

Representative Group Styles: How Ally Immigrant Rights Organizations Promote Immigrant Involvement

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ABSTRACT

Why are some organizations more successful than others at involving socially diverse groups of people? Previous research emphasizes the role representative leaders play in recruiting diverse constituencies. This study extends that research by analyzing how an organization's group style—its customs that shape everyday interactions—influences constituent involvement by either bridging or reinforcing social divides. Our multi-method approach examines ally immigrant rights organizations to assess the relationship between their group styles and their ability to involve immigrants. Ethnographic data reveal that divergent levels of immigrant involvement in two organizations can be explained by differences in the organizations' group styles—specifically, differences in their religious, class-based, and linguistic practices. Original survey data from a national sample of ally organizations demonstrate the generalizability of our findings. Our analysis shows how having an immigrant-friendly group style can promote immigrant involvement, indicating that an organization's style is associated with its social composition. Having representative leaders from immigrant groups, though positively associated with immigrant involvement, is insufficient for sustaining immigrant involvement; group style can moderate the effect of having representative leaders. This research suggests that organizations seeking to recruit and retain a diverse social base could benefit from cultivating a representative group style.

KEYWORDS: immigration; religion; activism; ally organizations; culture.

Although many organizations aspire to be socially diverse, relatively few achieve this goal (Gillis et al. 2017; Ostrower 2007). Why are some organizations more successful than others at involving diverse groups of people? Extensive research has investigated organizational diversity in general (e.g., Kalev, Dobbin, and Kelly 2006; Rivera 2012) and socially diverse advocacy organizations in particular (e.g., Dixon, Danaher, and Kail 2013; Fulton and Wood 2017; Leondar-Wright 2014). Still, most

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organizations struggle to recruit and retain a diverse base of participants, and sociological understanding of diversity dynamics remains limited. One stream of research emphasizes the importance of having representative leaders (i.e., leaders with social characteristics similar to those of the constituents the organization seeks to involve), recognizing that “indigenous leaders” (Morris 1984) are often most effective at mobilizing their communities (Ganz 2009; Morris and Braine 2001; Okamoto and Gast 2013; Purdue 2001). However, it remains unclear whether having representative leaders is sufficient to promote diverse member involvement. This study extends this line of research by examining not only representative leadership but also what we term *representative group styles*: styles that incorporate the preferred practices of the full spectrum of constituents an organization seeks to involve. By analyzing how an organization’s group style—its customs that shape everyday interactions—influences constituent involvement (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003), we move beyond questions of diversity for its own sake, examining instead the conditions that produce substantial organizational involvement across lines of difference. We find that having a representative group style can enable organizations to achieve and sustain greater levels of social diversity.

In this study, we use a multi-method approach to examine the relationship between group style and constituent involvement among ally organizations. Ally organizations differ from other social movement organizations in that they are comprised primarily of people from relatively privileged groups who are not members of the marginalized group for which they are advocating (Dixon et al. 2013). Thus, they often confront challenges associated with bridging social differences. Examples include predominantly white organizations working for racial justice, conservative Christian organizations supporting Jewish settlers in Israel/Palestine, and (here) organizations comprised of predominantly U.S.-born members working for immigrant rights.

Social movement scholars have often minimized the importance of ally organizations, believing them to be ineffective and short-lived, due to allies’ often minimal personal stake in the issues being addressed (Marx and Useem 1971; Myers 2008). In recent years, however, some scholars have given ally organizations greater attention by pointing to examples of their efficacy, such as “straight” ally organizations working to advance LGBT interests (Myers 2008; for other examples see Dixon et al. 2013; Russo 2014). Furthermore, campaigns like Black Lives Matter are reviving questions about whether and how allies should be involved in such movements (Fulton, Oyakawa, and Wood 2017; Roediger 2016). Some scholars underscore the importance of understanding ally organizations because of their prevalence, potential for coalition-building, and occasional efficacy (Dixon et al. 2013; Myers 2008; Russo 2014). Others highlight how organizations that span social divides, such as ally organizations, can increase marginalized groups’ access to elites and help generate the cultural and social capital needed to challenge existing systems of power (Bystydzienski and Schacht 2001; Rose 2000).

To increase their legitimacy and bolster their effectiveness, many ally organizations seek to involve members of the group for whom they are advocating. However, such efforts can be undermined by the significant challenges associated with bridging social differences. To better understand the factors influencing an organization’s ability to achieve and sustain a diverse base of participants, this study examines the efforts of 81 ally organizations to involve the people for whom they are advocating.

Our analysis focuses on a salient dimension of social diversity in American life: the divide between immigrant and U.S.-born constituencies. Divergent national backgrounds often generate different customs and patterns of everyday interaction (i.e., group styles), which can make it challenging for U.S.-born allies to successfully engage immigrants. Thus, we examine the group styles of ally immigrant rights organizations and assess whether these group styles are associated with immigrant involvement. We pursue a multi-method strategy beginning with an ethnographic examination of two ally immigrant rights organizations (one that was successful in incorporating immigrant participants and one that was less successful) and proceeding to a survey analysis to test the generalizability of our ethnographic findings. The ethnographic investigation reveals that immigrant-friendly group styles—particularly immigrant-friendly religious, class-based, and linguistic practices—promote

immigrant involvement and enhance immigrant leaders' ability to recruit and retain immigrants. We then analyze survey data from a national sample of ally organizations working for immigrant rights and find that having immigrant leaders and an immigrant-friendly group style are associated with greater immigrant involvement. Furthermore, our survey analysis indicates that the effect of immigrant leaders is amplified if the organization has an immigrant-friendly group style. Thus, group style not only builds on the impact of representative leadership but also *multiplies* that impact. By demonstrating how a representative group style helps ally immigrant rights organizations involve both privileged allies and marginalized constituents, this study offers insights that are applicable to many types of organizations seeking to recruit and retain a diverse base of constituents.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: REPRESENTATIVE LEADERSHIP AND GROUP STYLE

This study examines differences among ally organizations, why those differences exist, and how those differences are associated with an organization's ability to involve the people for whom it is advocating. We use the term "allies" to refer to an ally organization's more privileged participants; the term "directly affected constituents" to refer to the more marginalized, primary intended beneficiaries of an ally organization's actions; and the term "representative leaders" to refer to organizational leaders drawn from those directly affected constituents.¹

Although it can be strategic and desirable for ally organizations to involve the people for whom they are advocating, achieving this goal can be challenging (e.g., [Bystydzienski and Schacht 2001](#)). Differing cultures, practices, and tactics among privileged and marginalized groups can undermine their efforts to work together, in part by creating obstacles to building trust, shared goals, and an inclusive organizational culture ([Dixon et al. 2013](#)). Power differentials and perceptions of threat can intensify these challenges ([Beamish and Luebbers 2009](#)), and organizations embodying such power differentials risk merely reproducing existing hierarchies (e.g., [Carmichael and Hamilton 1967](#); [Wadsworth 2008](#)).²

Still, the potential benefits to both parties may outweigh the challenges. Marginalized constituents can benefit from the social capital they accrue through participating in ally organizations, and more privileged allies can enhance their advocacy efforts by drawing on the experience and insider knowledge of directly affected constituents ([Shaw 2011](#); [Wuthnow 2002](#)). Furthermore, without participation from people who are directly affected by the issue at hand, ally organizations risk their legitimacy, efficacy, and longevity ([Dixon et al. 2013](#)). For these reasons, many ally organizations seek to involve directly affected constituents in their organizations, albeit with highly variable success ([Myers 2008](#)).

Research on efforts by organizations to involve a diverse base of participants emphasizes the importance of having leaders who are representative of the people the organization seeks to involve. Because representative leaders are insiders within their communities, they can draw on their social networks to recruit participants ([Ganz 2009](#); [Morris and Braine 2001](#); [Okamoto and Gast 2013](#); [Purdue 2001](#)). Representative leaders can also help strengthen relationships between members of different social backgrounds by building trust, thus helping to sustain involvement of diverse groups over time (e.g., [Bystydzienski and Schacht 2001](#); [Mallett et al. 2008](#); [Zamora and Osuji 2014](#)). However, less is known about whether organizational characteristics beyond representative leadership might influence an organization's ability to recruit a diverse group of participants, especially when

1 Movement scholars use the term "constituents" in different ways. [McCarthy and Zald \(1977\)](#) refer to "conscience constituents" and "beneficiary constituents" to distinguish between people involved for reasons of conscience and people involved for direct benefits. Recognizing actors' complex motivations, our terms de-emphasize the idea that more privileged participants are motivated solely by conscience and that marginalized participants are motivated solely by direct benefits.

2 Some scholars critique efforts to build "diverse organizations" because of the tendency toward tokenism that reproduces existing inequalities (e.g., [Embrick 2011](#); [Turco 2010](#)). Our article dovetails with such critiques, though they are beyond its focus.

leaders attempt to recruit marginalized constituents into an organization populated primarily by more-privileged allies.

Research on cultures of interaction offers insight into how an organization's group style can influence its ability to involve a diverse base of constituents (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003; Lichterman 2012). Group styles are "recurrent patterns of interaction that arise from a group's shared assumptions about what constitutes good or adequate participation in the group setting" (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003:737). That is, group styles are customs, routine ways of talking and acting that characterize the everyday interactions of a group. This cultural-interactionist framework highlights the importance of creating an inclusive group culture within which all parties in a diverse organization, particularly those marginalized by low socioeconomic status, feel comfortable and represented (Leondar-Wright 2014; Lichterman 1995; Yukich and Braunstein 2014). We push this framework a step further by inquiring whether an organization's culture promotes not only feelings of comfort and representation but also the increased involvement of directly affected constituents.

For instance, efforts to build coalitions across social differences, such as class, race, and immigration status, may be inhibited by the predominance of "personalized politics," an organizational culture common among U.S.-born, middle-class, white people that emphasizes intensively participating individuals who are articulate and confident in self-presentation (Lichterman 1995). Organizations with a group style that embodies personalized politics tend to be more accessible to highly educated, middle-class people, despite the organizations' intentions to involve a diverse base of constituents (Lichterman 1995). Furthermore, community-based organizations perceived as out-of-touch with constituents' needs often struggle to elicit their involvement (Marwell 2007; Walker and McCarthy 2010). Such organizations can increase their legitimacy and appeal among potential participants by forging ties with local community groups (Walker and McCarthy 2010), providing opportunities to cultivate in-demand skills (Marwell 2007), and participating in both advocacy and service provision (Minkoff 2002).

Drawing on this framework, we argue that ally organizations may be able to maintain broad-based organizational commitment by cultivating a group style that represents the preferred practices of the *full spectrum* of its constituents, which can increase the organization's legitimacy among its constituents.

ALLY ORGANIZATIONS WORKING FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

To examine the relationship between representative leadership, an organization's group style, and its ability to involve directly affected constituents, we analyze ally organizations working for immigrant rights. The immigrant rights movement in the U.S. has grown substantially over the last decade, fueled by stricter policy enforcement and hostility toward immigrants in public discourse (Santana 2015; Voss and Bloemraad 2011). While much of this mobilization has occurred through immigrant-based organizations (Milkman 2000; Mora 2013; Perez 2009), many ally immigrant rights organizations have also played an important role in the movement (Pallares and Flores-González 2010; Voss and Bloemraad 2011; Yukich 2013a, 2013b). Ally immigrant rights organizations are immigrant advocacy organizations initiated by or predominantly composed of U.S.-born people. Because many of these organizations seek to involve immigrants (i.e., directly affected constituents), they provide an excellent case for exploring the dynamics of ally organizations and their efforts to involve the people for whom they are advocating. In order to work together, U.S.-born allies and immigrants must navigate numerous sociocultural differences; often, they literally and figuratively speak different languages.

Immigrant rights organizing often involves disruptive tactics that immigrants, especially if they are vulnerable to deportation, may perceive as risky (Voss and Bloemraad 2011). Accordingly, solidarity and trust among participants are important characteristics immigrants consider when deciding whether to join a particular activist organization (Yukich 2013a). Because the present political

atmosphere undermines solidarity and trust between immigrants and U.S.-born people, ally immigrant rights organizations face considerable challenges in engaging immigrants (Nicholls 2013). Consequently, even ally organizations that strongly aspire to involve immigrants often lack substantial immigrant involvement (Yukich 2013a, 2013b).

Such shortfalls in representative participation signify missed opportunities for immigrants, their allies, and society as a whole. By participating in civic groups like ally organizations, immigrants can build the social and cultural capital needed for adaptation and economic mobility (Brettell and Reed-Danahay 2011; Ramakrishnan 2005; Stoll and Wong 2007). By involving immigrants, ally organizations can become more representative of shifting demographics and better equipped to address the needs and draw on the strengths of the nation's newest residents. By better integrating immigrants into civic life, U.S. society gains residents who, through their involvement in civic groups, have built critical skills for participating in American democracy (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995).

Although several studies analyze the civic participation of immigrants, many focus on the *individual* characteristics of immigrants associated with their civic participation (Ramakrishnan 2005; Stoll and Wong 2007; Terriquez 2011). This study instead examines the *organizational* characteristics associated with immigrant civic engagement. Specifically, this study examines how the group style of ally immigrant rights organizations is associated with immigrant involvement in these organizations. Shifting the analytical focus onto organizations can provide a fuller explanation for the civic participation of immigrants. For instance, Stoll and Wong (2007) find that immigrants with higher levels of education are more likely to become involved in civic organizations. This finding may imply that immigrants with less education lack the skills, knowledge, or motivation to become civically engaged—but the trend could also result from many civic organizations' cultures being oriented toward college-educated individuals, thereby deterring involvement of less-educated immigrants.

Research on immigrant integration sheds light on how organizational characteristics might influence immigrant involvement. At a national level, immigrants in countries that promote multiculturalism are more likely to become citizens, trust political institutions, and feel invested in national identity (Bloemraad 2015). By extension, organizations that recognize cultural differences and incorporate representative practices may find it easier to elicit immigrant participation and investment (Kerwin and Barron 2017). Furthermore, immigrants are more likely to see an organization as legitimate and to become participants when its "activities, goals, structure and/or procedures" align with their needs and expectations (Vermeulen and Brünger 2014:983), such as nonprofit organizations that address language access (DeGrauw 2016). By focusing on how organizational characteristics affect immigrant participation and drawing on the concepts of representative leadership and group style, this study identifies previously under-recognized factors influencing immigrant civic engagement.

In this article, we analyze how the leadership and group style of ally immigrant rights organizations are associated with immigrant involvement in these organizations. Our multi-method analysis begins inductively with an empirical puzzle: Two structurally similar ally immigrant rights organizations in immigrant-dense cities both have immigrant leaders and strive to involve immigrants, yet one organization is substantially more successful at recruiting and retaining immigrant members than the other. What accounts for their differing outcomes? To begin to solve that puzzle, we took an inductive approach. Through the process of analyzing an array of practices, the organizations' religious, class-based, and linguistic practices emerged as being consequential for sustaining immigrant participation. Having identified a potential relationship between an ally organization's group style and its level of immigrant involvement, we then shift to a deductive approach. We assess the generalizability of our ethnographic findings by analyzing survey data from 79 ally organizations working for immigrant rights. This quantitative analysis supports the insights that emerged from our ethnographic data, finding a significant relationship between an organization's religious, socioeconomic, and linguistic characteristics and its level of immigrant involvement. Furthermore, these characteristics are shown to moderate the relationship between having immigrant leaders and achieving higher levels of immigrant

involvement, indicating that representative group style moderates the effect of representative leadership.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: REPRESENTATIVE GROUP STYLE AND IMMIGRANT INVOLVEMENT

To explore factors that might explain immigrant involvement in ally immigrant rights organizations, we analyze data collected through ethnographic fieldwork in two such organizations. Both are affiliated with the Immigrant Justice Movement, a national network of local organizations working for immigrant rights, many of which are ally organizations seeking to involve immigrants.³ The first author spent a year and a half conducting ethnographic research with a New York City-based organization (August 2007–January 2009) and two months with a Los Angeles-based organization (May–June 2008) by participating in meetings, vigils, protests, immigration check-ins, fundraisers, and town hall sessions. In addition, the first author conducted 48 in-depth interviews with activists involved in the two organizations (21 in NYC, 27 in LA). Though significantly less time was spent with the LA organization, the purpose of the qualitative analysis is not to provide a point-by-point comparison of the two organizations that produces theoretical conclusions, but rather to provide a comparison from which insights emerge that can be tested using survey data.

These two organizations were selected because of their similar size, structure, founding date, and location in historic immigrant gateways (NYC and LA), and because of the similar composition of the types of leaders and institutional members when they began. Both organizations were founded in 2007, and at their inception about half of their leaders were immigrants and 40 percent of their institutional members were immigrant organizations.⁴ In both organizations, some of the immigrant leaders and U.S.-born leaders had extensive activist experience and others had very limited activist experience. Though both organizations grew in total membership over time, they gradually diverged in their capacity to engage immigrants; the LA organization maintained its level of immigrant involvement, while the level of immigrant involvement in the NYC organization decreased. The LA organization was largely successful at retaining its initial immigrant participants and building its immigrant base. More than a year after the LA organization's founding, all four of the immigrant congregations involved at its launch were still among its ten actively involved institutional members. Furthermore, at a typical meeting about 35 percent of the participants were immigrants. In contrast, even though the NYC organization had immigrant leaders and substantial immigrant involvement at its launch, many of the immigrant participants did not remain actively involved, and the organization struggled to attract new immigrants. After the first year, the percentage of immigrant member institutions actively involved in the NYC organization dropped from 40 percent (2 out of 5 total organizations) to 10 percent (1 out of 10 total organizations), and at a typical meeting, about 20 percent of the participants were immigrants.

Because both organizations sought immigrant involvement and included a significant number of immigrants at their inception, the research was not initially focused on how ally immigrant rights organizations promote immigrant involvement. That question emerged over time, as the two organizations began to diverge in their percentage of immigrants involved. In response to this divergence, the first author sought to identify explanations for this variation by using Atlas.ti to analyze approximately 2,000 pages of field notes, interview transcripts, and organization documents.

This inductive analysis revealed that the two organizations had cultivated different group styles, which influenced their ability to involve immigrants. The LA organization's group style incorporated immigrant-friendly practices, while the practices associated with the NYC organization's group style disproportionately favored the cultural customs of its U.S.-born participants. From the analysis, three

3 All names of organizations and individuals are pseudonyms.

4 In this paper, the term "immigrant" refers to first-generation immigrants (people born outside of the U.S.), and the term "U.S.-born" refers to people born in the United States, including second-generation immigrants.

elements of the organizations' group styles—their religious, class-based, and linguistic practices—emerged as impacting their ability to recruit and retain immigrants. After identifying these elements as potentially important for involving immigrants in ally immigrant rights organizations, we analyzed survey data to test whether these elements of group style are generally associated with ally organizations' involvement of immigrants.

Qualitative Analysis

An organization's group style comprises many elements, each of which can shape how participants experience the organization. For example, given varying childcare needs across constituencies, whether an organization provides on-site childcare or incorporates child-centered activities may attract participants from different groups. Likewise, culinary practices, such as the types of food regularly served, can influence participants' experience of the organization.

Through our inductive analysis of ally immigrant rights organizations, three elements of group style—an organization's religious, class-based, and linguistic practices—emerged as being particularly relevant to immigrant involvement. These findings correspond with prior research showing that immigrants' religious, class-based, and linguistic preferences often differ from those of U.S.-born people (Massey and Higgins 2011; Suro et al. 2007; Terrazas 2009). Our analysis extends that research by examining whether the interaction of immigrants' preferences and an organization's group style influences the organization's ability to involve immigrants.

In the following analysis, we present ethnographic data demonstrating that while both organizations had immigrant leaders and sought to involve immigrants, differences in their organizational practices led to divergent levels of immigrant involvement. The LA organization had more immigrant-oriented religious practices, included more organizational practices associated with working-class culture, and regularly used Spanish alongside English in meetings, materials, and events—all of which produced a group style that encouraged immigrant participation. In contrast, the NYC organization only minimally incorporated immigrant-friendly practices. Instead, U.S.-centric religious practices, middle-class cultural practices, and the almost exclusive use of English in the organization's meetings, materials, and events predominated. These practices generated an overall group style that deterred immigrant participation, despite the presence of immigrant leaders. Furthermore, these practices generally corresponded with the preferred practices of dominant groups in U.S. society (i.e., people who are U.S.-born, middle-class, English-speaking, and white Protestant), which undermined the organization's ability to present itself as a legitimate representative of immigrant constituents. Thus, while prior research demonstrates that immigrant leaders can help an ally organization involve immigrants, our analysis of the LA and NYC organizations indicates that having immigrant leaders can be insufficient for involving immigrants if the organization's group style is not immigrant-friendly.

The LA Organization: How Immigrant-Friendly Group Style Promotes Immigrant Involvement

The following field notes from a 2008 LA organization event illustrate some of the organization's immigrant-friendly practices, which were characteristic of the organization.

It is almost dark at St. Clare's Catholic Church, the new home for Luis, a Mexican immigrant temporarily living in the church to avoid detention and deportation, drawing on the historic practice of "sanctuary." Tonight's special event is celebrating his safe move from another church where he had been living. As participants wait for the event to start, they read through the program, which is available in Spanish. Approximately 40 people are present, about half U.S.-born allies and half Latinx immigrants, including several of the LA organization's leaders.

The event begins when a white, U.S.-born priest, Father James, steps in front of the altar and plays a guitar, leading everyone in an English-language song about light, the refrain ringing, "Take your candle, and go light your world." The second song, "Solidaridad," written by an Ecuadorian priest, is

in Spanish. Its final verse highlights themes dominant in Latin American religions and liberation theology, which are central to the religious lives of many Latinx people: “Llegar a ser la voz de los humildes/ Descubrir la injusticia y la maldad/ Denunciar al injusto y al malvado/ Es solidaridad, solidaridad, solidaridad” (“Becoming the voice of the poor,/ Uncovering injustice and evil,/ Denouncing the unjust and the wicked—/that is solidarity, solidarity, solidarity”). During the songs, some people sway and clap, while others stand still. After the singing, a Latino priest, Father Ricardo, welcomes everyone to the church. He raises a question posed in the program—“Porque estamos aquí?” (“Why are we here?”)—and explains why Luis is here now, welcoming him to his new place of refuge. Fr. Ricardo’s welcome is bilingual; he speaks each phrase first in English and then in Spanish.

Next, Reverend Rosa (a Latina immigrant pastor and leader in the LA organization) and a layperson (the daughter of a Mexican immigrant who is living in a church to avoid deportation) address those present, one speaking in English and one in Spanish. Their address is followed by a joint prayer in English and Spanish by Reverend Rosa and a white, U.S.-born pastor. Luis speaks next, thanking everyone for coming and talking about his immigration case. He speaks in Spanish, and a young Latina woman stands beside him and translates his words into English. Luis mentions other families in a similar situation and lights a candle to remember them.

As Luis finishes, Reverend Rosa walks to the front of the church and joins him. She speaks in English and Spanish. Her style is charismatic—she gestures with her hands as she speaks, and her words, body, and face are full of emotion. When Reverend Rosa finishes speaking, she asks everyone to come to the front to “lay hands” on Luis to bless him. Everyone stands, walks to the front of the altar, and forms a circle around Luis, putting their hands on his head or shoulders in the Pentecostal and charismatic Catholic tradition of “laying on of hands” in which the Holy Spirit is believed to move through the bodies of believers to give the person strength. Father Ricardo prays for Luis’s safety as everyone keeps their hands on Luis, an act that feels emotional, intimate, and vulnerable. As the prayer ends, Father James starts playing the guitar again and sings a South African song in English. People gathered in the circle sing together, spontaneously clapping their hands and hugging Luis and each other.

The NYC Organization: How the Lack of Immigrant-Friendly Group Style Inhibits Immigrant Involvement

The importance of immigrant-friendly religious practices. Although there is no single set of “U.S.-born” or “immigrant” religious practices, many religious practices vary along racial, ethnic, and immigrant lines (Edwards 2008; Fulton 2017; Marti 2012; Yukich 2018). Immigrant Protestants, compared with U.S.-born Protestants, are five times more likely to belong to a Pentecostal tradition and thus engage in more emotionally demonstrative, physically expressive religious practices such as hand-raising, spontaneous dancing, audible affirmations, and speaking in tongues (Hollenweger 2004; Jennings 2014; Massey and Higgins 2011; Suro et al. 2007). Similarly, Latinx Catholics, many of whom are immigrants, are four times more likely than non-Latinx Catholics to identify with charismatic Catholicism (Suro et al. 2007). These differences suggest that many immigrants would be less comfortable with religious practices associated with mainline Protestantism—planned, controlled, intellectual, and less body-centric practices (Edwards 2008; Hollenweger 2004; Jennings 2014).

As the foregoing vignette shows, many of the religious practices at the LA organization’s events were drawn from Latinx Catholic or Pentecostal traditions, such as the Spanish song about solidarity, body movement and spontaneity during worship, and the laying on of hands. In contrast, at the NYC organization’s events, songs and prayers were typically planned ahead of time, rehearsed, and involved standing still rather than dancing, gesturing, or hand-raising. For example, at a vigil outside an ICE detention center—a potentially unwelcoming site for some immigrants—participants sang “This Little Light of Mine,” “We are Marching in the Light of God,” and “Go Down, Moses,” all of which are Christian songs commonly sung in white, middle-class Protestant churches. Although “We are

Marching” is originally an African hymn and participants sang it in English and Spanish, and “Go Down, Moses” is an African-American spiritual, participants sang both songs with sheet music in their hands, bodies mostly still, and voices in unison.

These religious practices enacted a group style that was unfamiliar and unappealing to people who were not from mainline Protestant traditions, including many immigrants. An imam who was involved in the NYC organization but was unable to convince his congregants to join explained in an interview, “The Muslim community is aware of [the NYC organization] . . . but they are not with [the organization] because it presents itself basically as a Christian organization . . . Singing songs with lighted candles and what not? That’s Christian. That’s not Jewish. That’s not Muslim. So there’s a heavy orientation of that. And so that’s not attractive to Muslims, because they feel, ‘Why should I be involved with that?’” The imam’s sentiments suggest that the predominance of Christian practices—primarily mainline Protestant practices—in the NYC organization deterred people from other religious backgrounds, such as the religious traditions with which many immigrants are affiliated, from becoming involved.

The importance of immigrant-friendly class-based practices. Class-based differences in preferred modes of interaction and decision-making can be a source of tension within socioeconomically diverse civic organizations (Braunstein, Fulton, and Wood 2014; Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003; Leondar-Wright 2014; Lichterman 1995). For example, although labor unions often train members in participatory practices, working-class participants without union ties can feel uncomfortable with participatory practices such as personal introductions, since an emphasis on the individual is less common in working-class culture and public speaking is often associated with higher levels of education (Leondar-Wright 2014). Some class-diverse organizations navigate this tension by facilitating participatory practices in the context of small groups, which can be less intimidating for working-class participants (Diaz-Edelman 2017). Predominantly middle-class civic organizations also tend to have a consensus-based decision-making style rooted in “personalized politics” (Leondar-Wright 2014; Lichterman 1995). In contrast, among organizations comprised of working-class people, decision-making styles tend to be more hierarchical with clearly distinguished roles for leaders and participants, which can facilitate swift action on urgent issues (Espinosa, Elisondo, and Miranda 2005; Freeman 1972). Among participants in ally immigrant rights organizations, the allies tend to be middle or upper-middle class, while many of the directly affected immigrants tend to be working class (Voss and Bloemraad 2011), potentially creating a mismatch in the participants’ preferred class-based practices.

At the LA organization event depicted above, most of the facilitators were Latinx and from working-class or middle-class backgrounds. Even though attendance at the event was small enough to allow middle-class participatory practices like individual introductions, event organizers avoided practices that put pressure on people to speak publicly. Instead, they allowed people to participate voluntarily. In contrast, in the NYC organization, almost every meeting—usually led by a college-educated professional on the steering committee—started with a ritual of personal introductions, in which participants sat in a circle and all attendees introduced themselves, sharing what brought them to the meeting. Those introductions were typically followed by discussions about each agenda item, with participants expected to voice their opinions so consensus could be cultivated about decisions that needed to be made. Participatory practices like these, which pressure participants to speak in a semi-public setting even if they feel unprepared to do so, can be distressing for many immigrants, especially those whose class backgrounds do not emphasize public speaking (Leondar-Wright 2014; Lichterman 1995).

Furthermore, observations from a meeting in 2007 illustrate the frustration some immigrant members of the NYC organization felt with the way the organization’s consensus-based decision-making style at times delayed its taking action. Members were discussing concerns about local corrections

officials allowing federal immigration (ICE) officers to investigate the immigration status of people awaiting trial in local jails. Emmanuel, a working-class immigrant who had previously been incarcerated, asked a law professor in attendance why legal action could not be taken to stop this practice. When she answered that litigation had not been effective, he looked unhappy. The other participants began sharing ideas about how to voice their concerns, some suggesting writing letters to the Department of Corrections and others recommending a teach-in for congregations. In the end, no consensus was reached about steps to take, so the organization postponed decision-making on the issue. Emmanuel was visibly angry, saying, “But we need legal change!” He wanted swift, decisive action and was frustrated that the organization’s consensus-based decision-making style had delayed efforts to act. At the end of the meeting, Emmanuel distributed information about a fundraiser for an immigrant-led group, saying, “They are the number one organization stopping deportations and helping families.” He restated his concern that the NYC organization needed to act more quickly to stop deportations. “We are getting spiritual support, but we need *help!*” he said emphatically. This example reveals a difference in priorities for action among the organization’s members. It also illustrates the frustration some immigrants experienced when the organization’s consensus-based decision-making model delayed taking immediate action. While Emmanuel remained involved in the organization’s work, his attendance at meetings became less frequent over time.

The NYC organization’s emphases on participation and consensus epitomize a middle-class group style that rewards people who are practiced at publicly voicing their ideas and privileges the interests of those who emphasize process over action and polite advocacy over confrontation. Though structuring meetings to require every person to speak and making decisions by consensus may be *intended* to give greater voice to marginalized participants, these practices can also make immigrants experience discomfort, frustration, and marginalization. In this way, organizational practices rooted in the privileged class status of “ally” participants can become an obstacle to engaging some immigrants.

The importance of immigrant-friendly linguistic practices. Finally, language differences present a major obstacle to interaction between immigrants and their U.S.-born counterparts. In the United States, having limited English-language skills can inhibit immigrants’ civic participation (Ramakrishnan 2005; Stoll and Wong 2007), especially within organizations where English is the predominant language used to recruit participants and conduct activities (Lien, Conway, and Wong 2004). The LA organization event depicted above, like many of its events, was conducted in both English and Spanish, making it easier for many recent immigrants to participate. In contrast, almost all of the NYC organization’s meetings and public events were conducted exclusively in English, and formal translation services typically were not provided. The lack of formal translation services for people speaking languages other than English made the NYC organization feel more like a group for U.S.-born allies than a group for immigrant activists in genuine partnership with their allies.

The leaders of the NYC organization recognized this weakness, but they did not have a strategy for addressing it, as the following example from a meeting in 2008 demonstrates: The NYC organization had created a new website and some people expressed frustration that the website was almost entirely in English, arguing that the most important people—immigrants themselves—might not be able to read it. The U.S.-born person leading the meeting said, “Well, I think English-only is better than just doing Spanish and English while not including other languages. That’s what we usually do, but that makes it seem like we are only a movement for Latino immigrants.” Another leader spoke up, saying, “Even if it’s just Spanish, it gets us away from the idea that everybody should speak English.” Other people around the room nodded, seeming to agree. “Is anyone willing to do the translation?” the meeting leader asked, looking around the room. One of the leaders, a Spanish-speaking immigrant who often ends up doing translations for the organization, sighed and said, “I’m really too busy to do it, but I guess I can do it if no one else can.” Thanking him, the leader asked, “Does anyone know any other languages at all? It would be really great if we could have the website

Table 1. Elements of Group Style That Promote or Inhibit Immigrant Involvement

<i>Element of Group Style</i>	<i>Promotes Immigrant Involvement</i>	<i>Inhibits Immigrant Involvement</i>
Religious Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporating formal and informal prayers • Singing songs from variety of religious traditions and in more than one language • Providing space for spontaneous religious expression • Involving bodily movement • Providing time for silent/ individual prayer that could include meditation or <i>salat</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overusing generalized interfaith language • Overemphasizing white Protestant prayer styles (formal and planned with bodies still) • Over-reliance on Christian corporate prayers and songs
Class-based Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixing consensus-based decision-making with other modes of decision-making • Providing opportunities to participate in the context of small groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overusing consensus-based decision-making at the expense of taking immediate action • Overemphasizing public speaking and other participatory practices in large groups
Linguistic Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making organizational material available in multiple languages • Conducting meetings in multiple languages • Providing translators at organizational events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-relying on English • Overemphasizing a single non-English language, such as Spanish

in Chinese, especially since several of our families are Chinese.” When no one raised their hand, he moved on, ceding that the website would remain predominantly in English.

In another example, a Chinese immigrant couple, Mark and Mary (these are pseudonyms, but the names they used were similarly Anglicized), attended a few meetings of the NYC organization. However, they spoke very little English and the organization offered no translation for Chinese speakers. Some of the leaders had hoped to groom Mark and Mary to be leaders in the organization, but their minimal proficiency with English, coupled with the lack of translators, inhibited their speaking during meetings and limited their ability to understand what was being discussed. Not only did Mark and Mary not become leaders, they soon stopped attending the meetings altogether. The NYC organization’s lack of a sustained strategy for using multiple languages at its meetings and in its materials severely limited non-English-speaking immigrants’ ability to participate in its activities. Furthermore, it signaled to all immigrants, even those who could speak English, that the organization’s group style was more fitted to the cultural practices and comforts of U.S.-born people than those of immigrants. [Table 1](#) summarizes the religious, class-based, and linguistic practices of an organization’s group style and their impact on immigrant involvement.

Discussion of Practices

Even though these two ally organizations were similar in many ways, including starting with similar levels of immigrant involvement and immigrant leadership, the LA organization incorporated several practices likely to resonate with many immigrants and continued to attract immigrants, while the NYC organization exhibited fewer immigrant-friendly practices and struggled to involve immigrants

over time. Although the LA organization's practices would not appeal to all immigrants equally—for instance, its primarily white and Latinx Christian religious practices and its predominant use of English and Spanish are not representative of LA's Korean Buddhist population—the LA organization included more immigrant-friendly practices than did the NYC organization. Thus, while previous research emphasizes the importance of representative leadership for constituent involvement, our observations indicate this strategy may not be sufficient for sustaining constituent involvement, since both organizations initially had similar levels of immigrant leadership. Our ethnographic observations suggest that, while immigrant leaders are important, having an immigrant-friendly group style can also promote immigrant involvement. More generally, these observations highlight the importance of cultivating a representative group style when seeking to involve a diverse base of constituents. The specific insights emerging from our qualitative analysis—that an organization's religious, class-based, and linguistic practices may be linked to its level of immigrant involvement—could help explain why some ally organizations are more successful than others at involving directly affected constituents.

Although ethnographic case studies are valuable for revealing underlying social processes and subsequently explaining social phenomena, they are limited in their scope and generalizability (Feagin, Orum, and Sjoberg 1991). Accordingly, in the following section, we assess the generalizability of the insights that emerged from our qualitative analysis using data from a national sample of ally organizations working for immigrant rights.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: EVIDENCE FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF ALLY IMMIGRANT RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

To assess the generalizability of our ethnographic findings about the importance of group style for immigrant involvement, we analyze data from the National Study of Community Organizing Organizations (Fulton, Wood, and Interfaith Funders 2011). The organizations in this national study have an organizational form similar to those examined in the qualitative analysis. Each organization operates as a community-based organization that brings together individuals from its member institutions to address social, economic, and political issues that affect poor, low-income, and middle-class sectors of American society (Wood 2002; Wood and Fulton 2015). Each organization has paid staff and a board of directors consisting of representatives from its member institutions, which include religious congregations, nonprofit organizations, schools, unions, and other civic associations. The board members function as the organization's core volunteer leaders and they meet on a regular basis to lead the organization. These commonalities enable our analysis to hold the organizations' form relatively constant, while allowing their social composition and activities to vary.

The national study surveyed the entire field of these organizations in 2011 by distributing a two-part survey to the director of each organization. Part one was an online survey that gathered extensive data on each organization's history, interactions, and activities. Part two consisted of customized spreadsheets that directors used to provide detailed demographic information about their institutional members, board members, and paid staff. This multi-level study achieved a response rate of 94 percent, gathering data on 178 of the 189 organizations in the country and demographic information on the 4,145 member institutions, 2,939 board members, and 506 paid organizers affiliated with these organizations (Fulton 2018).⁵ Because this article focuses on ally organizations working for immigrant rights, we restrict the sample to organizations that address immigrant rights issues.⁶ The

5 The population included every institution-based community organizing organization in the United States with an office address, at least one paid employee, and institutional members. The population did not include organizations with only individual (rather than institutional) members. Based on these criteria, the study identified 189 active organizations by using databases from every national and regional community organizing network, databases from 14 foundations that fund community organizing, and archived IRS 990 forms.

6 Directors were asked how involved their organization has been in addressing immigrant rights issues over the past two years. This ordered categorical variable had five response options (not involved, minimally involved, a little involved, somewhat

resulting sample is comprised of 79 organizations and the 2,043 member institutions, 1,275 board members, and 241 paid organizers affiliated with these organizations.

Among the ally organizations working for immigrant rights, there is substantial variation in the level of immigrant involvement. The quantitative analysis measures immigrant involvement using the proportion of immigrant member institutions within an organization.⁷ Sixteen percent of the organizations have no immigrant member institutions, whereas 33 percent have immigrant member institutions making up at least one quarter of their membership base.

To measure representative leadership, the analysis uses a binary variable: whether the organization had *at least one immigrant organizer on staff*. While most research on group styles uses qualitative methods, this study is among the first that attempts to operationalize the group style concept. However, because our survey data do not explicitly measure the organizations' group styles, the analysis uses the organization's religious profile, class-based dynamics, and linguistic practices as proxies for its group style. In particular, we associate immigrant-friendly group styles with the following three characteristics: 1) reduced predominance of U.S.-centric religious orientations among the organization's core volunteer leaders (i.e., *the proportion of board members who are not U.S.-born clergy*); 2) the extent to which the organization engages class differences among participants (i.e., *the extent to which class differences prolong planning meetings*);⁸ and 3) whether the organization accommodates linguistic differences (i.e., *whether the organization conducts activities in more than one language*). The analysis also controls for the proportion of immigrants in the organization's county as well as the organization's annual revenue, age, and number of paid organizers. Table 2 displays descriptive statistics for the variables used in the quantitative analysis.

The analysis conducts a series of OLS regressions and uses the proportion of immigrant member institutions within an organization as the dependent variable. Table 3 displays the results of the five multivariate regression models.⁹ Model 1, the base model, regresses on the representative leadership variable and on all of the control variables. Consistent with previous research, the results indicate that having representative leaders is positively associated with the involvement of directly affected constituents. Specifically, among these ally organizations working for immigrant rights, those that have at least one immigrant organizer on staff have a greater proportion of immigrant member institutions. Among the control variables, only the proportion of immigrants in the organization's county is significantly associated with immigrant involvement; this relationship is stable across all of the models.

Model 2 examines whether an organization's group style—based on its religious profile, class-based dynamics, and linguistic practices—is associated with immigrant involvement. The following expectations emerge from our qualitative analysis and subsequent discussion: Because organizations that incorporate religious traditions and practices familiar to immigrants are likely to exhibit a more immigrant-friendly group style, we expect the religious profiles of an organization's volunteer leaders to be related to immigrant involvement. With regard to class, because organizations that engage class differences are likely to exhibit a more immigrant-friendly group style, we expect the class-based dynamics of an organization to be related to immigrant involvement. Because organizations that

involved, and very involved). Organizations that indicated being "somewhat involved" or "very involved" in addressing immigrant rights were selected for the restricted sample.

7 Directors were asked to indicate for each institutional member whether the majority of the institution's participants are immigrants or U.S.-born. Member institutions for which a majority of its participants are immigrants were coded as immigrant member institutions. There are five cases for which more than 60 percent of the organization's institutional members are immigrant institutions. These cases are not included in the analysis because their social composition is such that they would not be considered *ally* immigrant rights organizations.

8 Directors were asked to indicate the extent to which class differences prolonged their planning meetings over the past 12 months. The five response options (not at all, minimally, a little, somewhat, and a lot) were converted to a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5.

9 Because this study surveyed the entire population of institution-based community organizing organizations in the U.S. and received responses from 94 percent of the organizations, a finite population correction factor— $\sqrt{(N-n)/(N-1)}$ —is applied to each analysis (Cochran 1977). The finite population correction factor is based on the 158 organizations (out of 189) that provided data for all variables used in the analysis.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Community Organizing Organizations Working for Immigrant Rights

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Proportion of immigrant member institutions	.18	.15	.00	.52
<i>Characteristics of the Organization</i>				
Proportion of immigrants in the organization's county	.17	.11	.02	.37
Revenue in 2010 (x \$100,000)	2.95	2.93	.25	13.24
Age of the organization	15.78	9.40	1.00	40.00
Number of organizers on staff	3.05	2.54	1.00	13.00
<i>Representative Leadership</i>				
At least one immigrant organizer on staff	.39	.49	.00	1.00
<i>Religious Profile</i>				
Proportion of board that are not U.S.-born clergy	.75	.19	.14	1.00
<i>Class-based Dynamics</i>				
Extent class differences prolong meetings	1.85	1.00	1.00	4.00
<i>Linguistic Practices</i>				
Conducts activities in more than one language	.85	.36	.00	1.00

Source: 2011 National Study of Community Organizing Organizations (Fulton et al. 2011)

Note: N = 79.

accommodate linguistic differences are likely to exhibit a more immigrant-friendly group style, we expect the linguistic practices of an organization to be related to immigrant involvement. Model 2 indicates that each of the variables serving as proxies for immigrant-friendly group styles are positively associated with immigrant involvement. In this model, the effect of representative leadership remains significant.

Based on our ethnographic analysis, we also expect that an organization's group style is associated with representative leaders' effectiveness at recruiting and retaining directly affected constituents. The subsequent models examine whether an organization's group style moderates the relationship between having immigrant leaders and immigrant involvement. Models 3–5 each include an interaction term for the binary variable *at least one immigrant organizer on staff* and one of the three proxies for immigrant-friendly group styles. The models indicate that the positive immigrant involvement effect of having an immigrant leader is even stronger in organizations that have an immigrant-friendly religious profile or conduct their activities in more than one language.

Interestingly though, in Model 5, the negative coefficient for having an immigrant organizer on staff indicates that an organization that has an immigrant leader and conducts its activities only in English is associated with having less immigrant involvement than an organization that does *not* have an immigrant leader and conducts its activities only in English. Although the former type of organization is rare, this finding is consistent with research on tokenism (Turco 2010) and suggests that having a representative leader without a corresponding representative group style can actually undermine efforts to involve constituents.

Overall, the quantitative analysis demonstrates the generalizability of our ethnographic findings. These findings provide additional evidence that immigrant-friendly group styles are associated with greater immigrant involvement, and that an organization's group style can boost or hinder immigrant leaders' ability to recruit and retain immigrants. Although the quantitative analysis is limited in that it cannot be used to determine causal order, the relationship is likely mutually reinforcing. Prior research shows that an organization's practices can be shaped by its participants (Fine 2012; Fine and Hallett 2014), and this study is among the first to demonstrate that an organization's group style can influence who participates. Our ethnographic data, which are longitudinal, provide evidence of an

Table 3. OLS Regression Models Estimating the Proportion of Immigrant Member Institutions

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>
Proportion of immigrants in the organization's county	.335*** (3.954)	.258** (3.097)	.256** (3.036)	.264** (3.203)	.248** (3.038)
Revenue in 2010 ^a	.012 (.105)	.055 (.527)	-.030 (-.296)	.082 (.772)	.073 (.688)
Age of the organization ^a	.146 (1.880)	.092 (1.315)	.117 (1.805)	.094 (1.387)	.064 (.910)
Number of organizers on staff ^a	-.082 (-.724)	-.124 (-1.159)	-.100 (-.978)	-.149 (-1.446)	-.093 (-.920)
At least one immigrant organizer on staff	.315*** (3.418)	.203* (2.352)	.344* (2.074)	.432* (2.509)	-.857** (-2.810)
Proportion of board members who are not U.S.-born clergy ^b (A)		.213*** (3.572)	.127* (2.198)	.220*** (3.827)	.220*** (3.670)
Extent class differences prolong meetings (B)		.154* (1.987)	.131 (1.679)	.235* (2.526)	.203* (2.504)
Conducts activities in more than one language (C)		.231*** (3.870)	.241*** (4.009)	.208*** (3.510)	.395* (2.619)
At least one immigrant organizer on staff x A			.415* (2.240)		
At least one immigrant organizer on staff x B				-.194 (-1.274)	
At least one immigrant organizer on staff x C					1.334*** (4.070)
R-squared	.268	.388	.409	.396	.418

Note: N = 79. Coefficients are standardized; *t*-statistics in parentheses; Constants are not displayed.

^aLogged values.

^bMean centered.

p* ≤ .05; *p* ≤ .01; ****p* ≤ .001 (two-tailed tests).

organization's group style influencing constituent involvement over time. In sum, the findings suggest that having a representative group style can help organizations involve a diverse base of participants both directly and by facilitating the efforts of representative leaders to recruit and retain them.

CONCLUSION

As organizations ranging from Fortune 500 companies to religious congregations seek to become more socially diverse, they confront the challenges of recruiting and retaining people from diverse backgrounds (Edwards 2008; Kalev et al. 2006; Rivera 2012). Although having representative leaders can help address these challenges, many organizations with representative leaders still struggle to achieve and sustain a diverse base of constituents. Few studies in this field of research have looked to organizational characteristics beyond representative leadership to explain constituent involvement. We advance this organizational level of analysis by examining how an organization's group style can attract or repel certain groups of people. By analyzing ally immigrant rights organizations and their ability to involve immigrants, this study reveals how having a representative group style can promote the involvement of directly affected constituents and facilitate representative leaders' efforts to involve these constituents. These findings have implications for any organization that aspires to become

more socially diverse, highlighting the importance of having an organizational culture that represents the range of its participants' cultural preferences.

While previous research focuses on the important role representative leaders play in recruiting and retaining members of marginalized groups, this study assesses the limits of representative leaders' ability to involve such groups. We find that ally organizations with immigrant leaders tend to have greater immigrant involvement, but that immigrant leaders can be limited in their ability to convince immigrants to join or remain in the organization if the organization's group style does not adequately reflect immigrants' cultural preferences. Indeed, we find that having a group style that includes immigrant-friendly religious, class-based, and linguistic practices is related to greater immigrant involvement, even in the absence of immigrant leadership. Furthermore, we find that 1) immigrant-friendly group styles can boost immigrant leaders' ability to increase immigrant involvement and 2) in the absence of a representative group style, having immigrant leaders may actually suppress immigrant involvement (perhaps due to a perception of tokenism).

This study also addresses a persistent problem in the social movements literature on building diverse organizations, a goal for many social movement organizations that seek to bridge social divides. The literature emphasizes the importance of cultivating a shared collective identity to address the challenges of building trust and commitment among participants from different backgrounds, especially when power differentials are in play. Our research suggests that having both representative leaders and a representative group style can go a long way toward building such trust and commitment. When people feel represented and, perhaps even more important, when they feel comfortable participating in the day-to-day activities of a diverse organization, their levels of trust and commitment to the organization will likely be stronger. Future research could explore the relative importance and interdependence of having representative leaders, a representative group style, and a shared collective identity for social movement organizations seeking to involve a diverse base of participants.

These insights about the importance of representative group styles also advance understanding of the factors that promote immigrant involvement in civic life more generally. Most studies that examine immigrant civic engagement emphasize associations between the individual characteristics of immigrants and their likelihood of becoming civically engaged. Rather than focusing on individual characteristics, this study examines how the characteristics of organizations can promote or deter immigrant involvement. For immigrants and members of other marginalized communities, such as people of color or LGBT people, organizational characteristics may be an especially important and under-recognized predictor of civic involvement. When the group styles of civic organizations privilege the practices of the dominant culture, they can deter members of marginalized communities from participating.

The concept of representative group styles is not limited in applicability to faith-based organizations or ally organizations working for immigrant rights; the concept has significance for any organization seeking to recruit and retain diverse members. Although secular organizations are unlikely to incorporate diverse religious practices as a strategy for increasing social diversity, they could benefit from incorporating class-based and linguistic practices that resonate with the people they seek to involve. In addition to the three elements of group style we identified, there are other elements that shape an organization's group style and can influence the involvement of marginalized people. Elements ranging from family-oriented practices to culinary choices can influence the extent to which an organization's group style feels comfortable and attractive to potential participants. Future research could build on this study by constructing and testing the validity of measures for a variety of group style elements. With such measures, future studies could examine how the relationship between group style and constituent involvement might vary when examining other types of organizations (such as private-sector companies), other issues (such as affordable healthcare), or other elements of group style (such as conflict resolution).

An organization's group style can be an important barrier or bridge to involving a diverse base of participants. But knowing this does not necessarily empower an organization to change in ways that will make its group style more representative of the people it seeks to involve. For instance, is it even

possible for allies to learn and adopt the cultural practices of the people for whom they are advocating? Even if they could, *should* they? A thin line separates two divergent organizational approaches: 1) adopting certain cultural practices in order to work more effectively with and for marginalized communities and 2) appropriating the cultural practices of marginalized communities in ways that are exploitative (Rogers 2006). Given the practical and moral complexities associated with cultivating a representative group style, many organizations might choose to focus solely on the more straightforward task of recruiting representative leaders. However, this study demonstrates the limitations of this approach. Our findings indicate that organizations with both representative leaders and a representative group style are more likely to build and sustain organizational cultures in which social diversity can thrive.

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