender (1 = male)	0.52		1.68
Constant	3.56		
-2 log-likelihood	159.15		
Chi-square	8.34	*	
Negelkerke R^2	.08		

*significant at .05.

Table 16: Multiple Logistic Regression of Arts Participation on Domain-Specific Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities and Control Variables (n = 80)

Variables	b		Exp(β)
Domain-specific satisfaction with arts/cultural activities	1.37	**	3.92
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	-0.06	*	0.94
Gender (1 = male)	1.32		3.73
Constant	0.26		
-2 log-likelihood	64.11		
Chi-square	21.20	***	
Nagelkerke R^2	.36		

*significant at .05; ** significant at .01; *** significant at .001.

Table 17: Multiple Logistic Regression of Arts Participation on General Satisfaction with Arts/Cultural Activities and Control Variables (n = 177)

Variables	b		Exp(β)
General satisfaction with arts/cultural activities	0.78	***	2.18
<i>Control variables</i>			
Age	-0.05	**	0.96
Gender (1 = male)	0.20		1.22
Constant	1.38		
-2 log-likelihood	164.90		
Chi-square	26.70	***	
Nagelkerke R^2	.21		

** significant at .01; *** significant at .001.

Hypothesis and Measurement of Variables

Hypothesis

H7: There is a positive association between arts participation and community-oriented action.

Measurement

Arts Participation

See description above.

Community-Oriented Action

Community-oriented action was assessed using three individual questions. Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they: (1) participated in any type of community improvement activity in their community, (2) worked with others in their community to try to solve

community problems, and (3) took part in forming a new group or organization to try to solve community problems. Each community-oriented action was dummy coded (1 = yes; 0 = no).

Analyses

The associations between arts participation and community-oriented actions were assessed using multiple logistic regression techniques (Tables 18-20). As shown in Tables 18, 19, and 20, the net effect of arts participation on each measure of community-oriented action was positive and statistically significant. This indicated that individuals who have participated in one or more arts-related activities within the last 12 months were more likely than those who have not participated to have (1) participated in a community improvement activity, (2) worked with others to try to solve community problems, and (3) taken part in forming a new group or organization to try to solve community problems.

Table 18: Multiple Linear Regression of Community-Oriented Action (“Having Ever Participated in Any Type of Community Improvement Activity in the Community”) on Arts Participation and Control Variables (n = 177)

Variables	b	Exp(β)
Arts participation	1.28 **	3.58
<i>Control variables</i>		
Age	-0.01	0.99
Gender (1 = male)	-0.21	0.81
Constant	0.64	
-2 log-likelihood	203.86	
Chi-square	13.89 **	
Negelkerke R^2	.11	

** significant at .01.

Table 19: Multiple Linear Regression of Community-Oriented Action (“Having Worked with Others in the Community to Try to Solve Community Problems”) on Arts Participation and Control Variables (n = 178)

Variables	b	Exp(β)
Arts participation	0.80 *	2.22
<i>Control variables</i>		
Age	-0.01	1.00
Gender (1 = male)	-0.01	0.99
Constant	-0.20	
-2 log-likelihood	240.92	
Chi-square	5.48	
Negelkerke R^2	.04	

* significant at .05.

Table 20: Multiple Linear Regression of Community-Oriented Action (“Having Taken Part in Forming a New Group or Organization to Try to Solve Community Problems”) on Arts Participation and Control Variables (n = 176)

Variables	b	Exp(β)
Arts participation	1.13 *	3.08
<i>Control variables</i>		
Age	-0.01	0.99
Gender (1 = male)	-0.35	0.71
Constant	-0.85	
-2 log-likelihood	218.85	
Chi-square	9.55 *	
Nagelkerke R^2	.07	

* significant at .05.

Summary and Conclusion

In summary, key findings from this research include:

- Approximately seven in ten respondents from the 2012 and 2013 TRS reported that arts/cultural activities were available in their communities.
- Higher levels of satisfaction with arts and cultural activities are linked to higher levels of both community attachment and community satisfaction.
 - Of the respondents who indicated availability of arts/cultural activities, individuals who were more satisfied with the arts/cultural activities in their communities were more likely to express higher levels of *community attachment* and *community satisfaction* than those who were less satisfied with local arts/cultural activities.
 - Gender and age appear to play an important role regarding community attachment: females and older respondents had significantly higher levels of community attachment.
 - Population size seems to impact community satisfaction; residents of places with populations ranging between 2,000 and 10,000 and places with populations ranging between 500 and 1,999 had significantly lower levels of community satisfaction than did residents of places with populations of less than 500.
 - Individuals who held higher levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities exhibited higher levels of community attachment than their counterparts who held lower levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with the arts/cultural activities in their communities.
 - Individuals who held higher levels of general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities were more likely than those with lesser levels of

general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities to indicate that they were very satisfied with life in their communities.

- Perceived community capacity to support arts/cultural activities contributes to satisfaction with local arts/cultural activities.
 - Individuals who perceived their community to hold greater capacity for the arts were more likely than their counterparts who perceived their community to hold lesser capacity for the arts to exhibit higher levels of domain-specific and general satisfaction with arts/cultural activities in their communities.
- Higher levels of community attachment is associated with arts participation.
 - Community attachment was positively and significantly associated with arts participation. Those respondents with higher levels of community attachment were more likely to participate in local arts/cultural activities than those with lower levels of community attachment.
- Community satisfaction is not associated with arts participation.
 - No support was found for the hypothesis that community satisfaction is positively associated with arts participation.
- Satisfaction with arts/cultural activities is associated with arts participation.
 - Domain-specific satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with arts participation.
 - General satisfaction with arts/cultural activities was positively and significantly associated with arts participation.
 - Respondents who were more satisfied with domain-specific arts/cultural activities and general arts/culture activities in the community were more likely to participate in art/cultural activities than those with lower levels of satisfaction.
- Arts participation is associated with community-oriented action.
 - Individuals who have participated in one or more arts-related activities within the last 12 months were more likely than those who have not participated to have engaged in community-oriented actions.

Taken as a whole, the findings lend support for the assertion that arts may be a potential strategy for rural community development. Community development, as we define it, involves “purposive action undertaken with positive intentions at improving community structure” (Theodori 2005:666). Accordingly, from our perspective, community development refers to the creation and maintenance of *community* as a social characteristic of a local population. The process of community development involves purposive, positive, structure-oriented actions, and exists in the efforts of people working together to address their shared interests and solve their common problems (Theodori 2005, Wilkinson 1991). As Theodori (2008:92) stated

... the substantive element of community development is social interaction. The process of community development, therefore, depends largely on the intentional actions of people in a locality coming together and interacting with the intent of solving their local problems, improving their quality of life, and shaping their future well-being.

In this study, such actions were referred to as community-oriented actions.

Based upon the findings from this research, we propose that community developers, public leaders, and other practitioners working in the area of rural community development should assess the *perceived community capacity* for the arts among local residents, as well as the levels of arts/cultural *satisfaction* and *participation* in the community. Then, if/when applicable, public leaders and community development practitioners should identify and invite those residents who actively participate in arts-related activities to become involved in local community development projects/programs. According to these data, residents who participate in the arts are, in fact, those residents trying to purposively alter the structure of their community in a positive manner (i.e., engaging in community-oriented actions).

In conclusion, an increased understanding of (a) the factors related to arts participation and (b) the effects of arts participation on community-oriented action is especially beneficial for community developers, public leaders, and other practitioners (e.g., Cooperative Extension Service personnel) seeking an arts-based strategy to rural community and economic development processes/projects. Such knowledge is pertinent, as well, for national and state policy-makers and local and regional organizational leaders seeking to fund and promote arts-based and related initiatives.

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