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Social Disorder and Level of Engagement of Small Business Owners in the Virgin Islands

Saul Santiago
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Saul Santiago

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Review Committee

Dr. Walter McCollum, Committee Chairperson, Management Faculty
Dr. Marilyn Simon, Committee Member, Management Faculty
Dr. Mohammad Sharifzadeh, University Reviewer, Management Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2015

Abstract

Social Disorder and Level of Engagement of Small Business Owners in the Virgin

Islands

by

Saul Santiago Cordero

MA, University of Phoenix, 2005

BS, Robert Morris College, 2002

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Advanced Management and Decision Sciences

Walden University

January 2015

Abstract

The U.S. Virgin Islands is experiencing an economic recession, manifested through social disorders such as abandoned and vandalized houses. Research points to social disorders and lack of community engagement as key factors inhibiting community development efforts. In order to strengthen these struggling communities, research has highlighted the need for public–private partnerships. Guided by Ajzen’s theory of planned behavior, which posits that attitudes can predict behaviors, this study examined the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in community development. Small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands received an Internet or paper survey; a total of 79 completed surveys out of the 220 who were contacted. A Spearman rank-ordered correlations test and multiple regression were used to analyze the responses, with physical and social disorder, number of employees, and years of operation as the independent variables, and community engagement level as the dependent variable. The findings revealed a strong community engagement from the business owners, although none of the independent variables had a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable. The findings also indicated which areas of social disorder most concerned small business owners. This study can have a positive social impact by identifying common areas of distress, which can help spur greater collaboration between community stakeholders and local small businesses, thereby creating an improved local environment

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my father, Santiago Santiago Diaz, who instilled in me a love of learning and a drive for academic achievement. I know he will celebrate this accomplishment with pride in his heart. To my wife, Jamie, and my children, Jai-Lynn, Savian, and Samuel, who have endured my dedication to the study while also serving as my main motivation to succeed. To my mother, Minerva, who always expected great things from all her children.

Additionally, I would like to dedicate this study to my brother Samuel, and my sisters Ruth and Marta, who encouraged me through this long journey and didn't allow me to quit. Without the support I received, this study would not have been possible.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background	3
Problem Statement	4
Nature of the Study	6
Research Questions and Hypotheses	8
Theoretical Base.....	12
Definition of Terms.....	15
Assumptions.....	16
Scope and Delimitations	17
Limitations	18
Significance of the Study	18
Summary	21
Chapter 2: Literature Review	23
Strategy for Searching the Literature	26
Behavior Theories	26
Theory of Planned Behavior	26
Subjective Norms Theories.....	29
Correlation Research.....	30
Identifying Relationships	31

Interpreting Results	32
Overview of Small Business and Community Research in the United States	35
Small Businesses and Community Development	39
Quantitative Survey Research in Community Development	43
Identifying Stakeholders	46
Understanding Community Development Factors.....	48
Traditional Community Designs.....	50
Progressive Community Designs	51
Business-Friendly Community Factors.....	54
Community Improvement Efforts.....	55
Detecting Areas for Improvement	57
Identifying Resources in High-Poverty Neighborhoods.....	60
Engaging Stakeholders and Creating Accountability	61
Creating Thriving Communities With Shrinking Budgets	63
The Role of Small Businesses.....	65
Small Versus Big Business	65
Impact on Local Economies.....	68
Community Cohesion	69
Maximizing Small Business Participation in Local Community Development	71
Using a Sense of Civic Pride to Increase Participation.....	71
Informal Community Networks	72
Creating Public–Private Partnerships	73

Relationship of the Study to Previous Research	75
Conclusion	77
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	79
Introduction.....	79
Research Design and Approach	81
Appropriateness of Design.....	82
Population and Sample	86
Ethical Consideration of Participants.....	89
Data Collection	90
Data Analysis	91
Instrumentation and Materials	93
Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale	96
Community Citizenship Behavior Scale	98
Usefulness to the Field.....	99
Summary	100
Chapter 4: Results	101
Introduction.....	101
Research Tools.....	102
Data Collection, Conversion, and Analysis	104
Data Analysis	106
Sampling Selection	108
Survey Participants Demographic Classification.....	110

Descriptive Analysis of the Variables.....	111
Research Questions and Hypotheses Findings	113
Methodological Assumptions	114
Hypothesis 1.....	114
Hypothesis 2.....	115
Hypothesis 3.....	116
Hypothesis 4.....	116
Conclusion and Summary	118
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	119
Overview.....	119
Interpretation of Findings	120
Limitations of the Current Study	125
Recommendations for Future Research	126
Methodological Enhancements.....	127
Implications for Social Change.....	128
Conclusion	131
References.....	134
Appendix A: Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale	148
Appendix B: Community Citizenship Behavior Scale	150
Appendix C: Consent Forms.....	151
Appendix D: Invitation Letter to Participants.....	153
Curriculum Vitae	157

List of Tables

Table 1 Source Type	26
Table 2 Data Analysis Chart	95
Table 3 Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale Dimension of Social Disorder ..	96
Table 4 Psychometric Characteristics for Summated Scale Scores	104
Table 5 Frequency Counts for Selected Variables	110
Table 6 Descriptive Statistics for Level of Engagement Survey Items Sorted by Highest Mean	111
Table 7 Descriptive Statistics for Social Disorder Survey Items Sorted by Highest Mean	112
Table 8 Descriptive Statistics for Physical Disorder Survey Items Sorted by Highest Mean	113
Table 9 Spearman Rank Ordered Correlations for Selected Variables	115
Table 10 Prediction of Engagement Based on Demographics and Social Disorder	116
Table 11 Prediction of Engagement Based on Demographics and Physical Disorder ...	117

List of Figures

Figure 1. Net job creation by firm size, 1990-2003..... 67

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The great U.S. recession affected not only the 50 states but also the territories and commonwealths that are a part of the nation. In 2013, the U.S. Virgin Islands experienced many of the devastating effects of the economic recession. In small communities such as the Virgin Islands, single employers can have an outsized effect on community well-being. The Hovensa oil refinery on the island of St. Croix closed in January 2012 after 45 years of operation and accounted for 20% of the territory's gross domestic product (Shea, 2012). The unemployment rate in St. Croix jumped to 19% after the loss of jobs caused by the refinery closing, essentially doubling the number of unemployed persons on the island (Shea, 2012). The local government sought to offset the loss of the refinery and its 2,000 employees, with increased initiatives meant to reach out to the local small business community and attract larger businesses to the Virgin Islands (St. John Source, 2012). Initiatives such as tax breaks and low-interest loans highlight the significance of businesses to a thriving and growing environment.

Beyond attracting entrepreneurs, local governments support collaborations with private entities to enrich the regional economies. Government leaders are increasingly understanding the importance of healthy and codependent public-private partnerships (Fitzgerald, Haynes, Schrank, & Danes, 2010). Small businesses are important to economic recovery because the founding and durability of small businesses generate jobs and represent a positive contribution to the economic development of an area and to the gross domestic product of the community (Surdez, Aguilar, Sandoval, & Lamoyi, 2012).

Entrepreneurs who start companies can create the type of momentum that sagging economies need to recover from recession.

Communities that are struggling with unemployment and shrinking government resources expect their leaders to work with private entities to solve problems. According to Surdez et al. (2012), many city planners and policy makers see businesspersons as agents of transformation and motors of the economic system that drive investment, hiring, and community development forward. Government leaders are increasingly turning toward citizens and private entities to assist in public policy and management (John, Fieldhouse, & Liu, 2011). Community planners and policy makers monitor community well-being over time to see whether residents' satisfaction with their neighborhood overall has increased or decreased because that is a significant factor for understanding public sentiment (Sirgy, Widgery, Lee, & Yu, 2010). Community attitude is important to gauge when attempting to engage residents in major program changes.

Local and national governments recognize the importance of private enterprises to broadening the government's influence in neighborhoods. The link between small businesses and economic prosperity raises the profile of small businesses and encourages public-private partnerships to strengthen communities struggling economically (Easterling, 2011). Due to their importance in recovery, economists have linked businesspersons to innovation and often consider businesspersons risk takers who know how to take advantage of an opportunity to obtain a profit and create jobs as a by-product (Surdez et al., 2012). Understanding what drives entrepreneurs and the factors associated

with their involvement in community development is pivotal for formulating effective outreach to them.

Background

Collaboration is a by-product of the joint interest toward prosperity between private and public sectors. Community development can occur when private and public entities unite with a common purpose (Easterling, 2011). The phenomenon of public-private partnerships is the subject of extensive survey research efforts, as social scientists have sought to capture the important aspects of community development. A trademark of a thriving community is an inclusive business environment, because as Wittmer (2004) noted, leaders of preeminent businesses have always understood that they are part of a larger community.

Fitzgerald et al. (2010) conducted survey research on persons who form public-private partnerships and found that individuals who graduated from college are more likely to participate as civic leaders in elected or appointed positions. In addition, Fitzgerald et al. found a relationship between household income and profitability with providing financial and technical assistance to communities. Less clear is how attitudes toward the local community affect engagement levels for both businesses and individuals (Fitzgerald et al., 2010). Social inquiry is paramount in finding links between attitudes and eventual actions, and this study included a cross-sectional survey to examine the relationship between social disorder and level of engagement of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Various factors, including community development, drive neighborhood dynamics. Correlational research is a tool for social scientists to identify factors that can lead to improvement opportunities for members of a community (Axinn, Link, & Groves, 2011). Community cohesion can lead to improved well-being in solidarity, integration, and overall support (Van Gundy, Stracuzzi, Rebellon, Tucker, & Cohn, 2011). In the U.S. Virgin Islands and other small communities, input from key stakeholders such as small business owners can assist in creating social policy that is inclusive and promotes a healthy public–private partnership.

Data collected in surveys within a community setting can produce important insights, which is why it is important that researchers engage in their surroundings. Sanderson and Richards (2010) highlighted the importance of social research at the local level by positing that cautious attempts to understand community needs and problems essential to the structure of the community itself will yield locally relevant solutions. Researchers need to be cognizant of local community dynamics, political realities, economic conditions, and other factors that will eventually ensure their survey tools are significant to the specific location (Sanderson & Richards, 2010). The type of research alluded to by Sanderson and Richards spotlights the importance of identifying all the relevant participants when identifying diverse areas of a community to improve. Failure to identify key participants potentially weakens the outcome of survey research.

Problem Statement

While there is extensive research regarding community development and small business engagement in communities, the same is not true for data regarding how social

disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the Virgin Islands. The problem addressed in this study was that although government support for nonprofits and community development organizations is dwindling, policy makers demonstrate a lack of understanding of how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Some of the key factors contributing to the optimization of critical assistance and community development efforts are social disorder and community engagement integration (Easterling, 2011; Sanderson & Richards, 2010;). Research related to factors in community involvement by small business owners is significant because it can relate to the overall health of both the community and the private sector, but there is not extensive research in this area. To address the problem, this study involved examining the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the localized Virgin Islands community. The study also included other factors to assist in identifying possible correlations between perceived social disorder and engagement of small businesses.

The two broad demographic factors for the small business owners used in this study were the size of the business (number of employees) and the length of time the business had been in operation. Kramer, Seedat, Lazarus, and Suffla (2011) pointed out the general disarray and complexity of community assessment and community engagement, and social scientists understand the importance of efforts to track and measure the varied dynamics of neighborhoods. Physical and social disorder, number of employees, and years of operation were the independent variables, measured using the Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale (RMNDS; Mirowsky, 1999). The

community engagement level was the dependent variable, measured through the Community Citizenship Behavior Scale (CCBS; Liden et al., 2008).

Nature of the Study

The method of inquiry for this study was a quantitative correlational and multiple regression research design using a cross-sectional Internet or paper survey. Quantitative research involves examining the relationship between variables to test hypotheses or research questions. Correlational design is a quantitative method used to examine whether, and to what extent, a relationship exists between a set of variables.

Correlational designs predominantly involve relationships between variables or findings established descriptively to a predefined population (Wadongo, Edwin, & Oscar, 2010).

Researchers use surveys with an ordinal or interval level of measurement to gather detailed information about a specific demographic group.

In addition to quantitative correlational research design, qualitative grounded theory, case study, and phenomenological study designs also received consideration. Correlation and survey research can both apply to either qualitative or quantitative research, and their uses in quantitative data are growing (Combs, 2010). One of the common characteristics in quantitative data collection is that researchers have been obtaining larger data samples to test hypotheses using surveys (Combs, 2010). Whether larger sample sizes produce better results is currently the focus of research, and no consensus exists on the matter (Alessi & Martin, 2010). The G*Power 3.1 software program (Faul et al., 2009) determined the needed sample size for this study. Based on a

medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$) and an alpha level of $\alpha = .05$, the needed sample size to achieve sufficient power (.80) was 77 respondents.

Quantitative correlational research, quantitative experimental research, and qualitative survey research all require similar methodological preparation. As Kurtoğlu (2010) noted, survey research involves examining the relationship between independent and dependent variables related to a researcher's environment. Contrasts in use manifested in practical concerns about costs related to gathering the small business data for this research. For example, although experimental research encourages fieldwork, researchers can gather and analyze correlation and survey research with minimal effort (Alessi & Martin, 2010). Researchers can use field study for both correlation and survey research, but it is not necessary, and cost considerations can be a deciding factor on whether it should be a part of the research design. Considerations beyond cost can factor into whether scholars use fieldwork or more controlled environments.

Social scientists are sometimes reluctant to engage in fieldwork because it lacks many of the controls that scholars crave (Payne & Wansink, 2011). This is significant because, as Payne and Wansink (2011) noted, abstracting and planning field studies begin months before data collection. Given the geographical limitations in the U.S. Virgin Islands and the limited existent data, using both Internet and paper surveys as the means for obtaining data is appropriate for the study.

The research population was the business community of the U.S. Virgin Islands, a small group of islands in the Caribbean. The relatively limited group of small businesses made survey research a viable method of gathering the needed data. Identifying the small

businesses involved the staff of local agencies who gather information on small businesses, specifically the local Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, the local lieutenant governor's office had an open-access business database for tax purposes that contained names and contact information for small businesses in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The results of this study are relevant to the local community, and other researchers could replicate the survey instrument in similar communities, thereby expanding the scope of the study beyond the U.S. Virgin Islands small business community. Kramer et al. (2011) noted that a need existed for assessment instruments that were flexible enough for researchers to adapt to integrate community feedback in the construction and fluid meanings of community. The survey instrument met these criteria and would be applicable to other communities in which researchers wish to perform similar research. More in-depth information regarding the methodology, sample size, survey instrument, and data collection procedures is in Chapter 3.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In taking into account the need for increased community development in the U.S. Virgin Islands, this study involved examining the relationship between social disorder (including both physical and social disorder factors) and engagement of small business owners. The broad concept of social disorder is divided into two distinct types, physical and social disorder, for the Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale. Physical disorder for the purposes of this study is a type of social disorder including graffiti, vandalism, abandoned houses, dirt, and other physical factors in the Ross-Mirowsky

Neighborhood Disorder Scale (Mirowsky, 1999). Social disorder factors measure loitering, drug and alcohol use, and crime.

The principal research questions identified for the study aligned with the goals of quantitative correlation design. The central questions for the study were as follows:

RQ1: What is the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ2: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ3: What is the relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

RQ4: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

The following are the null hypotheses and alternative hypotheses:

H_{10} : There is no relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H1_a: There is a relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H2₀: The linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will not significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H2_a: The linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

The regression model for Hypothesis 2 was $Y_1 = A + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3$. Y_1 was the predicted value for engagement level; A was the value of Y_1 when all independent variables were zero (y intercept); X_1 was business size; X_2 was years in operation; X_3 was perceived physical disorder; and B_1 , B_2 , and B_3 were the regression beta weights for the three independent variables. The study involved using the survey instrument to collect the necessary data to test the research hypothesis.

H3₀: There is no relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives.

H3_a: There is a relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives.

H4₀: The linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographics variables (business size and years in operation) will not significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H4_a: The linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographics variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

The regression model for Hypothesis 4 was $Y_1 = A + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3$. Y_1 was the predicted value for engagement level; A was the value of Y_1 when all independent variables were zero (y intercept); X_1 was business size; X_2 was years in operation; X_3 was perceived social disorder; and B_1 , B_2 , and B_3 were the regression beta weights for the three independent variables.

The factors for this study related social disorder, including physical disorder and social disorder, to engagement by business owners. The study included specific demographic elements for the small business owners. The t statistics and accompanying p values that were part of the SPSS multiple regression output provided the significance of each regression coefficient. The F statistic and accompanying p value that were part of the SPSS multiple regression output provided the significance of the multiple correlation (R and R^2). There is always a possibility of collinearity between independent variables. The tolerance and variance inflation factor statistics that were part of the SPSS

multiple regression output helped to determine the presence of that problem (high correlations between the independent variables).

Theoretical Base

The basis of the theoretical framework for this study was the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1985). Because the study involved relating attitude and behaviors, it was important to have a theoretical framework that defined the relationship between the variables. Ajzen's theory establishes that attitudes relate to actions, and this study involved an attempt to find a link between business owners' attitudes and their actions in the community. According to Stanton, Taylor, and Stanaland (2009), attitude can affect behavior or behavior can be a result of attitude. Behavior can also influence attitude, so when conducting a study of small business owners' attitudes about their community and the impact of their attitude on their involvement in community development, this relationship becomes particularly relevant. Stanton et al. defined attitude as a psychological tendency expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor, and subsequent research has involved examining ways in which attitudes influence subsequent behavior (Glasman & Albarracin, 2006).

The theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) was the precursor to the TPB. According to the theory of reasoned action, behavioral intentions are a function of attitudes toward a behavior as well as subjective norms regarding the performance of the behavior. An individual's attitude and external pressure dictate whether that person acts on his or her intentions. Subjective norms are a facet of the theory of reasoned action that requires explanation. Subjective norms correspond to the views of significant others in

terms of performing the behavior, such as companion small business owners and their opinions on community development involvement, and may exert influence on behavioral intentions independent of attitude (Stanton et al., 2009). It may be possible for small business owners to feel unfavorably toward community development in general but to feel motivated to participate nonetheless because participation is the socially desirable and socially appropriate behavior within the community.

According to Besser and Miller (2001), the mechanisms of enhanced public image and prestige afforded a business for its involvement in community support could potentially increase the number of customers. Small businesses may also benefit from enhanced employee retention and better access to policy makers and important local community figures that can result in lucrative ventures (Besser & Miller, 2001). External factors constitute the subjective norms applied to private enterprises. The subjective norms created by an overall cooperative development culture in a particular community could help to sustain a culture in which small business owners feel motivated to participate in community development and hold positive attitudes toward their local neighborhood. The theoretical framework of subjective norms and behavioral intentions can assist in explaining the willingness of small business owners to engage in community development. Further research was necessary to establish a definitive lack of correlation between attitudes toward a community and participation level. That specific link was a focus of this study and formed the basis of the hypothesis regarding the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners.

Ajzen (1985) revised the theory of reasoned action into the TPB and added the additional element of perceived behavioral control (PBC) in terms of influence on behavioral intentions. If small business owners do not have confidence that their efforts will be successful (i.e., that time spent on community development will not result in an improved local environment and the costs of involvement in community development are not a good investment), then that could negatively affect behavioral intentions toward participation in community development. The TPB formed the structure for exploring whether small business owners viewed community development as beneficial to their company.

Whether businesses thrive or fail is a complicated phenomenon. According to Surdez et al. (2012), the two types of factors associated with the establishment and duration of small businesses are (a) factors derived from opportunities provided by the economic, legal, social, and political structure of the area and (b) factors related to psychological types and the sociodemographic characteristics of the business owners. Practical factors and more complex social and behavioral factors can affect the longevity of a small business and determine its fate.

Measuring psychological features, specifically attitudes, of small business owners to determine if any correlation exists between those factors and engagement in community development is a significant proposition. The survey instrument measured attitudes toward the community and community engagement so that it was possible to determine the relationship between them. The instrument also measured the broad demographic factors for the small business owners: their business size (measured by

number of employees) and the length of time their business has been in operation. The outcome of this study could provide a better understanding among policy makers, small business owners, leaders of nonprofit organizations, and concerned citizens regarding the dynamics related to achieving a common goal of enhanced involvement by more entities in community development initiatives.

Definition of Terms

Many of the terms in this study are common in the business community, but some terms have specific meanings within the study.

Attitude: A psychological tendency expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor (Stanton et al., 2009).

Community-based development (CDD): Community participation in development planning, implementation, and benefit sharing (Baroi & Rabbani, 2011).

Physical disorder: A type of social disorder including graffiti, vandalism, abandoned houses, dirt, and other physical factors in the Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale (Mirowsky, 1999).

Small business owner: For nonfarming entities, the owner of an organization with 500 or fewer employees (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2012).

Social disorder: Within the context of the Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale, it measures loitering, drug and alcohol use, and crime.

Technology acceptance model: A model that indicates intent to use as an instrument in measuring the strength of a user's willingness to use an innovative technology (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Theory of planned behavior (TPB): A theory that indicates three variables guide intent: PBC, attitudes, and subjective norms (Ajzen, 1985).

Theory of reasoned action: A theory that indicates if a person wants to predict whether another person will perform a behavior, the predictor has to understand the other person's attitude and subjective norm to verify a certain behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Assumptions

The study included several assumptions. Small business owners who participate in the survey would be familiar with taking self-administered Internet or paper surveys, and small business owners who participated in the survey would be willing to share their feelings and thoughts related to the research topic. The survey approach for quantitative data analysis would provide explanatory insight into the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Furthermore, generalizations made about the population of participating small business owners would be representative of every miscellaneous businessperson in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Moreover, data analysis would be definite with the prediction that social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the Virgin Islands. The small business owners contacted to take the electronic survey would have e-mail addresses, which would help to ensure familiarity with electronic communications and electronic surveys. Small business owners would also have the option to complete the survey in paper format.

Potential participants in the electronic survey received an e-mail that explained the survey and the criteria for participation. Small business owners who chose the paper-

based survey also received this explanation. Participants also received an assurance of their anonymity to allow for honest answers so that the owners who participated would be more likely to share their feelings. The survey instruments selected, the RMNDS (Mirowsky, 1999) and the CCBS (Liden et al., 2008), helped to ensure the data collected were valid for quantitative analysis. The selected scales indicated whether a relationship existed between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in their local community. Finally, the sampling method assisted in ensuring the selected sample was representative of the small business community in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the quantitative correlational study was the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in their community, as measured through survey data. The target population was small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The study included generalizations only about the population of small business owners in terms of the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the community. The study took place during the spring of 2014; consequently, the data collected only reflected small business owners who were members of the local Chamber of Commerce during that time. The study included a quantitative inquiry method involving a self-administered Internet or paper survey to gather information about the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the community.

Correlational survey research was the appropriate design for assessing the predictive individual relationships between the two independent variables' (social

disorder in the local community and level of engagement in community development) multiple constructs and the dependent variable's (social disorder in the local community) multiple constructs. The primary focus of data analysis was assessing predictive relationships. Because the basis of the random sampling method was small business owners, I filtered entrepreneurs based on the parameters that constituted a small business rather than any other business type.

Limitations

This study included the random sampling method on the basis of membership to the local Chamber of Commerce to avoid omitting small business owners who differed systematically from those included in the sampling frame. The target population for the study was small business owners who were members of the U.S. Virgin Islands Chamber of Commerce. Chambers of commerce have listings of businesses with contact information, including e-mail. Small business owners who were not members of these organizations were not targets for this study, which may have hindered the study by decreasing the pool of available respondents.

Significance of the Study

One potential outcome of the study was a better understanding of the role local perceptions regarding social disorder play in the community involvement of entrepreneurs. The practical implication of the research was an enhanced ability for policy makers to engage and encourage critical assistance from small business owners for the purpose of community development efforts. Besser and Miller (2001) identified a need for local merchants to publicize their actions so they could reap the rewards of their

involvement in community development initiatives. Local residents' knowledge of small business owners' level of engagement in community development is helpful in the residents' decision to reward the business. Besser and Miller also found that residents must care and engage in the local community to prioritize rewarding businesses for their engagement. If residents do not care about the community, they will not respond positively to businesses that do.

In difficult economic conditions, the health of small businesses is an important topic. Research related to factors in community involvement by small business owners is significant because it can relate to the overall health of both the community and the private sector. Relevant evidence exists that business donations have an independent positive effect on the success of the business, which, according to Kilkenny, Nalbarte, and Besser (1999), demonstrates that social investing pays off. Business owners who contribute to and engage in the local community can realize economic gains from their actions.

The importance of community engagement for corporations extends beyond the financial realm. Kilkenny et al. (1999) found that social relations by small business owners are just as significant as economics in determining the success of the business. Furthermore, small business owners in a competitive and downbeat economy can rely on improving their social interactions as a way to advance the likelihood of economic success. Kilkenny et al. also identified strong evidence for the link between successful businesses and entrepreneurial attitudes that views the role of small business as providing mutual, symmetric, and reciprocated support to the regional community. These findings

highlight the importance of identifying the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the community.

Small business owners possess various qualities that may benefit a local community, especially communities in low-income areas and experiencing serious economic struggles, such as the U.S. Virgin Islands. As Surdez et al. (2012) noted, current research has indicated that to become successful businesspeople, individuals should develop a capacity to negotiate and enhance their creativity and leadership, which are learnable attitudes and behaviors. These skills, as well as the capacity to infuse resources and capital, make small business owners a key part of a thriving community development strategy. Understanding the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners will help government agencies and other entities involved in community development to harness an increased pool of capital and resources. The descriptive statistics used in this study may reveal a relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Policy makers and local government agencies, given the findings in this study, could adjust their outreach toward these small business owners and align it with the owners' expectations.

Community activists, government officials, and aspiring and active businesspersons may use the findings in this study to adjust attitudes and capacities to improve the possibilities of success in the face of economic challenges. One of the goals for this study was to empower stakeholders to use the information, and any correlations identified through this research, to target and improve upon existing community development initiatives. An additional goal of the research was to identify the various

dynamics and connectivity between small businesses and low-income neighborhoods. The data from the study may serve to uncover agreement between small businesses and government agencies on areas for improvement. Identifying common areas of concern can help spur greater cooperation between community stakeholders and local small businesses, thereby creating a mutually beneficial environment.

Summary

An introduction to the study on the need for increased engagement from small business owners appeared in Chapter 1. Economically struggling communities such as the U.S. Virgin Islands are receiving fewer government resources for community development, even as unemployment and crime demand more programs to assist neighborhoods. Understanding and engaging small business owners will be critical for leaders of nonprofit organizations and policy makers to address the shortfall in government assistance in difficult economic conditions. The research questions and hypotheses reflected the problem. In Chapter 1, I also included a discussion on the nature of the study; the theoretical foundation, purpose, and significance of the study; and the assumptions, scope, delimitations, and limitations. The background information presented in Chapter 1 helped to establish a foundation for the study and subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 2, I include a review of the relevant literature and a description of the theoretical framework of planned behavior and its relationship to the key ideas of the study. In Chapter 3, I explore a discussion on the use of a correlational survey design for the study as well as an explanation of the methodology, including its suitability for

answering the research questions and resolving the problem. I also include a discussion of the setting, sample, survey instrument, and data collection methods. Chapter 4 contains the statistical results of the study conducted with small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands such as charts and analysis of the data resulting from the study. In Chapter 5, I include an analysis of the study results as well as implications for the hypotheses. I also give an overview of the effects of the study on current knowledge and recommendations on future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Improving communities is an important part of assisting the overall national economy and creating a stronger middle class. According to Suwankitti and Pongquan (2010), improving communities is one goal of three that persons should strive for in the equivalent of Maslow's famous pyramid. The first goal is to obtain basic human needs and quality of life, the second goal is employment security and choice in livelihood, and the third goal is to balance the human environment with natural resources, institutions, economies, and societies (Suwankitti & Pongquan, 2010). Lyndon, Moorthy, Er, and Selvadurai (2011) agreed with the premise, pointing to participation and empowerment as the main indicators that policy makers must focus on when drafting comprehensive plans to address community problems. It is not a surprise that research reflects the need to focus on citizens and engaging them in policy.

Empowerment of community residents arises from the need to reflect a universal representation of the community's unique needs and aspirations. Lyndon et al. (2011) discovered that participation and empowerment in the targeted community development program were the critical factors that determined the perceived quality of life for residents. Residents felt they could improve their livelihood most efficiently through policies that stressed participation and empowerment in the neighborhood (Lyndon et al., 2011). Research in the area of community attitudes and engagement for individuals has not extended toward businesses and, more specifically, small business owners (Eversole, 2012). Therefore, the problem addressed in this study was that, although government support for nonprofits and community development organizations is dwindling, policy

makers demonstrate a lack of understanding of how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The intent of improving community participation is not necessarily to create buy-in for a specific agenda. Eversole (2012) noted conclusively that community development policies are not about addressing the problem of how to convince everyone to participate in a specific worldview and institution. Determining relationships between community sentiment and concerted efforts at improving neighborhoods will serve to guide policy makers in their attempts at developing progressive policies, yet a gap exists in the literature related to social disorder and engagement of small business owners toward community development efforts, specifically in small, insular communities such as an island. The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Beyond wishing for increased participation and formal partnerships, Eversole noted a need for “translation agents” (p. 37) who would move easily between the powerful elements of the community and the neediest, serving the interests of both. The challenge of involvement in community improvement is to ensure individuals and small businesses become participants in their own right.

One outcome of this study was a better understanding of the role local perceptions about social disorder serve in the community involvement of entrepreneurs. The practical implications of the research included a better ability for policy makers to engage and encourage critical assistance from small business owners for the purpose of community development efforts. The literature review includes four broad areas. The

first section serves as the foundation for behavior theories, specifically TPB and subjective norms theories. The second section of the literature review covers information and studies related to correlation research, including identifying relationships and interpreting results. The third broad area in the literature review is the research surrounding small businesses and community research in the United States. This third section will include areas of current research in community development, such as studies on community designs, both progressive and traditional, with an emphasis on designs and factors that make a community business friendly. Another focus of the literature review is various community improvement efforts in academic studies, including detecting areas for improvement, maximizing survey participation in community research, identifying resources in high-poverty neighborhoods, engaging stakeholders and creating accountability, and creating thriving communities with shrinking budgets.

The focus of the final section of the literature review is small business, with a particular emphasis on the role of small business in community development, small business versus big business, and community cohesion. The review of research regarding small businesses will additionally include how the leaders of these institutions can create a sense of civic pride to increase stakeholder participation, create informal networks, and establish private and public partnerships. These literature review sections will also include a review of the use of descriptive surveys in current research to generate a theory from data collected regarding specific occurrences. The four areas will serve as a foundation from which to evaluate survey research and its precise strengths and weaknesses in business and community research settings.

Strategy for Searching the Literature

The primary sources for the literature review included articles from peer-reviewed journals, dissertations, and foundational books. The sources of journal articles were the Walden University library search engines and databases, including Sage Publications, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, and ERIC. Database searches included the following key words and phrases: *community development, community cohesion, theory of planned behavior, small business and big business, low-income neighborhoods, behavior theories, correlation research, subjective norms, community stakeholders, community planning, community designs, business community resources, budget deficit community, business impact on local economy, civic pride, informal community networks, private–public partnerships, and community budget impact*. The original database searches using these keywords or phrases provided approximately 200 journal articles. Of the approximately 90 articles cited, 87% had a publication date between 2008 and 2013 (see Table 1).

Table 1

Source Type

Source type	Amount
Book	1
Survey instruments	2
Academic journal	85

Behavior Theories

Theory of Planned Behavior

In the TPB, Ajzen (1985) theorized that intention is the main antecedent to actual behavior and three independent variables guide intention: PBC, attitudes, and subjective norms. The PBC variable explains a person's willful action over a behavior and is a

reflection of the apparent ease or difficulty involved in performing the intended behavior. The PBC variable indicates whether an individual believes he or she is responsible for and capable of performing a specific action and whether the individual has the necessary opportunities, abilities, and resources to act on his or her intentions (Uhlener, Berent-Braun, Jeurissen, & Wit, 2012). Each of these variables has been the subject of academic research.

The component of attitude demonstrates a person's biased evaluation of the expected consequences resulting from performing the intended action. Attitude as a component measures whether a person feels positively or negatively about performing a specific action and includes the perceived consequences of the action (Uhlener et al., 2012). The subjective norm variable demonstrates the perceived standard behavioral expectations, the pressure exerted on an individual by others, and the motivation to accept those expectations (Milton & Mullan, 2012). Within the TPB, the combination of these three variables directly influences a person's intention to execute a behavior. In general, individuals are more likely to have high intentions if they hold more positive attitudes toward the anticipated behavior, if they perceive that significant others endorse the behavior, and if they believe the behavior is under their own control (Kelly, Deane, & Lovett, 2012). These three variables comprise the foundations of TPB and form the basis for using TPB in an academic research study involving behaviors and attitudes.

The scope of TPB and of how it applies across different areas of social research has been a focus in academic literature. Previous academic reviews of studies regarding health interventions that used TPB showed that a majority of the researchers of those

studies were able to establish behavioral change through use of the theory (Milton & Mullan, 2012). The studies reviewed by Milton and Mullan (2012) included social research using TPB across various disciplines to determine whether TPB was applicable in diverse areas of inquiry. The results of the studies demonstrated the potential research significance of TPB in social research relating to behaviors and covering a wide variety of topics.

Behavior is a critical component of social science research, and determining causation provides context for the outcome of observations. Glasman and Albarracin (2006) found that attitudes and perceptions about behavior outcomes link to attitude stability and attitude–behavior consistency. According to the TPB, the immediate cause of behavior is a person’s intention to perform the behavior (Kelly et al., 2012).

Understanding this facet of TPB is crucial to using the theory in social research given the need to first measure or control for intentions when studying attitudes and behavior. A review of TPB research studies also found that researchers could use TPB to predict intent and variance in behaviors for a wide assortment of fields such as food preparation and even areas where the study subjects must self-report (Milton & Mullan, 2012). The ability to generate useful data even through participants who self-report allows researchers to design academic studies around behaviors and attitudes. The TPB is a well-established and widely used social research model used to predict and collect information on human behavior.

A core principle of the TPB is the link between an individual’s intention to behave in a certain manner and his or her actual behavior. According to the TPB, the

intention to perform a behavior becomes the immediate causal predictor of any behavior in question (Fu, Richards, Hughes, & Jones, 2010). By capturing the motivational factors that guide specific behavior, intentions serve as a pointer for how much effort people are willing to exert to perform a specific behavior.

Subjective Norms Theories

Another theory set concerning behavior is subjective norms theories. Social norms may refer to what social groups normally approve of or what social groups usually do (Sieverding, Mattered, & Ciccarello, 2010). Subjective norm theories include normative beliefs and motivations to comply with an explicit action or request. Normative belief refers to perceiving the expectations of specific individuals or groups, and the motivation to comply is the willingness to be pliable to an individual's or group's opinions (Chi, Yeh, & Hung, 2012). When individuals have a need, they will feel motivated to satisfy the need by searching for information relative to their experience and the external environment (Chi et al., 2012). According to subjective norms theories, after considering and evaluating information, a person may decide to use a product or perform an action based on a judgment of other alternatives.

Academic literature also includes criticisms of subjective norm theories. Sieverding et al. (2010) conducted a meta-analysis and found subjective norm to be the weakest predictor of intention when compared against attitude and PBC. According to the theory of reasoned action, if an individual wants to predict whether a person will or will not perform a behavior, that individual has to understand the person's attitude and subjective norm (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In a scenario with small business owners,

subjective norms can include perceived societal, organizational, and peer pressure to appear charitable.

Researchers have encountered the most difficulty with subjective norms in studies that involve attitude and intentions. Subjective norms have historically been the most challenging to duplicate through empirical studies, and researchers have concluded that their role in influencing intentions is likely context dependent (Fu et al., 2010). The straightforward interpretation of subjective norms, along with PBC and attitudes, as being direct antecedents to behavior is not universally demonstrable in research. Signals of compliance from subordinates may fool administrators who use normative pressure, but Fu et al. (2010) suggested that these same norms would ultimately affect employee performance. Fu et al. noted that when managers use elevated levels of subjective norms, they slow down production rates for employees. Managers should not rely on subjective norms and PBC to form the entire basis of their administrative approach.

Correlation Research

Large amounts of data and random data sets can include hidden information that is useful in social science. Scholars use correlation research to look at patterns in large and small data sets and apply metrics to extract meaningful relationships in the data (Logan, 1982). Social scientists using quantitative methods in their research design can test hypotheses this way, although correlation analysis can be particularly valuable if little a priori knowledge is available about associations between predictor and criterion variables (Lambert & Durand, 1975). While conducting correlation research, researchers attempt to determine if the components of the observed phenomenon produce the

correlation between observed ratios or if the results are simply unauthentic results of a common operation (Logan, 1982). Conducting quantitative research is not easy, but if done cautiously, it can provide results that are more actionable than figures collected exclusively in a laboratory setting (Payne & Wansink, 2011). Correlational computations can help researchers to establish whether apparent links in specific phenomena are the result of false interaction or an actual association. Scholars can use correlation research to find associations, patterns, and useful relationships, which is especially useful in large data sets.

Researchers use correlation research to determine relationships between a predictor and a criterion, but social scientists must consider important limitations. During correlation research, additional analyses may be necessary if a researcher wants to go beyond identifying overall relationships, such as formulating conclusions that depend on the balance between predictor and criterion variables or inferring a relationship among subsets of the variables (Lambert & Durand, 1975). Scholars must avoid making broad assumptions that reach beyond the scope of current research; Logan (1982) asserted that researchers could not derive a single set of rules or formulas from ongoing statistical research that would be adequate for all data based on ratios with common terms. Scholars who are successful in identifying connections through their data mining should be wary of the limits of those associations.

Identifying Relationships

Correlation research is a valuable tool for finding relationships in large data sets and even identifying trends and predictors, but social scientists using correlation research

should be acutely aware of its limitations as well. Combs (2010) noted that researchers should consider whether a heavier reliance on secondary data will have an adverse effect on the analysis they are conducting. Before finalizing interpretations about the correlation data results, researchers must establish three factors: (a) predictors share a considerable amount of variation in the variables, (b) supporting statistics such as weights and loadings are stable from sample to sample, and (c) considerable correlations exist between predictor–criterion subsets (Lambert & Durand, 1975). After meeting these conditions, social scientists using correlation research can feel more confident about their results and the relationships they have identified.

Social scientists using correlation research have tended to increase the sample size in recent years. Combs (2010) indicated that scholars using correlation research have dramatically increased their sample size, though Combs did not note that these statistics necessarily indicate better research is taking place. Thus, there may not be a correlation between larger sample sizes and better data. Still, increasing the sample can have positive effects, and large samples have brought about an increase in the ability of researchers to identify small yet important relationships that they would not otherwise detect (Combs, 2010). This study involved an attempt to include all small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands with e-mail addresses as part of the sample.

Interpreting Results

Properly interpreting the results of correlation research and making assumptions about those results represents a considerable challenge for social scientists, even when they have isolated the variables and extracted seemingly strong relationships. Even

though researchers can examine two or more sets of variables in their entirety by canonical correlation analysis, the statistical results may be susceptible to quirks and, depending on the research focus, may not be useful for direct interpretation (Lambert & Durand, 1975). Logan (1982) identified a similar roadblock in the indexes used when constructing correlation research and gathering data. Properly constructing these indexes is crucial to improving the validity and interpretation of correlation research (Logan, 1982). Correlation research requires confirmation that all aspects of collected data and any assumptions made about the relationship between data sets are derived from solid methodology and even subsequent research.

One of the important goals of scholarly research is to tie the findings of correlation research into practical concerns in researchers' field of study, which is especially important in research fields that provide organizations with emerging theories. Combs (2010) noted that scholars should ensure they are maintaining their methodological rigor and calling upon their own personal managerial experience, even if they are using larger samples for correlation research. The output of correlation research should receive careful attention when there is too much emphasis placed on the dependence and the relationship between the predictor and the criterion (Combs, 2010). The acquisition of a large data set does not guarantee better research outcomes.

Using correlation research may provide vital information that allows scholars to trust the metrics and the resulting data over even professional appraisal conducted by peers. Derrick, Haynes, Chapman, and Hall (2011) contended that metrics could only be useful as an evaluation method when they deliver similar results as those of peers using

careful judgment. One pertinent question is whether correlation research can provide reliable results that provide sharp insight not possible without extensive data analysis. Derrick et al. noted that researchers could use correlation to substitute for even highly subjective actions such as peer review for articles. As an example, Derrick et al.'s results indicated that researchers could use algorithms to identify important articles without the need for approved peer review based on the correlation between peer-reviewed articles and the number of times researchers cited these articles. Such surprising insight can provide a clearer understanding of how relationships between data can create opportunities for the automation of difficult tasks by identifying trends and removing the human element.

When using large data sets for correlation research, scholars must ensure they are keeping tabs of basic tenets of research design. Specifically, Combs (2010) noted that researchers should not vacillate in their vigilance regarding construct validity, so that accurate measurement maintains its importance over statistical power. Combs also cautioned against equivocating statistical significance with theoretical or managerial significance. If the effect size is small, then researchers must identify whether any practical relevance or theory can generate real-world benefits to end users (Combs, 2010). Social scientists engaging in correlation research must understand the importance of effect size, not just whether isolated results support their specific theory or hypothesis.

Correlation research can also be an important tool in qualitative studies, providing scholars with valuable insight into large amounts of data and the associations within that data. Derrick et al. (2011) asserted that, when used and applied properly, metrics could

provide information that is objective, transparent, replicable, and comparable.

Correlation research requires plentiful and reliable data to draw comparisons and find relationships, which means limitations to its scope may exist in scenarios without historical data from which to draw.

Overview of Small Business and Community Research in the United States

One of the tools used to gather research data on businesses is the survey.

Researchers use survey research in qualitative and quantitative research by gathering information on a specific topic from a subset of the population and then generalizing those results to a larger population. The data from survey instruments allows scholars to predict future trends, assuming the researchers have employed rigorous parameters for validity and reliability (Kurtoğlu, 2010). The value of these survey instruments does not lay in the raw data that result, but lays in the correlations and relationships that the data expose (Kurtoğlu, 2010). Survey data allow scholars to identify more profound meaning in the gathered information and to use this meaning to shape future research and policy.

Using a survey to collect data is common for social scientists, and the Internet has simplified the process. One of the biggest shifts in research during the 21st century has been the move by scholars to using Internet-based surveys in scholarly research (Alessi & Martin, 2010). The increase in Internet-based surveys marks a change from traditional paper-and-pencil data collection methods used to recruit participants for survey research. According to Kurtoğlu (2010), survey research is perfect for seeing the direction in which a particular social phenomenon is moving and allows the possibility to restructure that path.

The survey research method involves creating questionnaires and data collection instruments that capture information relevant to the study topic. As Etchegaray and Fischer (2010) indicated, survey items can serve as substitutes for the real theory that a researcher is attempting to study. Thus, researchers should focus on the content validity of the survey instrument used to determine whether the survey includes items relevant to the research interests. Scholars must then ensure their survey instruments have construct validity, which means the instrument measures what the scholar thinks he or she is measuring (Etchegaray & Fischer, 2010). Finally, researchers focus on predictive validity (sometimes called criterion validity), which describes whether the survey can predict an outcome that is of interest (Etchegaray & Fischer, 2010). These three aspects of the survey instrument are critical to ensure the preservation of integrity and validity through the data collection process.

There are various reasons Internet use for surveys has skyrocketed among researchers. Alessi and Martin (2010) noted that one of the biggest reasons for this change is the proliferation of the Internet, which has become more accessible to everyone, not just the niche computer savvy persons who comprised a large proportion of early Internet adopters. The growth and availability of user-friendly survey software has also helped in the increased use by providing a simplified environment with which to collect and input data, just as the use of telephones and the postal service helped expand the use of survey research in previous generations (Alessi & Martin, 2010). Electronic survey tools also carry their own unique set of challenges for scholars to overcome.

Among the challenges in collecting survey data using the Internet is understanding the effects of selection bias. One of the nonobvious ways to introduce selection bias is the means of advertising the survey to recruit participants. Alessi and Martin (2010) advised that it is important for researchers to identify the various venues where they post study advertisements to provide other researchers general information about the likely characteristics of the respondents. The methods used to collect the data are also important to minimizing selection bias, and their delineation in the resulting research report should be clear. Bennett et al. (2011) noted that the methods used when conducting survey research will significantly affect the results of the survey in the areas of reliability, validity, and generalizability. Researchers should report on the methods used to collect data so other social scientists can assess the impact of the methodology.

Another important challenge in survey research is maintaining a good response rate from the targeted participants. In research, having a number of unrealistic expectations about the types of data a survey can reasonably collect may disappoint scholars (P. Smith, 2009). Keeping expectations in check is useful in determining how much effort is necessary to attract an adequate amount of possible participants for survey research. Another challenge to online survey research is maintaining a useful participation rate. Puleston (2011) indicated that response rates in online surveys had decreased by more than 50% since 2006. The reduction in participation rates is a substantial challenge for social scientists engaged in survey research.

In addition to falling participation rates, survey research also has other complications. The pool of respondents has also shrunk, with more people opting not to

participate in surveys, especially in Europe and North America (Axinn et al., 2011). The main reason given by those who choose not to participate in surveys is the uninteresting nature of surveys (Puleston, 2011). To combat this, scholars have increasingly been using more responsive designs in their surveys, assisted by the technological shift caused by the computerization of surveys and the introduction of companies that specialize in polling and surveys (Axinn et al., 2011). Given the risks of low participation rates and a shrinking pool of prospective subjects, researchers should ensure the surveys they generate are methodologically rigorous and interesting to the survey participants.

After conducting survey research related to businesses and community issues, there is still a challenge of evaluating the methodology used in collecting data. Bennett et al. (2011) stressed that part of the difficulty in evaluating surveys is the lack of validated guidelines for survey research, including research on businesses and communities, and that existing recommended quality criteria vary considerably. Bennett et al. noted that scholars should adopt a comprehensive set of criteria for evaluating methods used in survey research such as studies involving businesses and communities. These criteria could aid peer reviewers in identifying the relative strengths and weaknesses of specific research more quickly.

Internet surveys have important conveniences but also unique challenges. Properly planning and preparing Internet survey research can be more daunting than it initially appears because of problems that are unique to online research (Alessi & Martin, 2010). Some scholars choose to offload the data collected to professional research agencies, but this can have unintended consequences in the quality of the instruments

used (P. Smith, 2009). Similar to other nonprobability samples, survey research conducted through online means will have limited applicability outside of the response group (P. Smith, 2009). Given the challenges in online surveys, scholars must weigh the negatives involved. Online surveys provide unique advantages to survey research as well, including convenience and cost reduction. This study included an Internet survey to cut costs and deliver the survey more quickly to small business owners across the U.S. Virgin Islands but also provided paper surveys to small business owners who preferred that format.

Small Businesses and Community Development

Small businesses are vital features in the economy of small communities, by virtue of their subsistence in the local community as well as through the resources they provide to regional governments and civic organizations, including nonprofit organizations. Business support of the community refers to a contribution to the public good (Kilkenny et al., 1999). Members of the U.S. Council of Economic Development stated that businesses are socially responsible at three dimensions: (a) consumers, employees, and shareholders; (b) the environment; and (c) the community, broadly defined as contributions to the arts, efforts to solve social problems, and assistance with community improvement (Fitzgerald et al., 2010). The broad scope of responsibility outlined by the council members indicates the extent to which businesses contribute to a local economy and are therefore susceptible to the environmental pressures of its surrounding neighborhoods.

Survey research can significantly contribute to the understanding of the dynamic relationship between businesses and communities and draw out corollaries related to the role of businesses in community development. In small economies, leaders of local businesses and communities look for opportunities that provide renewed economic growth with sustainable and participatory development (Ruane, Santos, & Enriquez, 2010, p. 96). Small business owners that tailor some business success metrics around community needs may see an increase in managerial performance (Wadongo et al., 2010). Social scientists can use surveys to identify the ways in which businesses will engage in collaborative community building. Policy makers and independent agencies involved in community development should prioritize understanding the needs and expectations of small businesses and conduct surveys exploring the attitudes of small business owners to assist in accomplishing those goals.

One way in which businesses contribute to community development is through their leaders increasing their resource allocation to educational institutions, particularly public schools. Patton (2011) indicated that the types of businesses and community organizations that can contribute to development vary: law enforcement, juvenile justice agencies, social services, medical and mental health agencies, business leaders, community foundations, youth support groups, and family service organizations are some examples. The businesses and organizations cited by Patton have provided and continue to provide community development assistance in educational environments across the United States. Patton looked at the effectiveness of each group and found through survey research that only law enforcement groups were empirically effective in reducing

violence through school safety planning initiatives. Yet having a law enforcement presence in schools brings about other challenges as well, and Patton found through survey analysis that the drawbacks to heavy school presence in schools generally outweighed their benefits. Businesses in a community should affect local education initiatives by focusing their attention on student support services, as Patton suggested that school social workers and school guidance counselors were generally more effective in reducing repeat incidents of school violence. Survey research identifies ways in which existing small businesses participate in and enhance community development.

Identifying ways in which small businesses and their owners can improve academic development within a community is another example of important survey use by social scientists. Zygmunt-Fillwalk, Malaby, and Clausen (2010) used survey research to analyze new teacher preservice programs. The findings from Zygmunt-Fillwalk et al.'s research may help leaders of educational institutions to adjust their student teaching programs so that those programs allot for internships in more realistic urban classroom environments, thus better preparing the educators and serving the needs of the local neighborhoods surrounding the institution. The results will benefit both the social scientists and the local community, creating value for everyone involved.

Family-owned businesses have an even tighter connection to their localized community and can therefore involve their companies even further in development efforts. Fitzgerald et al. (2010) conducted survey research on family businesses to look at ways the leaders of these organizations responded to community needs in the following areas: providing leadership in civic or other organizations, holding elected or appointed

office, providing assistance to community development and planning, donating to local schools and youth programs, and participating in community activities. Surveys that explore the ways businesses are willing to cooperate in social development are powerful tools in practical research and will provide local elected officials with valuable data.

Nontraditional organizations such as community foundations, which often have connections to small businesses, also play an important role in community development. Easterling (2011) conducted survey research that indicated many leaders of community foundations were risk-averse with regard to community change. The hesitance identified through Easterling's survey research highlighted some of the challenges that policy makers face when working with businesses and other entities that could serve as key allies in community development. Reaching out to these community foundations with ideas for dynamic alterations in the local neighborhood may lead to resistance.

Small business owners who participate in survey research may also be susceptible to socially desirable responses (SDRs). Leaders of some businesses may view providing SDRs to surveys as a method for improving their image in the local community (Steenkamp, de Jong, & Baumgartner, 2010). Besser and Miller (2001) suggested that small business owners who are also civic leaders placed greater emphasis on strengthening the community, improving their image in the community, and cooperating with other local businesses. Small business owners' susceptibility to SDRs may link to ordinary individuals' reasons for giving SDRs, because the answers that respondents provide on the surveys can make the survey taker look good based on cultural standards regarding the desirability of certain values, traits, attitudes, interests, opinions, and

behaviors (Steenkamp et al., 2010). Social scientists conducting studies with small business owners regarding community development must account for SDRs by understanding its influences and knowing how to interpret for those influences in the survey responses.

Quantitative Survey Research in Community Development

Community development studies using surveys have produced a wide range of insight. Quantitative research in community development ranges from studies in large urban areas to less densely populated suburban areas (Combs, 2010). A study on small business owner attitudes toward community development using survey research required identifying the local organizational community. Business owners who are part of any such study or who view the results desire actionable data, and organizational administrators want to be confident that acting on the identified effects is likely to have a noticeable impact on their organizations (Combs, 2010). Providing palpable benefits in the realm of community development is imperative because taxpayers, organizational leaders, and individuals pay for most studies to benefit society (Sutherland, Goulson, Potts, & Dicks, 2011). The goal for scholars pursuing studies in community development should be to produce actionable data from their results (Combs, 2010). Researchers should consider the real-world impact of their quantitative study on community development.

The focus of quantitative research regarding community development and the role of businesses should include the real-world benefit to the owners who run the organizations. As Combs (2010) demonstrated, having an adequate sample is important,

but the long-term impact of research and whether it can show strong evidence that organizational theories are correct and of real benefit to the owners of those organizations is more important. Beyond organizations, government leaders who want to analyze the benefits of individual or collective research must engage the public and stakeholders during and after the studies take place (Sutherland et al., 2011). Securing a large number of participants is less important than securing an adequate number in the pursuit of knowing that researchers can then apply the results to real-world challenges facing businesses and communities (Combs, 2010). The quality of participants is more important than quantity.

Research devoted to community development and the role of businesses must include the proper context in selecting the variables to use for quantitative studies. Establishing a hypothesis and variables is crucial because the most suitable metrics for study evaluation differ between research fields (Derrick et al., 2011). The goals of community development research should be transparent to the local participants and the outcome needs to apply to actual improvement in the neighborhood (Combs, 2010). The use of recommended and culturally applicable instruments and scales will assist researchers in identifying interventions that promote ongoing community development (Kramer et al., 2011). Correlational survey research is also suitable for drawing out a quantitative measure of business sentiment on the issue of community development.

Small business owners were an important stakeholder in this study, and identifying them to engage them was a significant hurdle to overcome. Sanderson and Richards (2010) indicated barriers to participation exist across communities, yet each

neighborhood displays the obstacles differently based on geographic, cultural, socioeconomic, and logistical factors. Ways to identify small business owners in a community include enlisting the assistance of the local Small Business Development Center and the local Chamber of Commerce, as well as posting announcements to local media and colleges (Ruane et al., 2010). Social scientists use these approaches to identify possible small-business-related stakeholders as well as to increase awareness of ongoing community research within the local merchant community.

Identifying government agencies and centers that retain listings and directories of active businesses is critical when searching for small business owners as participants. These government agencies and local business partnerships have a pulse on the regional membership and the resources necessary for organizational development (Ruane et al., 2010). Alternatively, locating small business participants can occur in unexpected ways through seemingly unrelated research. Patton (2011) identified several stakeholders through his research on community organizations' involvement in school safety planning. The stakeholders identified by Patton included localized business groups, in addition to law enforcement groups, local nonprofit organizations, and community foundations. When creating stakeholder listings for survey deployment, it is important to connect with these agencies and centers to acquire lists and other resources that may be useful in creating a more comprehensive study (Ruane et al., 2010). The community center and government agency resources listed above ensure a more comprehensive listing of stakeholders for survey distribution.

Identifying Stakeholders

Understanding the factors related to the expectations and the traditional roles of stakeholders makes identifying those entities easier. Some community foundations, for example, organize around specific entities (i.e., donor relations, investment, grant making, and administration), and they commonly have little representation in areas such as convening, advocacy, and capacity building (Easterling, 2011). Reticence for radical community change, as described by Easterling (2011), revealed that although these institutions are vital for community development, involvement of the foundations in crucial changes to the existing environment is unlikely. Stakeholder identification should also include prior knowledge on where the stakeholders fit into community development, allowing for more targeted survey questions.

The emphasis of the research also determines the specific stakeholders and the methods of reaching out through surveys. Sanderson and Richards (2010) conducted research on improving the after-school options for youth as one of many factors that can contribute to a healthy local community. The participant pool chosen for the research by Sanderson and Richards consisted of a partnership between university and community members committed to augmenting after-school resources for youth in a particular low-income urban community. Surdez et al. (2012) found substantial effects between sociodemographic features and entrepreneurial performance in small business owners. Identifying stakeholders for community development research requires tapping into ongoing efforts by local members and innovatively engaging them in the data collection process.

At times, the stakeholders in a community are not influential or vocal, yet survey researchers need to identify them and their needs and to include them in the research process. Van Gundy et al. (2011) used survey research to identify the effects of community cohesion on a subset of the population particularly vulnerable to community degradation: the youth. Van Gundy et al. concluded that depression and increased drug use were the unfortunate side effects of disintegrating communities. Rather than looking at the outcome (increased drug use, vandalism, and depression among the youth), Van Gundy et al. focused on the causes and found that a unified and connected community is vital to the overall well-being of the younger members. Identifying community development stakeholders for survey research entails a commitment to understanding the potential pool of participants.

Racial and other ethnic factors may also be categories for stakeholders in the community. Communities with diverse ethnic inhabitants use survey research to understand where any disparities may exist in outreach efforts. Carty et al. (2011) looked at racism as a factor for community health survey research and found that racism is an important cause of racial health disparities because of its influence on socioeconomic conditions, institutional structures, racial prejudice, and stress. The influence of survey research in these scenarios is twofold: (a) identifying potential race-related problems and (b) identifying attitudes and solutions (Carty et al., 2011). Solutions identified by survey research assist community development efforts to benefit all stakeholders, regardless of race or other demographic differences.

Although time consuming, it is important that researchers engage in the neighborhoods and communities where they conduct their studies. Sanderson and Richards (2010) found that concentrated efforts to understand community needs and obstacles specific to the structure of the particular neighborhood under study, including programs and inhabitants, will provide locally relevant solutions. Researchers should be conscious of local community dynamics, of political realities, of economic conditions, and of other factors that will eventually ensure their survey tools are significant to the specific environment (Sanderson & Richards, 2010). The category of survey research alluded to in current research highlights the importance of identifying all the relevant participants when identifying precise areas of a community to improve.

Understanding Community Development Factors

Surveys play a significant role in social science research and are essential in providing both academics and community planners information vital to understanding community development factors. Bacdayan (2008) researched the links between academic institutions and community growth through economic development outreach, and the findings indicated that community-based survey research relies on local resources to identify participants. Bacdayan also listed factors that contribute to community development, particularly in education, where institutions can contribute to a better prepared workforce and use internships to bolster areas of community weakness. The data on educational institutions and their contributions to local neighborhoods are vital in creating the framework for strengthening local communities by targeting areas for improvement that can guide policy making and resource allocation.

In communities such as the U.S. Virgin Islands, community development factors include considerations for the tourism industry. Many local communities recognize the importance of tourism in motivating change in social, cultural, environmental, and economic dimensions, which is an environment where tourism activities have had a close connection with the local communities (Aref et al., 2010). Tourism is an important community development tool that leads to economic development in communities. According to Aref et al. (2010), local community leaders play a crucial role in confronting tourism issues. Current research outlines the importance of positive aspects of sociocultural, environmental, and economic impacts of tourism in local communities.

Advancing community-driven development (CDD) assists in empowering low income and other sidelined groups. Baroi and Rabbani (2011) noted that CDD is responsive to beneficiary demand, allows greater autonomy for local businesses, guarantees increased downward accountability, and enhances the capabilities of the local community. In society, formal and informal groups play important roles as actors and instrumentalities in the success or failure of community development. In CDD, Baroi and Rabbani posited that the community's inhabitants play a role in both supply and demand because the core ingredients and components of community development come from a society. In this context, factors such as social norms, values, and characteristics serve as instruments. Baroi and Rabbani contended that in CDD, the community plays a significant role in furnishing insight, applying processes, and using outputs. Governments and established businesses play a key role in creating different policies.

Traditional Community Designs

Additional researchers have focused on the most sought after types of community designs or the designs considered optimal for inhabitants. Handy, Sallis, Weber, Maibach, and Hollander (2008) conducted a survey study regarding community support for traditionally designed communities and defined traditional communities in their study as featuring a mix of residential and commercial land use and pedestrian connections between the various uses. The results of the study indicated that support for traditionally designed communities had grown in the previous decade among city planners (Handy et al., 2008). Social science research that includes surveys is valuable in understanding community member perceptions and expectations regarding community development because policy that is in line with citizens' expectation is likely to have a greater chance of success (John et al., 2011). Creating buy-in is significant for increasing public support on community development policies.

Community foundations comprise a research area that can potentially yield important information on cooperative community development. Easterling (2011) identified, through survey research, various facets of community foundations that pose significant challenges for their continued growth and expansion. A comprehensive community assessment is valuable for community foundations as an important instrument for directing leadership and resource allocation (Easterling, 2011). John et al. (2011) found that leaders of community foundations, along with other business leaders and policy makers seeking to engage local participants, should focus on measures that involve exploring citizens' feelings related to conditions in the neighborhood. Survey research

by social scientists often provides the necessary data points that serve as a thorough assessment of the local environment.

Educators are key constituents in improving communities, and survey studies have looked at the preparation that educators receive in urban areas and low-income environments. Zygmunt-Fillwalk et al. (2010) surveyed preservice teachers who participated in internships at low-income urban schools to determine whether these types of service training would improve the experience for the student teachers and found that traditional internships and preservice programs do not prepare teachers for working in these communities, as they shield the new teachers from valuable experience and immersion in a more realistic classroom environment. The student participants in the survey research by Zygmunt-Fillwalk et al. expressed encouraging reactions to the urban training initiative. Understanding community development dynamics such as methods to improve educational quality and teacher training is critical for policy makers and local leaders and demonstrates the usefulness of survey research in social science.

Progressive Community Designs

The Internet allows like-minded individuals to unite around common interests. The emergence of virtual communities that form around specific identities and interests makes the Internet a practical option for targeting a specific population for survey research (Alessi & Martin, 2010). Virtual communities also allow researchers to save resources by providing access to various members of a specific group in one convenient location, rather than having to find participants scattered throughout various geographical locations, yet researchers should be aware that members of these communities will not

necessarily be open and willing to spending time completing surveys (Alessi & Martin, 2010). Puleston (2011) noted that researchers must create survey instruments that engage the participants and create in them a sense that they are part of the process, not just a supplementary data point. Participants who feel engaged in the process are more likely to respond.

Ideas for improving survey research are plentiful in social science literature. Puleston (2011) suggested various ideas, including capping the time it takes to complete a survey at 30 minutes, adding survey satisfaction mechanisms at the end of every survey, and creating an industry award for survey design. P. Smith (2009) contended that scholars conducting research should consult with research agencies that specialize in surveys to create instruments that are better structured, more engaging, and still methodologically sound. According to Axinn et al. (2011), researchers are developing tools to improve these surveys to allow better surveys while controlling costs. Academic commentary and the expectations of scholars when crafting surveys can also be unrealistic when weighted against the practicality of attaining respondents (P. Smith, 2009). Researchers must maintain survey questions balanced against the target demographic completing a survey.

The use of electronic surveys provides additional avenues for improving delivery. Axinn et al. (2011) provided insight into improving surveys and response rates, suggesting the use of computer software in questionnaires to tailor respondents' unique circumstances or prior responses to recognize errors and radically improve data collection time. Using computer software can also provide what Axinn et al. called paradata, or

information about the data collection process itself. Responsive survey design can provide a methodological tool that alters the response rate and improves its quality (Axinn et al., 2011). Acquiring data on how respondents complete surveys assists in survey design and ensures questionnaires match user expectations in various ways.

One strategy to engage small business owners in a specific survey is to illuminate the types of neighborhoods in which they would prefer to reside. Handy et al. (2008) conducted survey research and found participants desired well-designed communities that offer child-friendly environments and the ability for the elderly to age in place. John et al. (2011) conducted survey research and found that a sense of belonging and feeling secure, combined with an unwillingness to trust the local government to solve community problems, could provide the incentives for civic participation. Researchers can tap into this sense of empowerment through structuring their survey instruments so that participants view the study as a type of civic activity and a contribution toward community development.

In developing survey questions for survey research, researchers must take into account participants' tendencies to provide SDRs. Steenkamp et al. (2010) called on social scientists to focus on SDRs in their studies that would identify whether the phenomenon is a significant problem in survey research. In gauging the attitudes of small business owners toward community development, it is important to note and account for SDRs. Identifying local stakeholders, determining unique factors related to community development, and understanding business needs were critical to collecting and assessing the data correctly in this study.

Business-Friendly Community Factors

Community leaders can take various steps to encourage small business growth and create a vibrant local community. Ramona (2011) noted that capital is crucial when a small business owner is considering the initial development of a company, but identifying the most adequate form of financing is frequently a major obstacle for small and medium-size enterprises. In communities with colleges and universities that include business degrees, allowing faculty adequate time to research activities in the local community may also result in a more active exploration of business friendly solutions (Stanton et al., 2009). Some approaches to providing small businesses with neighborhood support include reducing the reporting requirements imposed by accounting regulations, reducing taxes associated with trans-border commerce and simplifying customs and import procedures (Ramona, 2011). When creating new laws and policies, leaders in local municipalities must assure the small business community that the new regulations will not make commerce more difficult and must have their needs in mind.

Business leaders prefer competitive and open markets as superior environments for growth. Ramona (2011) noted that those market conditions offer the best guarantee to small and medium corporations for increasing their effectiveness and their innovation potential. Among the incentives identified by Ramona are policies based on opportunities that sustain strength and arrangements that support offensive, defensive, and diversified strategies based on weaknesses and threats. Each stated approach begins after proposing business programs as broad ideas that turn into groups of projects with action plans, aided by the implementation of development policies. Ramona proposed

that the realization of solving the problems of economic development associated with small and medium-sized businesses and of implementing policies occurs only through cooperative efforts between governmental, private, and nongovernmental sectors.

City planning in business-friendly communities is an important area of consideration for local policy makers. According to Ryu and Swinney (2011), downtowns in small communities have been home to small, autonomous, and family-owned and operated businesses that are community-based, and these businesses return a large portion of their profits to their local neighborhoods. Stakeholders and city planners must consider that those downtowns and their small and medium-sized businesses share an economic purpose. Ryu and Swinney suggested that when business owners reported consistent attitudes about how to market their downtown, they perceived the performance of the local downtown and their own business more positively. Although similarities with all three branding components for their community's business center (image, vision, and culture) were a positive and significant predictor for the perception of downtown performance, vision was the most important component for small business owners (Ryu & Swinney, 2011). Ryu and Swinney defined vision as comprised of long-term objectives about the functional, physical, social, and economic roles of the particular community business center. The survival of neighborhood businesses depends on the economic viability of the community.

Community Improvement Efforts

Researchers use descriptive surveys to collect detailed information regarding participants and their attitudes and motivations. Erbaydar and Cilingiroglu (2010) used a

descriptive survey to analyze the pain and depression of health care patients. Using descriptive research methods allowed Erbaydar and Cilingiroglu to look at conventional quantitative measures such as pain level and tie those data to depression levels. The additional information from descriptive research allows social scientists to delve beyond traditional cause-and-effect quantitative research and to address qualitative questions if necessary.

Researchers also use descriptive surveys to draw contextual data for existing problems, for example participant sentiment toward community development efforts. Patton (2011) conducted research on community organizations' involvement in school safety planning and relied on an earlier descriptive survey for the data to analyze. The descriptive survey data in Patton's research included information on various community organizations and on how their specific involvement affected the incidence of school violence. The survey that Patton relied on allowed future social research beyond the scope of the initial study, which is one of the benefits of descriptive surveys. Researchers can use the data from descriptive surveys to form the basis of new insight.

Descriptive surveys are of course susceptible to some of the same vulnerabilities as other types of social research surveys. Steenkamp et al. (2010) conducted a study on SDR tendencies and acknowledged the phenomenon as an ongoing concern for research scientists and survey research. Among the misconceptions of SDRs in existing survey research identified by Steenkamp et al. are that researchers can conceptualize it as a one-dimensional construct, that the existing scales in social science literature are all equally

valid for all constructs, that significant SDR correlation implies contamination, and that researchers can account for the biasing influence of SDRs through a control variable.

By placing current knowledge in context and creating new data, descriptive survey use is highly beneficial to community leadership. Carty et al. (2011) noted descriptive survey use assists researchers and policy makers by providing a more complete calculation of social determinants that may contribute to localized differences in infant and overall health. Descriptive surveys additionally enhanced the capacity of local neighborhood stakeholders to engage in and employ original research on a relevant community concern (Carty et al., 2011). The direct feedback from descriptive surveys produces real-world knowledge applicable to efforts at community development.

Engaging community stakeholders is an effective approach for producing more valid and locally relevant social research. As Sanderson and Richards (2010) noted, a community-based collaborative approach to survey research produced improvements in two key areas: it boosted the significance and usefulness of the survey results and it increased the likelihood that the findings would have an impact on future activities. The goal of the research by Sanderson and Richards (2010) was to identify the needs of both parents and students regarding after-school programs, and the researchers' approach of engaging them in the survey process produced results that policy makers would be more likely to use in the educational institutions where the survey participants originated.

Detecting Areas for Improvement

Descriptive surveys are also useful in identifying attitudes toward community improvement areas, including health services. Bugge, Smith, and Shanley (1999)

conducted a descriptive survey to identify the types of skills and requirements expected of community mental health staff. Using a descriptive survey instrument allowed Bugge et al. to collect not only surface data but also more detailed information on local expectations and skill requirements for the mental health staff who participated in the study. Bugge et al. used a hybrid design for their descriptive survey to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, and they used mixed data collection methods, including both formal questionnaires and structured in-person interviews of select participants. The success of that study in gathering varying data types and employing different collection methods demonstrated the flexibility of descriptive surveys as a data-gathering tool.

Detecting areas for improvement also implies the prioritization of resources, and education is generally one of the more significant budget areas. School systems are often in need of reform, particularly in low-income neighborhoods. Anderson-Butcher et al. (2010) noted that leaders in local departments of education should allow schools and district leaders to gain influence over the many circumstances affecting student achievement, healthy development, and overall school success. Seeking areas for improvement in education includes improvement planning, which requires building bridges between families and community resources.

Local government leaders can enlist leaders in the private sector to identify areas for community improvement. Ewoh and Zimmerman (2010) noted that during phases of budgetary constraints, urban economic development experts have advocated for community improvement districts (CIDs) that allow local governments an opportunity to empower private organizations to accomplish public objectives. Ewoh and Zimmerman

compared local businesses that have urgent needs to promote their businesses and increase profitability to homeowners interested in preserving their property values. Although CIDs are usually effective because of their intrinsic flexibility, their structure must include some sort of oversight instrument to prevent CIDs from performing in a manner that reflects a conflict of interest in their assigned jurisdictions (Ewoh & Zimmerman, 2010). Policy makers should collaborate with CIDs to identify and assess the requirements of all stakeholders in the community, so the leaders of small businesses can assign assets to meet any deficiencies effectively.

Detecting areas for improvement requires an honest assessment of the current shortcomings in a community. Local officials must be accountable for properly vetting not only the deficiencies but also the possible solutions. According to Sarker and Hassan (2010), accountability is not only a symbol of democratic authority but a vital component for improving the performance of public officials as well. Sarker and Hassan noted that a link exists between accountability and almost every imaginable facet of responsible governance, and they listed accountability as an important tool for combating government evils, including corruption, elitism, and extortion. The historical development of modern governing systems allowed for different formal institutional mechanisms to develop in most countries around the world (Sarker & Hassan, 2010). These mechanisms have succeeded in the developed world, yet still lag in developing countries, and some of the symptoms may appear in low-income communities whose leaders are seeking to identify areas for improvement.

Identifying Resources in High-Poverty Neighborhoods

Business leaders who operate in high-poverty neighborhoods and seek to make a difference locally must ask questions related to values. A small business leader may want to know how to integrate operations with values, what those values will consist of, and if the values all reflect realistic objectives that are useful to the local community (Dekay, 2011). Traditional approaches to alleviating poverty, largely through philanthropy and foreign aid, have generated over \$2 trillion specifically targeted for poverty reduction since the 1950s, mostly for Sub-Saharan Africa, and yet these approaches have not produced measurable economic progress (Hartman, Werhane, & Clark, 2011). Issues of conflicting values, conflicting interests regarding stakeholders, and the ability to listen to input from all stakeholders are all important skills for small business leaders who want to succeed in difficult situations and make a difference in the local community.

The development of sustainable solutions for economic improvement involves establishing a robust local infrastructure. The solutions include long-term business investment, resource integration, and commitment of business owners and their corporate boards to the belief that this strategy is in the long-term interests of both the business and the community (Hartman et al., 2011). If business leaders who choose to tackle social issues such as poverty can gain competitive benefit in the local marketplace, their efforts in creating shared value within the organization will lead to self-sustaining organizations that do not depend on private or public subsidies (Hartman et al., 2011). If small business leaders apply their considerable resources, expertise, and talent to poverty

reduction, they will make a greater social impact than any other institution or philanthropic organization (Hartman et al., 2011). Low-income neighborhoods are a societal condition that requires cooperative, long-term planning.

One of the challenges in low-income neighborhoods is there are not enough jobs, possibly due to the nature of capitalist society. M. J. Murray (2010) noted that low-income persons have a higher tendency to be without a job, and employing this group of workers will have a larger impact on the demand for goods and services because they have a greater inclination to consume. The increase of demand from these workers will cause employers to increase production and hire even more workers, which will in turn increase spending and produce a multiplier effect in the economy until the economy reaches dramatically increased levels of employment (M. J. Murray, 2010). The problem is that employers will not hire new workers because with high unemployment there is no anticipation from the business community that requests for their goods and services will increase (M. J. Murray, 2010). This is the classic chicken-and-egg problem, and leaders of local communities should incentivize hiring to kick start the cycle of employment, spending, and increased production.

Engaging Stakeholders and Creating Accountability

One way to increase survey involvement in the business community is to explain the practical benefits of the research study to the potential participants. Sirgy et al. (2010) noted that scholars must prioritize the use of well-established, reliable, and valid measures to capture community satisfaction in their social research. Maximizing survey participation in local communities includes informing possible respondents of the overall

benefits of social science research to the regional ecosystem (Sirgy et al., 2010).

Understanding which members of a local community are more likely to participate is useful in targeting relevant persons to maximize survey participation. John et al. (2011) analyzed survey data related to civic activity, found age and education were the principal determinants to increased civic engagement, and identified additional factors such as the role of resources and institutional trust as significant. A noteworthy observation by John et al. was that individuals' feelings about their neighborhood are an important spur to their civic action given that they grow concerned and then increase their involvement by taking positive action. In contrast, moral motivations and social norms did not have a strong outcome on civic engagement (John et al., 2011). Research scientists can use this information to plot themes and issues that will help to maximize survey participation in a local community.

There are various benefits associated with understanding the motivations of local companies. The results of surveys on small business attitudes can benefit local government support agencies in addition to federal government agencies that interact with small businesses (Ruane et al., 2010). Sirgy et al. (2010) proposed that survey research would provide local governments with analytic information regarding the sources of residents' dissatisfaction regarding subjective actions. According to Sirgy et al., local government agencies can use the data to create programs and services designed to increase residents' sense of satisfaction and decrease dissatisfaction to enhance their sense of well-being. If federal government agencies receive information on the industries they serve that is more accurate, the local businesses may receive better service in return

(Sirgy et al, 2010). Survey participants are more likely to engage with researchers if the researchers outline such practical benefits for them.

The benefits of researching strong communities also reach beyond the private enterprise environment. According to Kutek, Turnbull, and Fairweather-Schmidt (2011), community well-being relates to individual well-being. Community planners can draw upon the results of survey research to get an assessment of the well-being of the local population and compare it to nearby municipalities. Sirgy et al. (2010) also suggested that community leaders, in conjunction with community planning councils, conduct consistent, scheduled community surveys to assess both overall community well-being and the extent to which local resident's sense that local services contribute to their well-being. Leaders of local governments and agencies who choose to employ these surveys will likely provide residents with the impression that they are using their opinion directly for community improvement purposes, which can lead to increased participation.

The ethical behaviors of traditional and nonprofit organizations often entail conflict and tension between the inner workings of the organization, bureaucracies, current employees, external investors, the media, their consumers, the competition, and public and private interest groups (DeKay, 2011). It is important for business leaders to recognize these inherent conflicts within the organization.

Creating Thriving Communities With Shrinking Budgets

Organizations in the United States are facing difficult economic situations and must innovate through technologies. A combination of turbulent economic climate, downsizing, mergers, offshore contracting, and new conduits of distribution such as the

Internet have created a rush to technology to fill the voids (T. Smith, Koohang, & Behling, 2010). To compensate for those factors, company leaders are deploying technology for business efficiencies, profit improvement, and methods that create additional risks and disclosures for organizations (T. Smith et al., 2010). Developing a model that reflects the public's interests may allow for improved and innovative techniques in the budget process (Nollenberger, Maher, Beach, & Mcgee, 2012). At minimum, adjusting to match public sentiment will increase resident input and enhance local businesses' role in the budget process when policy makers create legislation regarding companies (Nollenberger et al., 2012). Business leaders should strive to create new avenues for growth in the face of shrinking budgets and struggling neighborhoods.

With shrinking budgets may come shrinking government services. Niegocki et al. (2012) noted that one way to learn about the steps and experience of customers in acquiring services and information is contacting the government agencies and community organizations requesting assistance. Some of the areas where a shrinking budget can affect services are the lack of updated or complete information online or alternatives to online resources for community members who do not have access to the Web (Niegocki et al., 2012). Other affected services that need funding at sufficient levels for a thriving community include available transportation for low-income community members. Creating thriving communities with shrinking budgets requires fostering a greater sense of ownership from members through open dialogue. Measham, Richards, Robinson, Larson, and Brake (2011) noted that open lines of communication enable local community stakeholders to define and take ownership of problems that form a basis for

comprehensive commitment by government officials to administrative processes and outcomes. Measham et al. noted that openness about limitations allows for better management of expectations and promotes mutual trust. The characteristics of successful engagement between officials and neighborhood members include developing trust, engendering a sense of community ownership, transparency, effective communication, focusing on deliberate outcomes, being inclusive, and adequate resource allocation (Measham et al., 2011). The need for honesty and a realistic outlook on the constraints placed by shrinking budgets should be a part of any discussion between policy makers and constituents.

Producing quantitative research data through surveys requires enhanced participation and involvement from community members. Traditionally, approaches to public participation have included attending meetings, writing letters, joining interest groups, and voting. These methods generate only minimal participation with regard to budget allocation (Nollenberger et al., 2012). Nollenberger et al. (2012) outlined the need for policy makers to treat citizens as customers and noted that there is a need to demonstrate program effectiveness as a means to address citizen concerns. Validating the outcomes of research helps participants and other community stakeholders to understand the value of similar studies and initiatives.

The Role of Small Businesses

Small Versus Big Business

Both large and small businesses are potent job creators and vital to economic growth in communities. Edmiston (2007) noted that net job creation at small businesses

is mostly the result of large job losses in big businesses, rather than the inherent job creation abilities of small companies. Additionally, Edmiston found that, on average, large corporations were better than small businesses at offering better jobs in metrics related to both compensation and stability. Another point of contention arises when comparing small and big businesses in the realm of innovation, where conventional thinking favors smaller firms.

One of the primary concerns for city planners and local community officials is the decision to provide incentives for small businesses or large businesses or to provide diluted resources to both. Edmiston (2007) pointed out that, generally, having new and large (500+ employees) corporations can serve to impede the growth of any existing business or to discourage the establishment of competing businesses that would otherwise have moved to the neighborhood. Positive aspects to large corporations include potential links with local suppliers, an uptick in consumer spending, the transfer of data from one firm to another, and sharing the workforce in the local community (Edmiston, 2011). As demonstrated in Figure 1, small businesses with fewer than 20 employees have provided the biggest net job creation over time, especially during difficult economic times.

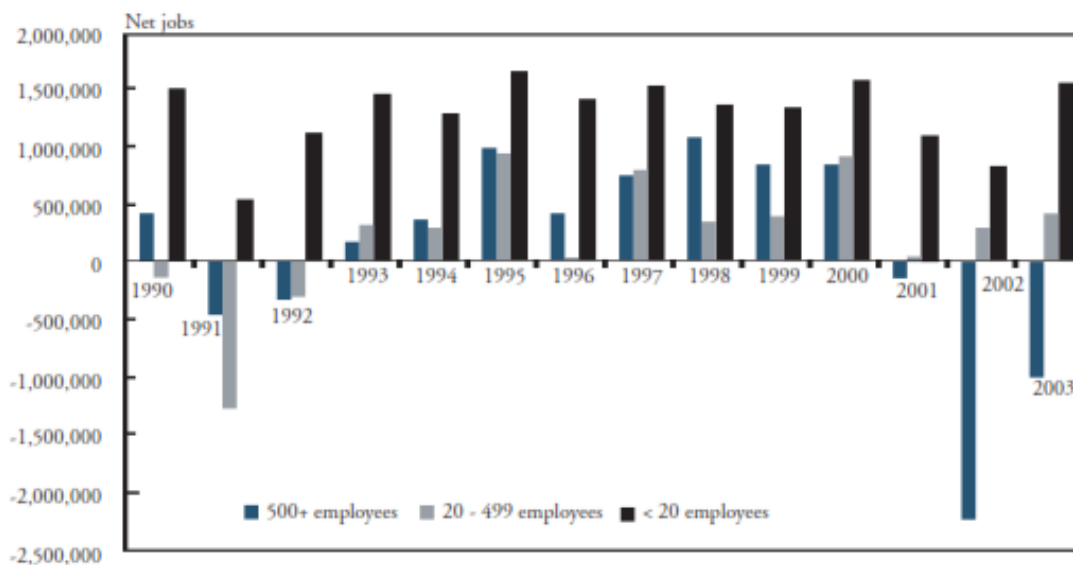


Figure 1. Net job creation by firm size, 1990-2003. From “The Role of Small and Large Businesses in Economic Development” (p. 78), by K. Edmiston, 2007, *Economic Review*, 92(2), 78. Copyright 2007 by Economic Review. Reprinted with permission.

After acknowledging that small businesses create a significant share of new jobs and are vital to local economies, it is important to compare them with big businesses. Edmiston (2007) contended that big businesses offer overall better jobs and higher salaries than small businesses. Benefit packages including health care, paid vacation days, insurance, and retirement tend to be more comprehensive at large firms as well, and big businesses lead the way in having lower turnover (Edmiston, 2007). The lower rates of employee-initiated turnover may indicate that job satisfaction and upward mobility are better at larger firms, and lower instances of employer-initiated separations may indicate that jobs at larger firms are more stable (Edmiston, 2007). These are all areas where big businesses are superior to small businesses.

Big businesses in small neighborhoods can have negative effects as well.

Edmiston (2011) concluded that the negative effects could include limitations on the supply of labor; upward pressure on wages and rents for the local population, which is detrimental to small businesses; overcrowding of existing infrastructure; and budget pressures from loans and associated spending if a local government decides to provide financial incentives for the large corporation. Edmiston contended that recruiting large firms is often expensive, both in direct outlays and through the opportunity cost from other forms of economic development. In cases where local governments or municipalities have spent significant resources to attract large corporations, there may be an argument that those resources could otherwise help to improve the existing business environment, including additional tax cuts and policy changes.

Impact on Local Economies

To make a case for research that affects local economies, social scientists must make their case to policy makers, including those in the local legislature, and follow up. C. Murray (2009) indicated that after making a case to the relevant authorities, an individual should not expect immediate action. C. Murray suggested helping stakeholders feel like they are contributing to a superior cause by pairing the issue studied with a broader legislative priority. Researchers who engage leaders of local government agencies should be able to walk them through the entire process. In discussing the impact of research or policies, having the right facts to back up their cause is vital. Additionally, C. Murray suggested adding a human element when attempting to connect with local legislators. Employing testimonials from persons affected by planned research will help

to put a human face on a study. The human element and the accurate data relevant to the local community will make quantitative research more compelling for participants.

To attract companies so they can have a positive effect on the economy, leaders of local communities must incorporate policies that support small business owners and their stores. Edmiston (2007) noted that neighborhoods and their policy makers must expand and improve infrastructure, in addition to developing and recruiting a capable and educated workforce. Edmiston also demonstrated that both small and big businesses make important innovations that keep local economies growing and that small businesses are likely more efficient at innovation. The level of innovation may depend on the type of industry and, in some areas, the innovative activities between the two intersect (Edmiston, 2007). These endeavors require a commitment from local government to improve the quality of life in the community and to form a business-friendly climate.

Community Cohesion

Survey research is significant in detecting community development factors such as community cohesion. Lowndes and Thorp (2011) described a cohesive community as one with a shared vision and a sense of belonging for all members, the multiplicity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances receives consideration, those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, and durable relationships develop between people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances at work, in schools, and within the neighborhood. In a cohesive community, citizens participate in building and perpetuating an overarching culture and the diversity in backgrounds and circumstances is a unifying feature of the local neighborhood (Lowndes & Thorp, 2011). The

characteristics of a cohesive community primarily include the ability of residents with different backgrounds to achieve similar life outcomes, including employment and general quality of life.

Community cohesion also values individualism over the traditional concepts of neighborhood multiculturalism. Ideas and actions associated with an active citizenry, an engaged community, and enhanced participation characterize a disavowal of the concept of multiple cultures, traditions, and identities that previously existed through a policy of multiculturalism (Lowndes & Thorp, 2011). According to Van Gundy et al. (2011), community cohesion affects factors related to youth stress levels. Survey research is important to social scientists as they strive to identify improvement opportunities for members of a community. Vandalism and general dissatisfaction coming from the local youth could be signs of lacking community cohesion and connectedness (Van Gundy et al., 2011). Additionally, Bacdayan (2008) conducted research on the links between economic development outreach and the academic community in business schools and found that business schools have several avenues to pursue in developing stronger communities by intertwining their academics with outreach programs. The five areas identified by Bacdayan (2008) were technical assistance, teacher degree programs, linking community with the classroom, conducting applied research, and conducting basic research. Businesses depend on thriving communities; therefore, framing the argument for small business involvement in community development is a sound path for researchers to pursue.

Maximizing Small Business Participation in Local Community Development

Using a Sense of Civic Pride to Increase Participation

Civic pride is an indicator of a healthy local neighborhood where residents are generally content. A robust sense of civic pride and community social support links to improved mental health and reduced stress levels in members of a community (Kutek et al., 2011). The benefits of a vigorous community also apply to the adolescents, because an association exists between the concept of community attachment, reduced substance-use problems, and reduced delinquency, and a sense of neighborhood detachment relates to elevated levels of depression, substance abuse, and delinquency (Van Gundy et al., 2011). Bacdayan (2008) explained in his research on economic development outreach that academic–local partnerships are successful when researchers have accounted for the expectations of the specific community. The results of Kutek et al.'s (2011) survey into community well-being and its effects on rural men demonstrated the need for structural growth rather than focusing on discrete approaches, such as providing therapy for specific persons only. Providing information about the various benefits of community development also assists in creating a sense of engagement for researchers.

The importance of conducting research into community development is also apparent beyond participation rates for social science research. Kutek et al. (2011) highlighted the benefits that research into factors of community well-being provides for agencies and community organizations whose staff deliver mental health services and other assistance to community members. Bacdayan (2008) pointed toward a need to frame economic development outreach as long-term propositions. Guidelines that

expand local health services, promote service learning from academic institutions, and provide other assistance are long-term solutions to community development rather than one-off ventures for the sake of social science research.

Informal Community Networks

The availability of local assistance, including health services, does not necessarily include only large government-sponsored programs. Specifically, Kutek et al. (2011) outlined the importance of informal community networks and the ability of those networks to provide an enhanced sense of community well-being. Kutek et al. noted that it is critical for individuals, organizations, and policy makers to understand the importance of the role these factors play in promoting and maintaining enhanced well-being in a local community. Additionally, Wittmer (2004) conducted survey research to establish the benefits of service learning, which is a more common name for community service among educational institutions. Educational institutions, along with regional businesses and government agencies, all have a role in improving local economies.

Partnerships between private and public entities that promote enhanced services and community research can produce both stronger local economies and valuable data for social scientists. Wittmer (2004) carried out survey research regarding the integration of service learning programs in graduate business schools. The results of the study indicated that there are tangible community benefits when educational institutions apply local community assets and integrate them into their curriculum, including internship programs and volunteering (Wittmer, 2004). Information provided through similar neighborhood research can assist in creating policy and establishing outreach programs.

Researchers have suggested various ways to increase interest in studies among a likely population of participants. Bullinger, Neyer, Rass, and Moeslein (2010) provided an innovative approach to maximize engagement by survey participants for community research focused on innovation contests: cash prizes offered for meeting specific challenges posed by the sponsor. These innovation contests can include ideas that lead to practical improvement opportunities for communities. After reviewing survey data from various innovation contests held at a German university, Bullinger et al. suggested that these events promoted not only competition but also cooperation among various stakeholders. A broader presentation of innovation contests can raise awareness of social science research and perhaps lead to greater engagement from survey participants.

Creating Public–Private Partnerships

Community development thrives when private and public entities unite with a common purpose, and this phenomenon is the subject of extensive survey research efforts, as social scientists aim to pin down the important aspects of community development. A hallmark of a flourishing neighborhood is an inclusive business environment, because as Wittmer (2004) noted, the best business leaders understand that they are part of a larger community. The individuals who form these partnerships have also been the subject of survey research, with Fitzgerald et al. (2010) finding that the more formal the education individuals have, the more likely they are to participate as civic leaders in elected or appointed positions. Fitzgerald et al. also established that individuals with higher incomes and profitable businesses are more likely to provide

financial and technical assistance to their local community. Social scientists should keep these findings in mind when identifying a sample.

One of the objectives of community planners and policy makers should be to maximize the engagement of all stakeholders, and surveys provide a means of collecting information to meet those goals. The design of survey research serves as a substantial area of inquiry regarding the possibilities for identifying community development factors. Steenkamp et al. (2010) discovered survey research also benefits from a deeper and more tangible understanding of when style is more important than substance, and vice versa. Participant engagement is vital to producing higher quality data, and improved survey design is the first step in maximizing the collection of vital information (Steenkamp et al., 2010). Researchers must not disregard the survey instrument during the planning phase of social science research.

Among the examples of community features that have been the focus of extensive survey research are local community banks. Banks provide key resources to community development, and the overall economic climate affects them. Lending by banks is vital to small organizations, yet lending can be challenging in tough economic times when small businesses have historically faced difficulties raising funds due to a lack of reliable information about them (Berger, Cowan, & Frame, 2011). Although bank lending is just one way of disbursing resources throughout a community, researchers have conducted a variety of studies on small business credit availability in recent years (Berger et al., 2011). The attention on bank lending shows how survey research is vital in establishing important data needed by policy makers interested in community development.

Relationship of the Study to Previous Research

One of the hurdles for survey research is acquiring enough participants willing to complete the entire instrument correctly. This effort requires an understanding of the demographics and other environmental factors that can affect the willingness of individuals to engage with researchers (Handy et al., 2008). Survey research requires participants' engagement and replies at a rate adequate for valid data, and the literature review involved exploring ways to identify factors important to potential respondents. The literature review also illuminated the types of communities to which many individuals aspire. Handy et al. (2008) conducted survey research and demonstrated a desire for well-designed neighborhoods that offer child-friendly environments and the ability for the seniors to age in place. Researchers can tap into this sense of empowerment through their survey instruments so that participants view the study as a means of civic action and input toward community development.

In developing survey questions for survey research, researchers must take the tendencies for participants to provide SDRs into account. Steenkamp et al. (2010) called on social scientists to focus on SDRs in their studies, which can aid in identifying whether the occurrence is a significant problem in their specific survey research. In measuring the attitudes of small business owners toward community development, as occurred in this study, it is important to note and account for SDRs. Identifying the stakeholders and categorizing the aspects related to community development were critical to properly assessing the data in this study.

A description of the focus for the current study and the primary purpose of this study, which was to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners, appeared in Chapter 1. Specifically, the topics of the first and third research questions were whether any correlation exists between social and physical disorder and small business engagement in community development, because existing literature includes a brief focus on individuals in a community without necessarily targeting the small business owners. Answering the second and fourth research questions indicated whether the demographic makeup of local small business owners has any causal relationship with engagement toward the local community. Choi and Murray (2010) looked at whether individuals' demographics directed their attitudes toward a community and noted a chain of research regarding individual attitudes in community settings dating back to the 1980s. The aim for this study was to extend the research into small business owners specifically, rather than average citizens, given the outsize influence and resources available to that subset of a community's population.

The focus of the final research question was whether any relationship exists between perceived social disorder, small business owners' demographics, and their engagement level in community development initiatives. The study of community development and community attitudes points toward significant and unique factors to consider regarding a major aspect of local neighborhood finances, namely small business owners. The literature did not include a focus on small business owners and on how their demographics and views affect their propensity to participate and apply their resources

toward community development. The absence of documented research in the literature regarding these factors indicated a challenging gap that required further analysis.

Conclusion

One of the objectives of research is to identify meaningful and actionable results within the data. In industry settings, leaders often use research to guide policy. Puleston (2011) noted organizational research should influence management's decision making, stimulate management's thinking, and inspire management. Puleston noted that quantitative research should have both practical use implications and provide enticements for other scholars to feel motivated enough to continue expanding knowledge in the area of study. Scholars conducting quantitative research in the social sciences should aim to motivate and provide important value to the content area. Evaluating the impact that scientific research can have on society is one of the first steps to quantifying the effectiveness of scholars' efforts at providing societal benefits (Sutherland et al., 2011). Sutherland et al. (2011) found that researchers could calculate the amount of benefit provided by social science research through quantitative study, and staff members of government agencies and other stakeholders could use this information to justify funding further quantitative and qualitative study research. Quantitative research on community development can also have positive social change as a purpose.

Meeting validity and reliability requirements is part of the process, not the result. Even when meeting the criteria of validity and reliability, Kurtoğlu (2010) noted that researchers should still ask fundamental questions regarding the meaning of their work, such as whether the fact that these relationships are valid and reliable means it is possible

to manage the world rationally. Researchers should ask this essential question of all scholars who are looking at relationships and associations and testing hypotheses through quantitative research. Some additional deficits identified in the literature review included the hesitance of some business leaders to participate in research efforts that can lead to significant community changes. The literature review also included a discussion on gaps in data regarding how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the Virgin Islands. Chapter 3 will include a detailed account of the methodology used to gather data in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

This quantitative, correlational study involved identifying the relationship between social disorder (including both physical and social disorder factors) and engagement of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. In Chapter 3, I include a comprehensive account of the research questions, hypotheses, research design, data collection, data collection instrument, data analysis tools, and participant information. The chapter also contains the rationale for selecting a quantitative correlational design to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ2: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ3: What is the relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

RQ4: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

The following are the null hypotheses and alternative hypotheses:

H1₀: There is no relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H1_a: There is a relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H2₀: The linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will not significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H2_a: The linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

The regression model for Hypothesis 2 was $Y_1 = A + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3$. Y_1 was the predicted value for engagement level; A was the value of Y_1 when all independent variables were zero (y intercept); X_1 was business size; X_2 was years in operation; X_3 was perceived physical disorder; and B_1 , B_2 , and B_3 were the regression beta weights for the three independent variables. I used the survey instrument to collect the necessary data to test the research hypothesis.

H3₀: There is no relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives.

H3_a: There is a relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives.

H4₀: The linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographics variables (business size and years in operation) will not significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

H4_a: The linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographics variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.

The regression model for Hypothesis 4 was $Y_1 = A + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3$. Y_1 was the predicted value for engagement level; A was the value of Y_1 when all independent variables were zero (y intercept); X_1 was business size; X_2 was years in operation; X_3 was perceived social disorder; and B_1 , B_2 , and B_3 were the regression beta weights for the three independent variables.

Research Design and Approach

The study included a correlational research design and multiple regression analysis to scrutinize the relationships between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the local community. The enormous amount of information in modern society has led to the need to apply statistical concepts to make sense of

information patterns (Liu, Lin, & Tsai, 2009). Researchers use correlation methods to help in understanding problems encountered in daily life (Liu et al., 2009). The study included surveys to collect data. Surveys are applicable for a collecting a wide range of data, from large sets of representative information such as a census to smaller sets such as intraorganizational data (Farrelly, 2013). Survey questionnaires are quantitative collection tools because they are predetermined, standard, and structured, making the tools ideal for social research (Farrelly, 2013). A correlational survey design was appropriate to answer a quantitative question regarding the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Appropriateness of Design

Correlation was the most applicable design for the study because the purpose was to examine the association between two variables: attitude and engagement level. According to Doğan, Atmaca, and Yolcu (2012), researchers employ correlation research to reveal the relationship between variables. The hypotheses in the study suited a quantitative research design to scrutinize the relationship between the independent variables (social and physical disorder, number of employees, and years of operation) and the dependent variable (community engagement level). Correlational designs contribute deductively to the creation of new knowledge (Farrelly, 2013). The models presented included an assumption that the independent variables had a relationship with the dependent variable, and probing this relationship spoke to the question raised by the study, which was how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the Virgin Islands.

There are limitations of correlation design that must also be addressed. In order to demonstrate correlation, researchers must establish three factors: (a) predictors share a considerable amount of variation in the variables, (b) supporting statistics such as weights and loadings are stable from sample to sample, and (c) considerable correlations exist between predictor–criterion subsets (Lambert & Durand, 1975). According to Farrelly (2013), researchers use quantitative studies to ask a very specific question and then collect numerical data from participants in an attempt to answer the question. Qualitative studies are suitable for understanding phenomena predominantly related to beliefs and feelings by collecting word data from participants (Farrelly, 2013). The factors above were used to select the most suitable research design.

One of the research designs considered for this study was qualitative grounded theory. Researchers use grounded theory methodology for data-derived explanations of human interaction (Hall, Griffiths, & McKenna, 2013). Grounded theory includes a heavy reliance on conceptualizing research data rather than imposing a specific set of procedures (Hall et al., 2013). In qualitative grounded theory, researchers attempt to discover what is happening and why through observations, immersion, and data collection. Qualitative grounded theory is useful for developing theories through exploring the data, which is why qualitative researchers employ it often (Hall et al., 2013). Grounded theory is often appropriate when there are scant initial data to work with, which requires a researcher to develop a theory while collecting the data (Hall et al., 2013). Qualitative grounded theory is thus more suitable for research that begins with broader, more general questions. The focus on wider questions, qualitative analysis, and

better suitability for formulating theories rather than drawing correlations makes grounded theory unsuitable for the study, which will involve examining the relationship between variables in a quantitative fashion.

Another of the designs considered for this study was qualitative case study. According to Houghton, Casey, Shaw, and Murphy (2013), case study research is useful for studying a phenomenon in its normal framework. Researchers may collect case study data using semistructured interviews, nonparticipant observations, and documentary analysis (Houghton et al., 2013). Stall-Meadows and Hyle (2010) contended that case studies may have limited generalizability in consumer studies and lack comparative analysis when viewed against other types of qualitative and quantitative design types. Case studies may not relate to or extend earlier work because they tend to lack a cumulative nature (Stall-Meadows & Hyle, 2010). Because the design of the current study involved establishing the existence of an association between variables and generalizing findings from a sample to a wider population, instead of actualizing a descriptive or explanatory investigation, a case study methodology was not appropriate.

Finally, a qualitative phenomenological research design received consideration for the study. According to Roberts (2013), the objective of the phenomenological design is to define a lived experience. The basis of phenomenological studies is a conviction that only those who have experienced a phenomenon firsthand can communicate it to the outside world, and researchers seek to answer questions by asking those who have experienced a phenomenon (Roberts, 2013). Phenomenological analysis typically avoids direct comparisons, preferring to draw conclusions from the firsthand

experience and use that understanding to detail the phenomenon in question (Roberts, 2013). These characteristics make a phenomenological methodology inadequate to study possible correlations from external events where a researcher has no firsthand experience of the phenomenon.

Due to the focus of phenomenological studies on firsthand experience and qualitative analysis, the phenomenological research design was not appropriate for the study. Researchers select qualitative approaches most often for context-rich research and commonly use inductive theory; thus, qualitative research was inappropriate for this study. Differences between survey, correlation, and experimental research include the ease of access to data. Researchers can gather survey and correlation data from existing data or obtain them electronically; Levy, Ellis, and Cohen (2011) indicated that experimental data rely on the availability of participants and, in some experiments, the availability of a specific setting in which to conduct experimentation.

On a macro level, methodology for a study must fall under a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approach. Qualitative research methods prioritize personal witnesses over objective measurement to produce important data about aspects of the human experience (Lipscomb, 2012). Research areas that require actionable research in management rather than understanding views and experiences may have limited practicality for qualitative research (Lipscomb, 2012). Lipscomb (2012) additionally contended that linking qualitative research findings with insight, belief development, and action is both intricate and problematic. The aim of this study was to find correlations between data sets, which made qualitative research unnecessary for

identifying simple conclusions from the data set that are applicable to both current policy making and future studies.

Qualitative data collection can require observation and other techniques that are time consuming and may limit the number of participants. Farrelly (2013) contended that correlational studies benefit from larger sample sizes, which made quantitative research a more appropriate design for this study. The targeted population of the study was various small business owners spread through three islands: St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John. Given the geographical restrictions and the benefits of a larger participant pool, a combination of Internet and paper surveys was more effective for this quantitative study, although it is important to ensure the survey is not lengthy and is easy to understand (Downes-Le Guin, Baker, Mechling, & Ruyle, 2012). An Internet and paper survey using a Likert-type scale and incorporating questions related to community attitude and community engagement was appropriate to gather data for the correlational and multiple regression analysis study. After data collection was complete, analysis began to test the hypotheses based on the research questions. Based on the criteria outlined above, the statistical analysis for this study included correlational and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between the independent and the dependent variables. Given all the research methods considered above, a correlational and multiple regression design was most appropriate for the study.

Population and Sample

The population for the study consisted of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The sample included owners of businesses and organizations with 500 or

fewer employees, which is the definition of a small business according to the U.S. Small Business Administration (2012). Small business owners received the survey, regardless of the type of business or organization they operate, as long as the business met the definition in terms of number of employees. Owners whose businesses or organizations employ more than 500 persons did not meet the criteria to respond to the Internet or paper survey. Due to the nature of the study and the sampling technique, the participants were in St. Croix, St. Thomas, or St. John and most had valid e-mail addresses registered with one of the various agencies assisting in identifying small businesses throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands. The demographic questions at the beginning of the survey ensured the participants' eligibility up front and aided in generalizability.

The Internet and paper survey distribution used governmental and private agencies to identify potential participants who met the criteria of being small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The participant pool included small business owners in St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John, identified through the various agencies that collect contact information on local small businesses. When a listing of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands was available, stratified sampling helped to select participants from each island to ensure proportional representation in the study for each island. The stratified sampling took into account the population size of each island. Upon receipt of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I disseminated the Internet and paper surveys to the selected pool of prospective participants. Survey participants received a copy of the purpose of the study and the criteria for participating in the first segment of the survey instrument.

An important facet of ensuring the accuracy of any correlation is obtaining an appropriate sample size. According to Suresh and Chandrashekara (2012), sample size needs to be sufficiently large relative to the goals and potential variability. Correlation and regression as data analysis techniques benefit from an increase in the sample size, which results in a reduction in standard error (Suresh & Chandrashekara, 2012). Increasing the sample size also increases the probability of identifying correlations in the data, whereas a smaller sample size can result in missing existing relationships between the variables. Suresh and Chandrashekara listed three factors that researchers should consider when calculating a suitable sample size: the p value or alpha level, the power, and the effect. One of the hypotheses for this study, that a positive correlation exists between small business owners' feelings toward their community's social disorder and their level of engagement in the community, was a one-tailed hypothesis. Suresh and Chandrashekara noted that a one-tailed hypothesis requires 20% fewer participants than a two-tailed study. Testing the hypotheses for this study, therefore, required fewer participants than correlational studies with a two-tailed hypothesis.

A popular method of calculating sample size is power analysis. Suresh and Chandrashekara (2012) noted that the statistical power is the likelihood of detecting a clinical significance; therefore, a high power study is ideal. Calculating statistical power can occur either before data collection using a sample size based on previous studies or after data collection (Suresh & Chandrashekara, 2012). Given that power analysis is difficult to calculate by hand, researchers often use software packages available for estimating power, such as G*Power (Winqvist, Klein, Tolbert, & Sarnat, 2012). To

determine the needed sample size for a multiple regression analysis model, I used G*Power 3.1 software program (Faul et al., 2009). With three independent variables (physical or social disorder, size of business, and years of operation), a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$), and an alpha level of $\alpha = .05$, the needed sample size to achieve sufficient power (.80) was 77 respondents.

Ethical Consideration of Participants

The study met the guidelines set by the Walden University IRB to ensure the ethical security of the research participants. Acquiring informed consent from the participants was crucial to ensuring the ethical consideration of the persons who voluntarily provided information for this study. According to Hammond and Cooper (2011), for informed consent to succeed, all participants must completely understand what a researcher is asking them to do when agreeing to take part in a study. Researchers must consider how to ensure the consent briefing is sufficiently comprehensive so potential participants can understand the requirements placed upon them for the study (Hammond & Cooper, 2011). The briefing should be manageable, concise, and clear so that participants will read the entire thing. The first section of the survey included an explanation of the purpose of the study; how I would collect, use, and store the data; how the participants' identities would remain confidential; and the approximate time needed to complete the survey. Prospective participants who chose the paper survey received encouragement to ask questions after taking adequate time to review the survey briefing. Prospective participants who chose the online survey received encouragement to submit questions after reading the briefing.

The first segment of the survey instrument included a statement indicating that, by filling out the survey, the participants would be granting consent. The consent form served as the invitation e-mail to participants completing the online survey. The first segment of the survey also included a statement calling for the participants to indicate that they had read and understood all the requirements of the study, including that they were free to stop taking the survey at any time. To access the full survey, potential participants had to acknowledge that statement with a positive response. Finally, some initial questions served to ensure participants owned small businesses in the U.S. Virgin Islands, as required for the study. The participants' Internet responses will remain stored in a password-protected database for up to 5 years and will not appear printed on paper. Paper surveys will remain in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home for up to 5 years. The probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research were not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Data Collection

After IRB approval (Approval No. 04-01-14-0161399), data collection for the quantitative correlational and multiple regression analysis study began, and the method used was a self-administered online or paper survey. According to Terhanian and Bremer (2012), researchers increasingly use online surveys for social research, and researchers are becoming more familiar with distributing and collecting data electronically. Researchers are increasingly using online surveys to cut research costs, with almost half of all survey research spending in 2012 comprised of online surveys (Terhanian & Bremer, 2012). The survey included seven questions from the CCBS and 16 items from

the RMNDS, in addition to questions about personal demographic factors including business size (measured by approximate number of employees) and years of operation. Prospective participants choosing the electronic survey received an e-mail inviting them to contribute to the study and explaining the purpose of the study, the criteria for participation in the study, and the researcher's responsibilities regarding data handling and maintaining the participants' anonymity. The e-mail also included a direct hyperlink to the survey and a request that the participant forward the e-mail to any associates who met the study criteria. Paper copies were available only to small business owners for whom e-mail addresses were not available. For the participants using paper surveys, I met with the owners in person to request that they complete the survey.

Data Analysis

I checked all information collected from the quantitative, correlational online survey for completeness, and any surveys deemed incomplete were not eligible for consideration. The data imported into SPSS indicated if correlational and multiple regression relationships existed between attitudes toward the community and engagement in local volunteering service. To minimize the possibility for Type I and II errors, the study included a *p* value calculated and used in the hypotheses testing to ensure a confidence level of .95. The goal of researchers is to make predictions and to test the predictions by constructing models that can demonstrate whether observed patterns of relationships exist between variables (Kent, 2009). According to Kent (2009), researchers use statistical analysis to measure any changes in one or more independent variables.

The strategy for analysis in this study was to provide descriptive statistics by calculating the mean, mode, median, and standard deviation of the demographic items collected using the survey instrument. The next step was to perform a Spearman rank-ordered correlations test and multiple regression analysis test to determine whether a relationship existed between community engagement and attitudes toward a community by the business owners surveyed. The most common and best known correlation coefficient is the Pearson product–moment coefficient (Maturi & Elsayigh, 2010). According to Maturi and Elsayigh (2010), the Pearson product–moment correlation takes into account the linearity of a relationship. The standard deviations serve to establish regression coefficients.

A multiple regression analysis indicated whether social disorder could predict levels of engagement in community services, with additional regressions to include the demographic factors, per the research questions. The measure of the linear association between the variables in the study is the correlation sought in the hypothesis. The correlation coefficient (r) indicates how two variables in a specific sample change in relation to each other. The values for the correlation coefficient in a Pearson product–moment coefficient can range from -1 to +1, including 0 (Maturi & Elsayigh, 2010). The review of the literature demonstrated that Pearson's r was robust when tested against nonnormality, nonequal interval measurement, and the combination of nonnormality and nonequal interval measurement (Bishara & Hittner, 2012). Robustness in those scenarios is invaluable to ensuring the proper analysis of the collected data.

I examined multicollinearity as part of the multiple regression analysis process and if it existed, I would have removed the independent variable that correlated least with the dependent variable from the model. The t statistics and accompanying p values that are part of the SPSS multiple regression analysis output provided the significance of each regression coefficient. The F statistic and accompany p value that is part of the SPSS multiple regression output provided the significance of the multiple correlation (R and R^2). There is always a possibility of collinearity between independent variables. The tolerance and variance inflation factor statistics that are part of the SPSS multiple regression output determined the presence of the problem of high correlations between the independent variables.

The possibilities for the collected data included that there would be no correlation, or linear relationship, between the variables ($r = 0$). If $r = 1$, a positive correlation exists between the variables in the study. Table 2 includes the four research questions, the null hypothesis for each research question, the scale and demographic questions used, and the statistical analysis necessary. If a correlation coefficient is -1 , there is a negative correlation, meaning the variables move in opposite directions. If one variable increases, the other decreases. Finally, if r is between -1 and 0 or between 0 and 1 , the number produced is the strength of the linearity between the variables.

Instrumentation and Materials

Data collection for the study included an online or paper-based survey instrument with a cross-sectional design. Online surveys enable a wide audience of possible participants while remaining both time and cost efficient (Baatard, 2012). Several studies

since 2003 have indicated that online surveys can produce similar response rates to mail surveys (Baatard, 2012). Paper-based surveys were a convenient alternative for small business owners who did not wish to complete the survey electronically.

Table 2

Data Analysis Chart

Research question	Related null hypothesis	Scales/survey items	Statistical approach
1. What is the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners' in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives?	There is no relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives.	Physical disorder (RMNDS) and engagement (CCBS)	Spearman rank-ordered correlations
2. What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners' in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives?	The linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will not significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.	Physical disorder (RMNDS), engagement level (CCBS), size of business, years of operation	Multiple regression
3. What is the relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?	There is no relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives.	Social disorder (RMNDS) and engagement (CCBS)	Spearman rank-ordered correlations
4. What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?	The linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will not significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives.	Social disorder (RMNDS), engagement level (CCBS), size of business, years of operation	Multiple regression

Note. RMNDS = Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale; CCBS = Community Citizenship Behavior Scale.

The survey for this study included three areas of focus: business demographic data, community attitude, and level of community engagement. Demographic information on their small business included size (measured in number of employees) and length of time the small business had been operational. The RMNDS was suitable for determining social disorder (Mirowsky, 1999), and the CCBS was suitable to collect data on community engagement (Liden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008). The CCBS and the RMNDS both use an interval measurement scale.

Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale

The RMNDS was suitable for measuring social disorder in the local community. According to Mirowsky (1999), the basis of the RMNDS is the formation of perceived neighborhood disorder that refers to visible cues indicating a lack of order and social control in the community. Order, as defined by Mirowsky, is a state of peace, safety, and observance of the law, and control is an act of maintaining order in the community. Visible cues that residents perceive through observing the neighborhood indicate order and control. The scale includes social and physical disorder, information on crime in the neighborhood, and both ends of the range—order and disorder. The RMNDS is available for nonprofit academic use without the author’s written permission (see Appendix A).

Table 3

Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale Dimension of Social Disorder

Dimension of social disorder	Item no.
Social disorder and order	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Physical disorder and order	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

According to Mirowsky (1999), a theoretical distinction between physical and social disorders and order separates the 16 items of the RMNDS. Exploratory factor analysis by Mirowsky showed that all items indicating physical and social order and disorder load on one factor and that a scale encompassing all the items had an alpha reliability of .921. The scale included two factors differentiated between disorder (or negatively worded items) and order (or positively worded items). Mirowsky conducted a test of construct validity by identifying one community disorder factor that did not fit well (neighborhood disorder) and one methods factor (agreement bias). The 16-item total scale has an alpha reliability of .921, according to Mirowsky, and the scale with abandoned buildings and well-maintained houses and apartments eliminated has a slightly lower alpha reliability of .913. The study included the full 16-item scale for its survey.

Participants considered their neighborhood and rate 16 items based on a 4-factor Likert-type scale, where 0 indicates *strongly agree* and 4 indicates *strongly disagree*.

The following five questions are sample items from the RMNDS:

1. My neighborhood is safe.
2. There is a lot of crime in my neighborhood.
3. There is a lot of graffiti in my neighborhood.
4. My neighborhood is noisy.
5. I can trust most people in my neighborhood.

Community Citizenship Behavior Scale

The CCBS served to measure the engagement of small business owners to the local neighborhood. Liden et al. (2008) developed the CCBS as part of a broader study to assess leadership dimensions that focus on developing employees to their fullest potential in the areas of task effectiveness, community stewardship, self-motivation, and future leadership capabilities. The CCBS is available for nonprofit academic use without the authors' written permission (see Appendix B).

Liden et al. (2008) created the CCBS as one measure in a larger study and pooled the CCBS, subjected it to content validation, and pilot tested it with a large and varied sample of students. Liden et al. noted that they could not identify a scale of community citizenship behavior from past research, and they independently developed the CCBS as a 7-item scale ($\alpha = .84$). An exploratory factor analysis by Liden et al. indicated that a confirmatory factor analysis validated the scale using an organizational sample. Liden et al. noted that the CCBS had good internal consistency reliability, the mean is near the midpoint of the scale, and the variance was good ($SD > 1$).

Participants considered their feelings and involvement in volunteer and community service initiatives and rated seven items based on a 7-factor Likert-type scale, where 0 indicated *strongly agree* and 7 indicated *strongly disagree*. The following seven questions from the CCBS were on the research survey:

1. I am involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work.
2. I believe it is important to give back to the community.

3. I take into consideration the effects of decisions I make in my job on the overall community.
4. I believe that your company has the responsibility to improve the community in which it operates.
5. I encourage others in your company to volunteer in the community.
6. When possible, I try and get your organization involved in community projects that you are involved in.
7. I believe that an organization is obligated to serve the community in which it operates.

Usefulness to the Field

The findings from the study include important information that may help government agencies, nonprofits, and community stakeholders to understand better how and why small business owners choose to contribute and become engaged in their local neighborhood. In addition, the study included relevant information regarding the correlation between how an important stakeholder views social disorder in the U.S. Virgin Islands and whether that feeling translates to increased community engagement. The literature review in Chapter 2 provided insight into the types of research conducted into community engagement and perceived citizen attitudes regarding a local neighborhood. The focus of much of the research around community engagement was on reasons for volunteering, including altruism. Researchers have also studied citizens' attitudes toward their local community and focused on specific segments of the local population. The study of small business owners and their attitudes toward the community

have been the subject of past research; however, there is a lack of data regarding how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses. Thus, examining the correlation between social disorder and small business owners' community involvement may provide useful information to various stakeholders, including government agencies and nonprofits, which rely on small business owners in their operations. I will share a summary of the findings with the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education and the local government through the lieutenant governor's office, and I will e-mail the summary to everyone initially invited to participate in the survey. I will also share the findings with the local St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John Chambers of Commerce, where the distribution list for the surveys originated.

Summary

Chapter 3 included a justification for using a correlational and multiple regression design to examine the relationships between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The chapter included a delineation and demonstration of data collection methods and data analysis procedures suitable to answer the research questions. The data collection instrument was an online and paper-based survey. The survey collected business demographic information on small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, the survey instrument included items from the RMNDS to collect data on community perception from the small business owners. The survey instrument also included items from the CCBS related to community involvement. Finally, the procedures used to safeguard the ethical protection of participants ensured compliance with the requirements of the Walden University IRB.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Social disorder refers to the physical and social order in a neighborhood, including crime and graffiti. Engagement refers to the interactions between small businesses in the community. I used the data obtained from a survey of small business owners in the quantitative comparative study to address the research questions.

The study involved examining the data gathered from a sample of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands to explore the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives. Data analysis revealed whether a positive correlation existed in the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives. The study results indicated whether perceived social disorder by small business owners correlated positively with their level of engagement in community development initiatives. The results also indicated whether the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives correlated positively. Seventy-nine small business owners from the U.S. Virgin Islands participated in this study.

Research Tools

The survey for this study included three areas of focus: business demographic data, community attitude, and level of community engagement. Demographic information on their small business included size (measured in number of employees) and length of time the small business had been operational. The RMNDS was suitable for determining social disorder (Mirowsky, 1999), and the CCBS was suitable for collecting data on community engagement (Liden et al., 2008). The CCBS and the RMNDS both have an interval measurement scale.

To collect data for the quantitative correlational and multiple regression analysis study, the method used was a self-administered online or paper survey. The small business owners invited to complete the electronic survey received an e-mail explaining the purpose of the study and the criteria for participation in the study. Those asked to complete the paper survey received a handout to read and keep with the informed consent information. The informed consent e-mail or handout included a definition of social disorder and engagement in the introduction, which were two key terms for the survey and its results.

The informed consent form included explanations on the study background, procedures, sample questions, and the voluntary nature of the study. Additionally, the informed consent form included information on the risks and benefits of being in the study, that there would be no compensation for participating in the research, and my responsibilities regarding data handling and maintaining the participants' anonymity. The e-mail also included a hyperlink to the survey and a request that the participant forward

the e-mail to any associates who met the study criteria. Paper copies were available to small business owners for whom e-mail addresses were not available at the St. Croix or St. Thomas/St. John Chamber of Commerce. I met with the participants using paper surveys in person to ask them to complete the survey.

The survey included seven questions from the CCBS and 16 items from the RMNDS, including questions related to physical and social disorder. The CCBS questions related to whether the small business owner participated in community service. These included survey questions on whether the small business owner was active in community service and volunteer work and whether he or she encouraged others in the company to volunteer in the community. The CCBS consisted of seven questions, with a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The next set of questions on the survey was the RMNDS questions.

The topics of the RMNDS questions were physical order and disorder, such as abandoned buildings in the neighborhood, and social order and disorder, such as trust in neighbors. In addition, the survey opened with personal demographic factors including business size, measured by approximate number of employees, and years of operation. I included these personal demographic factors to aid in generalizability through multiple regression. The data collected underwent analysis for psychometric characteristics on the three summated scale scores.

The psychometric characteristics for the three summated scale scores are in Table 4. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients ranged from $r = .84$ to $r = .86$, with a median alpha of $r = .86$. The value of the reliability coefficients indicated that all scales

had adequate levels of internal reliability. This result was not surprising given that other researchers had previously validated and used the CCBS and RMNDS in studies.

Researchers had previously tested the scales used for the survey for internal reliability as well. Liden et al. (2008) initially used the CCBS, which is available in the PsycTESTS database, and Mirowsky (1999) initially developed and used the RMNDS, which is also available in the PsycTESTS database.

The number of questions used in the survey is also in Table 4. Seven questions related to level of engagement, all of which came from the CCBS instrument. Sixteen questions came from the RMNDS, broken up into social and physical order and disorder factors. Ten questions related to social order and disorder, and six questions related to physical order and disorder. In addition to these questions were two personal demographic questions relating to years in operation and size of the business. Size of the business served to ensure the respondents were meeting the definition of a small business, which is having 500 or less employees.

Table 4

Psychometric Characteristics for Summated Scale Scores

Score	No. of items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	α
Level of engagement	7	5.58	1.11	1.14	7.00	.86
Social disorder	10	2.15	0.49	1.10	3.00	.84
Physical disorder	6	1.99	0.64	1.00	3.50	.86

Note. $N = 79$.

Data Collection, Conversion, and Analysis

After receiving IRB approval on April 1, 2014 (Approval No. 04-01-14-0161399), data collection began with a series of e-mails to small business owners in the

directory for the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John Chamber of Commerce. The first segment of the survey instrument included a statement indicating that, by filling out the survey, the participants would be granting consent. The consent form served as the invitation e-mail to participants completing the online survey. The first segment of the survey also included a statement calling for the participants to indicate that they had read and understood all the requirements of the study, including that they were free to stop taking the survey at any time. To access the full survey, potential participants had to acknowledge that statement with a positive response. I sent e-mails to more than 220 small business owners, informing them of the study parameters, using the informed consent procedures, and requesting participation in the survey. Using SurveyMonkey's collection tools, 27 small business owners responded and completed the survey either completely or partially. A 12% response rate resulted from the e-mail requests, and six small business owners opted out of receiving e-mails related to the survey. The participants' Internet responses will remain stored in a password-protected database for up to 5 years and will not appear printed on paper.

I also distributed paper copies beginning in April 2014 through hand delivery. I encouraged prospective participants who chose the paper survey to ask questions after taking adequate time to review the survey briefing. Most small business owners completed the survey immediately following the informed consent process. Some small business owners chose to submit their surveys later, and others never returned a completed survey. The number of paper surveys collected from St. Croix and St. Thomas

was 59. I uploaded the surveys to SurveyMonkey beginning in June 2014. Paper surveys will remain in a locked file cabinet at my home for up to 5 years.

Eighty-five respondents completed at least part or all of the survey. Five respondents did not answer 16 survey items, and one respondent did not answer 23 items. These respondents did not complete enough of the survey to be part of the data analysis, so I removed these six respondents from the study, which resulted in a sample of 79. Seven of the remaining respondents did not answer one question, and I estimated their response using the mean of the entire sample for that variable. Assessing normality and the presence of outliers involved using box plots and Q-Q plots.

Data Analysis

The first step of analyzing the data was to examine all information collected from the quantitative, correlational online survey for completeness. Any surveys deemed incomplete were not eligible for consideration. After importing the data into SPSS, I examined if correlational and multiple regression relationships existed between attitudes toward the community and engagement in local volunteering opportunities. To lessen the possibility for Type I and II errors, the study included a *p* value calculated and used in the hypotheses testing to ensure a confidence level of .95. Data analysis involved providing descriptive statistics by calculating the mean, mode, median, and standard deviation of the demographic items collected using the survey instrument, which were years of service and number of employees.

The next step involved performing a Spearman rank-ordered correlations test and multiple regression analysis to determine whether a relationship existed between social

and physical disorder, the linear combination of perceived social and physical disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives. A multiple regression analysis indicated that neither social nor physical disorder could predict levels of engagement in community services, with additional regressions to include the demographic factors, per the research questions. The measure of the linear association between the variables in the study was the correlation sought in the hypothesis, and the data analysis failed to identify a correlation. The correlation coefficient (r) indicates how two variables in a specific sample change in relation to each other.

I examined multicollinearity with the variance inflation factor scores as part of the multiple regression analysis process, and if it existed, I would have removed the independent variable that correlated least with the dependent variable from the model. The analysis did not reveal evidence of multicollinearity, and an inspection of the intercorrelations for the independent variables revealed no evidence of multicollinearity. The t statistics and accompanying p values that were part of the SPSS multiple regression analysis output provided the significance of each regression coefficient. The F statistic and accompanying p value that is part of the SPSS multiple regression output provided the significance of the multiple correlation (R and R^2). There is always a possibility of collinearity between independent variables. The tolerance and variance inflation factor statistics that were part of the SPSS multiple regression output revealed the problem of high correlations between the independent variables.

The possibilities for the collected data included that there would be no correlation or linear relationship between the variables ($r = 0$). If $r = 1$, a positive correlation exists between the variables in the study. If a correlation coefficient is -1 , there is a negative correlation, meaning the variables move in opposite directions. If one variable increases, the other decreases. Finally, if r is between -1 and 0 or between 0 and 1 , the number produced indicates the strength of the linearity between the variables. The data analysis showed that there was no correlation, or linear relationship, between the variables.

Assessing normality and the presence of outliers involved using box plots and Q-Q plots. The number of outliers found was as follows: number of employees (seven high outliers), years of operation (four high outliers), level of engagement (three low outliers), social disorder (no outliers), and physical disorder (no outliers). Because of these outliers, Spearman rank-ordered correlations were more appropriate than Pearson correlations to test the hypotheses. Spearman's correlation was also more appropriate than Pearson because of the positive skew on the data. The study included no evidence of multicollinearity. The design of the study attained independence among the responses because all respondents completed only one survey.

Sampling Selection

Upon receipt of IRB approval, I disseminated the Internet and paper surveys to the selected pool of prospective participants. The population for the study consisted of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and I sent survey requests to small business owners in St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John. The sample included owners of businesses and organizations; most were members of the U.S. Virgin Islands Chamber of

Commerce. Small business owners received the survey invitation, regardless of the type of business or organization they operated, as long as the business met the definition in terms of number of employees.

Owners who employed more than 500 persons did not meet the criteria, and I would have excluded them during the data screening process, although no business owner with more than 500 persons responded to the survey. Due to the nature of the study and the sampling technique, the participants were in St. Croix, St. Thomas, or St. John and most had valid e-mail addresses registered with either the St. Croix or the St. Thomas/St. John Chamber of Commerce. The informed consent and the demographic questions at the beginning of the survey served to screen participants' eligibility up front and aided in generalizability.

I used the chamber of commerce membership e-mails to identify potential participants who met the criteria of being small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The paper surveys distributed to small business owners in St. Croix and St. Thomas included a copy of the informed consent form. For the paper survey, I used stratified sampling to select participants from each island to ensure proportional representation in the study for each island. The stratified sampling included the population size of each island. For the Internet survey, every member of the St. Croix or St. Thomas/St. John Chamber of Commerce received an e-mail to request his or her participation. The e-mail included a copy of the purpose of the study the criteria for participating, the informed consent, and a link to the SurveyMonkey-powered survey. Both the paper and the Internet survey informed consent sections included the same

information regarding the study, the criteria for participation, and participant rights and responsibilities.

Survey Participants Demographic Classification

The U.S. Virgin Islands small business owners in this study reported employee counts ranging from one employee (the owner) to 200 employees. The median number of employees for the small business owners who participated in the survey was three ($M = 9.89$, $SD = 24.24$). The frequency counts for selected variables are in Table 5. Years in operation for the small businesses ranged from 1-3 to 20-55. The median number of years in operation for the small business owners who participated in the survey was 10 years ($M = 12.75$, $SD = 11.58$).

Table 5

Frequency Counts for Selected Variables

Variable and category	<i>N</i>	%
Business size (employees) ^a		
1	21	26.6
2-4	23	29.1
5-9	17	21.5
10-200	18	22.8
Years in operation ^b		
1-3	20	25.3
4-9	15	19.0
10-19	26	32.9
20-55	18	22.8

Note. $N = 79$.

^a $M = 9.89$, $SD = 24.24$. ^b $M = 12.75$, $SD = 11.58$.

More than three quarters (77.2%) of small business owners surveyed had less than 10 employees on their payroll (see Table 5). The most employees reported was 200, but more than one fourth of small business owners reported being the only employee in the

business. Slightly more than 44% of small business owners in the sample had operated their business for 9 years or less, and 55.7% had operated their business for 10 or more years. In addition, 25.3% of the small business owners reported being in operation for 3 years or less, and 32.9% had been in operation between 10 and 19 years.

Descriptive Analysis of the Variables

The descriptive statistics for the seven survey items pertaining to level of engagement are in Table 6. The basis for these ratings was a 7-point metric (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*), and mean ratings appear from high to low. The highest rating was Item 4, “I believe it is important to give back to the community” ($M = 6.11$), and the lowest rated item was Item 3, “I am involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work” ($M = 5.03$).

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Level of Engagement Survey Items Sorted by Highest Mean

Survey item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
4. I believe it is important to give back to the community.	6.11	1.37
6. I believe that our company has the responsibility to improve the community in which it operates.	5.80	1.36
5. I take into consideration the effects of decisions I make in my job on the overall community.	5.76	1.50
7. I encourage others in the company to volunteer in the community.	5.52	1.37
9. I believe that an organization is obligated to serve the community in which it operates.	5.51	1.42
8. When possible, I try and get my organization involved in community projects that I am involved in.	5.30	1.47
3. I am involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work.	5.03	1.99

Note. Items rated on a 7-point metric: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

The descriptive statistics for the 10 survey items pertaining to level of social disorder are in Table 7. The basis of these ratings was a 4-point metric (1 = *strongly*

agree to 4 = *strongly disagree*) and mean ratings appear from high to low so that a higher mean score reflected more social disorder. The highest rated item was Item 8, “The police protection in my neighborhood is adequate” ($M = 2.86$), and the lowest rated item was Item 4, “There is a lot of graffiti in my neighborhood” ($M = 1.58$).

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Social Disorder Survey Items Sorted by Highest Mean

Survey item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
8. The police protection in my neighborhood is adequate.	2.86	0.76
9. My neighborhood is safe.	2.42	0.76
2. There are a lot of abandoned buildings in my neighborhood. ^a	2.28	0.90
3. People in my neighborhood take good care of their houses and apartments.	2.15	0.82
10. I can trust most people in my neighborhood.	2.15	0.64
1. My neighborhood is clean.	2.13	0.81
7. In my neighborhood, people watch out for each other.	2.05	0.68
5. My neighborhood is noisy. ^a	1.92	0.75
6. Vandalism is common in my neighborhood. ^a	1.91	0.80
4. There is a lot of graffiti in my neighborhood. ^a	1.58	0.65

Note. Items rated on a 4-point metric: 1 = *strongly agree* to 4 = *strongly disagree*.

^a Item was reverse scored so that a high value reflected more social disorder.

The descriptive statistics for the six survey items pertaining to level of physical disorder are in Table 8. The basis of these ratings was a 4-point metric (1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*), and mean ratings appear from high to low so that a higher mean score reflected more physical disorder. The highest rated item was Item 16, “I am afraid to walk alone at night near my home” ($M = 2.11$), and the lowest rated item was Item 11, “I’m always having trouble with my neighbors” ($M = 1.65$).

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Physical Disorder Survey Items Sorted by Highest Mean

Survey item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
16. I am afraid to walk alone at night near my home.	2.11	0.92
15. There is too much alcohol use in my neighborhood.	2.11	0.78
13. There is too much drug use in my neighborhood.	2.09	0.99
14. There is a lot of crime in my neighborhood.	2.03	0.78
12. There are too many people hanging around on the streets near my home.	1.96	0.88
11. I'm always having trouble with my neighbors.	1.65	0.66

Note. Items were rated on a 4-point metric: 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*.

^a All items were reverse-scored so that high values reflected more physical disorder.

Research Questions and Hypotheses Findings

The principal research questions identified for the study aligned with the goals of quantitative correlation design. The central questions for the study were as follows:

RQ1: What is the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ2: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ3: What is the relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

RQ4: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners

(business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

Methodological Assumptions

The findings did not meet the assumption of normality based on an inspection of box plots and Q-Q plots. I assessed the assumption of independence using Durbin-Watson statistics and determined the statistical values for both models were acceptable. I also assessed the assumption of a lack of multicollinearity with both variance inflation factor scores and intercorrelations among the independent variables. This assumption was met. The findings met the assumption of homoscedasticity based on the examination of residual plots. The assumption of linearity was examined from the inspection of scatterplots and correlation coefficients. The result of those analyses suggested linearity was not evident. In summary, the findings did not meet the assumptions of normality and linearity, so it was appropriate to calculate Spearman rank-ordered intercorrelations, which revealed none of the four independent variables related to the dependent variable (level of engagement). Given that the multivariate regression models yielded similar findings to the Spearman bivariate correlations, the regression models represented an acceptable though nonsignificant summary of the relationships among the variables. For each research question, there was an accompanying hypothesis, and the data analysis indicated whether there was support for the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 was as follows: There is a relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in

community development initiatives. The intercorrelations among the summated scale scores using Spearman's rho to test $H1_a$ are in Table 9. The correlation was not significant ($r_s = .04, p = .76$), which did not provide support for $H1_a$. There was no relationship identified between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives; therefore, there was no support in the data for Hypothesis 1.

Table 9

Spearman Rank Ordered Correlations for Selected Variables

Score	1	2	3	4	5
1. Employees	1.00				
2. Years of operation	.32***	1.00			
3. Engagement	.07	-.11	1.00		
4. Social disorder	.02	-.21	.01	1.00	
5. Physical disorder	.12	-.16	.04	.73*****	1.00

Note. $N = 79$.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. ***** $p < .001$.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 was as follows: The linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives. A multiple regression analysis was suitable to test $H2_a$ (see Table 10). The overall model was not significant ($p = .99$), which provided no support for $H2_a$. There was no relationship identified between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation); therefore, there was no support in the data for Hypothesis 2.

Table 10

Prediction of Engagement Based on Demographics and Social Disorder

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>	VIF
Intercept	5.41	0.63		8.52	.001	
Number of employees	0.00	0.01	.02	0.20	.84	1.00
Years of operation	0.00	0.01	.02	0.21	.83	1.05
Social disorder	0.06	0.27	.03	0.22	.82	1.05

Note. $N = 79$. VIF = variance inflation factor. Full model: $F(3, 75) = 0.04, p = .99$. $R^2 = .002$. Durbin-Watson = 1.98.

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 was as follows: There is a relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives. The intercorrelations among the summated scale scores using Spearman's rho appeared in Table 9. The correlation was not significant ($r_s = .01, p = .96$), which did not provide support for $H3_a$. There was no relationship identified between perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives; therefore, there was no support in the data for Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 was as follows: The linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographics variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives. Testing this involved conducting a multiple regression analysis (see Table 11). The overall model was not significant ($p = .99$), which provided no support for $H4_a$. There was no relationship identified between

perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographics variables (business size and years in operation); therefore, there was no support in the data for Hypothesis 4.

Table 11

Prediction of Engagement Based on Demographics and Physical Disorder

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Intercept	5.52	0.46		11.91	.001	
Number of employees	0.00	0.01	.02	0.19	.85	1.02
Years of operation	0.00	0.01	.02	0.17	.86	1.02
Physical disorder	0.01	0.20	.01	0.06	.95	1.05

Note. $N = 79$. VIF = variance inflation factor. Full model: $F(3, 75) = 0.02, p = .99$. $R^2 = .001$. Durbin-Watson = 1.99.

Data analysis showed there was no support for any of the hypotheses in the study.

For Research Question 1, the data did not reveal a relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives. For Research Question 2, data analysis and the research tools did not reveal a relationship between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives. For Research Question 3, the data analysis did not reveal a relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives. Finally, for Research Question 4, the research tools and data analysis did not reveal a relationship between the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners

(business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives.

Conclusion and Summary

The study involved gathering surveys from 79 respondents to (a) explore the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives; (b) determine whether the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives correlated positively; (c) determine whether perceived social disorder by small business owners correlated positively with their level of engagement in community development initiatives; and (d) determine whether the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives correlated positively. The data did not support $H1_a$ (physical disorder with engagement; see Table 4), $H2_a$ (physical disorder and demographics with engagement; see Table 6), $H3_a$ (social disorder with engagement; see Table 4), or $H4_a$ (social disorder and demographics with engagement; see Table 7). I could not reject the null hypotheses, the analysis did not reveal any association or difference between the variables. The final chapter includes a comparison of the findings to the literature, conclusions and implications, and a series of recommendations.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Overview

A comparison of the study findings to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 appears in Chapter 5. Included in the chapter are conclusions and a series of recommendations based on the study data and the current literature related to the topic. Also included in this chapter is an interpretation of the findings, limitations, recommendations for future research, and implications for small business owners and social change. The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Social disorder refers to physical and social order in a neighborhood, including crime and graffiti. Engagement refers to how small businesses interact in the community. The study included four research questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ2: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives?

RQ3: What is the relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

RQ4: What is the relationship between the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners

(business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives?

Based on the findings, I could not accept $H1_a$: There is a relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives. Based on the findings, I could not accept $H2_a$: The linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives (see Table 6). Based on the findings, I could not accept $H3_a$: There is a relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives (see Table 4). Based on the findings, I could not accept $H4_a$: The linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners in their local community and their demographic variables (business size and years in operation) will significantly predict their engagement level in community development initiatives (see Table 7). A comparison of the findings to the literature, conclusions, implications, and a series of recommendations follows in this chapter.

Interpretation of Findings

An overview of the literature related to small businesses and the community appeared in Chapter 2. The topics included small business and community, community development, community cohesion, the role of small businesses, impact on local economies, and creating public–private partnerships. This section includes a discussion

on the interpretation of findings as they relate to the research questions and the literature on small businesses and community.

As noted in the literature review, the results of correlation research should receive attention when there is too much emphasis on dependence and the relationship between the predictor and the criterion variables (Combs, 2010). According to Derrick et al. (2011), the findings of studies such as this one are only useful as an evaluation tool when they deliver similar results as those of peers using cautious judgment. The findings are therefore in the context of the research questions and the initial exploration contained in the literature review.

The topic of RQ1 was the relationship between perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community and their engagement level in community development initiatives. The methodology for this study was a quantitative survey. The data from surveys such as the one in this study allow scholars to predict future trends, assuming they have employed rigorous parameters for validity and reliability (Kurtoğlu, 2010). Although the data in this study did not reveal correlations, they did establish useful information, including the strong engagement of small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands and the fact that the small business owners remained similarly engaged, regardless of how they felt about the physical and social condition of their environment.

The data in this study showed that most small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands engage in their community. The focus of the TPB is three independent variables that guide intention: PBC, attitudes, and subjective norms (Ajzen, 1985). The component of attitude demonstrates a person's biased evaluation of the probable consequences

resulting from executing the intended action. For small business owners, this may include how their community engagement will affect their business. The second variable was subjective norms, which encompasses the standard expectations, the outside pressure on the small business owner, and the incentive to accept those expectations.

The final variable was attitude, which measures whether a person feels positively or negatively about performing an action and the perceived consequences (Uhlener et al., 2012). According to the TPB, the combination of all three variables in subjective norms has a direct influence on whether a specific person executes the action. This study involved looking at small business owners' attitudes related to their perceptions of the community. According to the findings of this study, the small business owners' attitudes toward their neighborhood did not affect their engagement level.

The topic of RQ2 was the relationship between the linear combination of perceived physical disorder by small business owners in their local community, the demographics of small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their engagement level in community development initiatives. An aim for this study was to identify any correlations between the variables. The literature review revealed the importance of field studies in correlation research, because although conducting quantitative research is not easy, it can provide results that are more actionable than figures collected exclusively in a laboratory setting if done cautiously (Payne & Wansink, 2011). The focus on small business owners and community engagement was largely due to the level of connectedness between the two noted in existing studies and other literature.

The findings were in agreement with researchers who concluded that business support of the community refers to a contribution to the public good (Kilkenny et al., 1999). Fitzgerald et al. (2010) cited three dimensions for socially responsible businesses from the U.S. Council of Economic Development: (a) consumers, employees, and shareholders; (b) the environment; and (c) the community. The results of this study were that small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands are socially responsible at the community level.

The topic of RQ3 was the relationship between perceived social disorder by small business owners and their level of engagement in community development initiatives. Social disorder, in the survey instrument, related to interpersonal relationships between members of the community. The hypothesis in RQ3 was that the perception of social disorder by small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands would affect their community engagement. According to the results of the study, this is not the case; rather, small business owners engage in the local community regardless of how they feel about the social disorder surrounding them.

The topic of RQ4 was the relationship between the linear combination of perceived social disorder by small business owners, the demographics of those small business owners (business size and years in operation), and their level of engagement in community development initiatives. In small economies such as the U.S. Virgin Islands, local businesses and community leaders look for opportunities for improved economic growth with sustainable and participatory development (Ruane et al., 2010). Many businesses and community organizations can contribute to development in small

economies. Law enforcement, juvenile justice agencies, social services, medical and mental health agencies, business leaders, community foundations, youth support groups, and family service organizations are some examples mentioned by Patton (2011). Within the study, I demonstrated that small businesses owners with companies of all sizes and with varying lengths of time in operation all contributed to community development initiatives, regardless of how they felt about the environment.

The existing engagement from small business owners identified in this study supported the notion that community development efforts benefit greatly from local companies. The literature review covered research by Fitzgerald et al. (2010), who identified ways in which leaders of small businesses respond to community needs, including providing leadership in civic or other organizations, holding elected or appointed offices, providing assistance to community development and planning, donating to local schools and youth programs, and participating in community activities. The majority of small business owners in this study noted their own engagement in the local U.S. Virgin Islands community.

The study findings related to high engagement by small business owners also appeared to align with the concept of community cohesion. As described by Lowndes and Thorp (2011), the elements of a cohesive community include a shared vision and a sense of belonging for all members, the multiplicity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances receives consideration, and durable relationships develop between people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances at work, in schools, and within neighborhoods. A shared vision for a community requires involvement and engagement

from all stakeholders, as well as respect for the various viewpoints and backgrounds found within the U.S. Virgin Islands. Within this study, I found that most small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands believe it is important to give back to the community.

Limitations of the Current Study

This study included a random sampling method based on membership to the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John Chambers of Commerce to avoid omitting small business owners who differed systematically from those included in the sampling frame. Any other probability or nonprobability sampling method would have biased the study results. The target population for the study was small business owners who were members of the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John Chambers of Commerce from April to July 2014. Staff at the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John Chambers of Commerce provided online listings of businesses with contact information, including e-mail.

Small business owners who were not members of the St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John Chambers of Commerce were not targets for the study, which may have hindered the study by decreasing the pool of available respondents. Another limitation related to the outreach to the chamber of commerce members. I contacted all members with e-mail addresses, but some members did not have e-mail addresses listed. Although some small business owners chose a paper survey, I did not contact some persons in person and did not have e-mail addresses, so I did not survey them, although they did belong to their respective chamber of commerce.

Recommendations for Future Research

The literature on small business owners and their community, and the findings in this study, indicated a high level of community engagement exists among small business owners. Notwithstanding how each individual small business owner felt about the neighborhood, the majority reported they engaged in community development activities, which supported most of the literature reviewed and the common sentiment that small business owners are an integral part of communities because of their financial and social contributions. There are unknown factors regarding small businesses and their involvement in community development, even after conducting this study. The lack of correlations in the findings indicated that attitudes toward their immediate surroundings do not affect engagement levels for small business owners. The number of employees and the years of operation did not predict engagement levels; therefore, I did not identify variables that were significant in determining why small business owners become involved or who is more likely to contribute.

Therefore, future researchers should address the following questions: What variables related to small business owners determine community engagement by companies? What factors related to small businesses are significant in predicting community engagement (for example, the tax environment or start-up costs)? Are there any small business types that correlate to enhanced community engagement (for example, manufacturing vs. service oriented)? I did not address these questions in this study, but they may assist future researchers in determining whether small business owners engage in the community.

Methodological Enhancements

Based on the study results, there are various ways to capture data on small business owners' motivations or to identify what factors may cause higher or lower engagement levels for them. For example, rather than business size and years in operation, future researchers can focus on other factors, such as the type of business (for example, service vs. manufacturing). One possible research question is whether small business owners in the service industry have higher levels of engagement in their community than do small business owners in the manufacturing sector. The researcher can add *business type* as a demographic factor on the instrument to capture those data.

The personality of small business owners is another variable possibly worth exploring, given how it might affect their attitude toward community engagement. For example, is the small business owner outgoing or an introvert? This survey item could also be part of a future study as a demographic factor collected at the beginning of the study alongside existing demographic factors such as years in operation and number of employees. The limitation to this approach would be whether the small business owners are able to self-identify their personality type.

Another possible variable of interest is how successful the small business is and whether highly profitable small businesses engage in the community more than less profitable ones. Another methodological change that could alter the study results would be to use a different definition of engagement or physical disorder. The validated survey instruments used in this study defined physical and social disorder through a series of questions focused on various measures of social wellness. If a researcher defines those

measures through a different survey instrument, the results might be different from the results in this study.

The majority of the suggestions for future research involve only minor tweaks to this study conducted on small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. For changes to the demographic factors, future researchers can recycle the survey instruments used in this study (RMNDS and CCBS) and couple them with the new items previously outlined. If future research includes changes to the definition of social and physical disorder used in this study, the researchers must employ new survey instruments.

Implications for Social Change

There were several potential outcomes of this study, including a better understanding of the role local perceptions regarding social disorder play in the community involvement of entrepreneurs. The results of the study indicated that the perceptions of small business owners toward their community do not correlate with their engagement level in their community. One practical implication of the research is an enhanced ability for stakeholders to engage and encourage critical aid from small business owners for the purpose of community development efforts. Besser and Miller (2001) noted the need for local sellers to publicize their activities so they can reap the rewards of their participation in community development initiatives. Local residents' knowledge of small business owners' level of engagement in their neighborhood, contained as a measurement in this study, is helpful in the residents' decision to reward the business. Besser and Miller also found that residents must care and involve themselves in their community to reward businesses for their engagement. When

residents do not care about their community, they will not respond positively to small business owners who do.

The well-being of small businesses in difficult economic conditions is a prominent topic of discussion. Research related to factors in community involvement by small business owners, such as this study, is significant because it can speak to the overall health of both the community and the private sector. Pertinent evidence exists that business donations have an independent positive effect on the success of a business, which, according to Kilkenny et al. (1999), demonstrates that local charitable investing pays off. Business owners who contribute and engage in their neighborhood can realize economic gains from their actions.

The importance of community engagement for local small business owners extends beyond financial benefits. Social interactions by small business owners are as significant as economics in determining the success of a business (Kilkenny et al., 1999). Small business owners in a competitive and downbeat economic climate can improve their social relations as a way to improve the likelihood of economic success. Kilkenny et al. (1999) also found robust evidence for the link between successful businesses and entrepreneurial approaches that view the role of small business as providing mutual, symmetric, and reciprocated support to the regional community. Through these findings, Kilkenny et al. (1999) indicated the importance of studying the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the community.

Small business owners possess numerous qualities that can benefit a local community, especially communities in low-income areas and areas experiencing severe

economic struggles, such as the U.S. Virgin Islands. Surdez et al. (2012) found that current research indicated that to become successful businesspeople, individuals should enhance their skills in negotiation along with their creativity and leadership, which are learnable attitudes and behaviors. These skills, as well as the capacity to instill resources and capital into their neighborhood, make small business owners an important component of a successful community development strategy.

Understanding the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners may assist leaders in government agencies and other local entities involved in community development to tap into an increased pool of capital and resources. Using the descriptive statistics used in this study, I did not identify a relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Given the findings in this study, policy makers and stakeholders in local government agencies could adjust their outreach toward these small business owners, understanding that the small business owners' attitudes toward their community do not affect their engagement.

Community activists, government officials, and businesspersons can use the findings in this study to adjust local improvement efforts and enhance the possibilities of success in the face of economic challenges. One of the goals for this study was to empower stakeholders to use the information identified through this research to target and improve upon existing community development initiatives. The study results demonstrated overwhelming engagement by small business owners in their community, which bolstered the existing literature regarding how active they are in their neighborhoods.

An additional goal was to identify the current engagement levels between small businesses and low-income neighborhoods. The study results clearly indicated strong levels of community engagement by small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The data from the study can serve to identify possible agreement between small businesses and government agencies on areas for improvement. Identifying common areas of distress can help spur greater collaboration between community stakeholders and local small businesses, thereby creating an improved local environment.

Conclusion

The problem addressed in this study was that, although government support for nonprofits and community development organizations is dwindling, policy makers have demonstrated a lack of understanding regarding how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners in the localized Virgin Islands community. Additionally, the study involved examining two broad demographic factors for small business owners: the size of the business (number of employees) and the length of time the business had been operating. These factors allowed for data analysis beyond basic correlation and the use of multiple regression analysis.

The literature review provided an overview of the traditional interdependency between small business owners and their community. Important topics emerged, such as community cohesion, community development, and the role of small businesses as drivers of economic and social growth in their neighborhood. Following the literature

review, I failed to identify factors that determined or correlated specific small business owners with their community engagement levels.

A description of the methodology used to answer the research questions regarding small business owners and their engagement levels in the community appeared in Chapter 3. A quantitative survey was the most appropriate means of gathering the data needed to test the hypotheses. A discussion on the selected quantitative survey instruments, which were both existing instruments validated and used in prior studies related to attitudes and engagement in the community, also appeared in Chapter 4.

The results of the study conducted via survey, consisting of 79 valid responses from small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands, were in Chapter 4. Statistical analysis of the surveys revealed no support for the study hypotheses. No connection was found between small business owners' engagement in the U.S. Virgin Islands community and their attitudes toward physical or social disorder in the community. Additionally, their engagement levels did not correlate with the years of operation or the size of their business as measured by the number of employees.

A discussion and analysis surrounding the quantitative findings of the study appeared in Chapter 5. One outcome of the study was that small business owners in the U.S. Virgin Islands engage in community development, regardless of their attitudes toward the social disorder in their surroundings. Ideas for future research in the area of small business owners and their engagement in community development also emerged in Chapter 5. A discussion on the implications for social change arising from this study, including the hope that the study findings are helpful in continuing to forge

understanding and sustained collaboration between small business owners and the communities they serve, also appeared in the chapter.

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Appendix A: Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale



Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale

PsycTESTS Citation:

Mirowsky, J. (1999). Ross-Mirowsky Neighborhood Disorder Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: 10.1037/t06016-000

Test Shown: Full

Test Format:

Items are rated on a 4-point Likert-type scale: Disorder items are scored strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), and strongly agree (4). Order items are scored strongly agree (1), agree (2), disagree (3), and strongly disagree (4).

Source:

Supplied by author.

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Questionnaire

Next, I'd like to ask you some questions about your neighborhood. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

My neighborhood is safe. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?

In my neighborhood, people watch out for each other. (Do you . . .)

The police protection in my neighborhood is adequate. (Do you . . .)

I'm always having trouble with my neighbors. (Do you . . .)

I can trust most people in my neighborhood. (Do you . . .)

There are too many people hanging around on the streets near my home. (Do you . . .)

There is a lot of crime in my neighborhood. (Do you . . .)

There is too much drug use in my neighborhood. (Do you . . .)

There is too much alcohol use in my neighborhood. (Do you . . .)

I am afraid to walk alone at night near my home. (Do you . . .)

There is a lot of graffiti in my neighborhood. (Do you . . .)

My neighborhood is noisy. (Do you . . .)

Vandalism is common in my neighborhood. (Do you . . .)

There are a lot of abandoned buildings in my neighborhood. (Do you . . .)

My neighborhood is clean. (Do you . . .)

People in my neighborhood take good care of their houses and apartments. (Do you . . .)

Appendix B: Community Citizenship Behavior Scale



Community Citizenship Behavior Scale

Note: Test name created by PsycTESTS

PsycTESTS Citation:

Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Community Citizenship Behavior Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: 10.1037/t11359-000

Test Shown: Full

Test Format:

Servant Leadership Measure responses are scaled from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Source:

Liden, Robert C., Wayne, Sandy J., Zhao, Hao, & Henderson, David. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multi-level assessment. *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol 19(2), 161-177. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.01.006, © 2008 by Elsevier. Reproduced by Permission of Elsevier.

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Community Citizenship Behavior Scale

Items

1. I am involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work.
2. I believe it is important to give back to the community.
3. I take into consideration the effects of decisions I make in my job on the overall community.
4. I believe that our company has the responsibility to improve the community in which it operates.
5. I encourage others in the company to volunteer in the community.
6. When possible, I try and get my organization involved in community projects that I am involved in.
7. I believe that an organization is obligated to serve the community in which it operates.

Appendix C: Consent Forms

March 1, 2014

Dear Saul Santiago,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Examining the Relationship between Social Disorder and Level of Engagement of Small Business Owners in the Virgin Islands within the St. Thomas-St. John Chamber of Commerce website. As part of this study, I authorize you to retrieve small business contact information provided through the Chamber of Commerce website and contact members to request participation in the study. Individual small business owners' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: Allowing access to our member's contact information through our website and allowing the contacting of our members by the researcher to request survey participation. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,





St. Croix Chamber of Commerce

[Redacted]

Saul Santiago

[Redacted]

VIA EMAIL: [Redacted]

February 25, 2014

Dear Saul Santiago,

Thank you for contacting us concerning your scholarly research proposal entitled Examining the Relationship Between Social Disorder and Level of Engagement of Small Business Owners in the Virgin Islands. You have asked us for permission to use contact information for our members which is already publicly available on our website (stxchamber.org). Given that such information is publicly available to anyone who visits our website, we do not object to you (or anybody else who visits our website) using any of the contact information that is already publicly available thereon. Of course, we cannot speak for the willingness (or lack thereof) of any of our members to participate in your scholarly research; any such participation would be entirely voluntary and at the discretion of each member contacted by you.

Our lack of objection to you using publicly-available information from our website should not be interpreted, either expressly or impliedly, as our participation in or endorsement of your scholarly research, any publications thereof and/or any conclusions drawn therefrom.

Thank you for confirming that all data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from Walden University.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Appendix D: Invitation Letter to Participants

Internet-based CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study regarding how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the Virgin Islands. The primary purpose of this study will be to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Social disorder refers to how you view the physical and social order in the neighborhood, including crime, graffiti etc. Engagement refers to how you and your small business interact in the community. The researcher is inviting small business owners in the US Virgin Islands to be in the study. Small businesses are defined as having 500 or fewer employees. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Saul Santiago, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a 23 item (approximately 15 minute) internet survey regarding your views on social disorder and community engagement in the US virgin Islands.
- Completing the survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes
- You will only be asked to complete the survey one time

Here are some sample items (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree):

1. I am involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work.
2. I believe it is important to give back to the community.
3. My neighborhood is clean.
4. There are a lot of abandoned buildings in my neighborhood.
5. People in my neighborhood take good care of their houses and apartments.
6. I'm always having trouble with my neighbors. (Do you . . .)
7. There are too many people hanging around on the streets near my home. (Do you . . .)
8. There is too much drug use in my neighborhood.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one associated with the researcher will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue, stress or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

One potential outcome of this study is a better understanding of the role local perceptions regarding social disorder play in the community involvement of entrepreneurs. The practical

implication of the research is an enhanced ability for policy makers to engage and encourage critical assistance from small business owners for the purpose of community development efforts.

Payment:

There will be no compensation for participating in this research.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not collect personal information for this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by ensuring that the participants' internet responses will remain stored in a password-protected database for up to five years and will not appear printed on paper. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via email at [REDACTED] or via phone at [REDACTED]. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Walden University's approval number for this study is 04-01-14-0161399 and it expires on March 31, 2015.

Please print or save this consent form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By clicking the link below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.



Paper-Based CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study regarding how social disorders relate to community engagement in small businesses in the Virgin Islands. The primary purpose of this study will be to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners. Social disorder refers to how you view the physical and social order in the neighborhood, including crime, graffiti etc. Engagement refers to how you and your small business interact in the community. The researcher is inviting small business owners in the US Virgin Islands to be in the study. Small businesses are defined as having 500 or fewer employees. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Saul Santiago, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between social disorder and engagement of small business owners.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Complete a 23 item (approximately 15 minute) survey regarding your views on social disorder and community engagement in the US virgin Islands.
- Completing the survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes
- You will only be asked to complete the survey one time

Here are some sample items (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree):

1. I am involved in community service and volunteer activities outside of work.
2. I believe it is important to give back to the community.
3. My neighborhood is clean.
4. There are a lot of abandoned buildings in my neighborhood.
5. People in my neighborhood take good care of their houses and apartments.
6. I'm always having trouble with my neighbors. (Do you . . .)
7. There are too many people hanging around on the streets near my home. (Do you . . .)
8. There is too much drug use in my neighborhood.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one associated with the researcher will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue, stress or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

One potential outcome of this study is a better understanding of the role local perceptions regarding social disorder play in the community involvement of entrepreneurs. The practical

implication of the research is an enhanced ability for policy makers to engage and encourage critical assistance from small business owners for the purpose of community development efforts.

Payment:

There will be no compensation for participating in this research.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not collect personal information for this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Paper surveys will be stored in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home for up to five years. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via email at: [REDACTED] or via phone at [REDACTED]. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] Walden University's approval number for this study is 04-01-14-0161399 and it expires on March 31, 2015.

Statement of Consent:

You may keep this consent form for your records. In order to protect your privacy signatures are not being collected and completion of the survey will indicate your consent, if you choose to participate.



Curriculum Vitae

Saul Santiago

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

Walden University, Minneapolis, MN

Ph.D. in Management (2015)

Dissertation: "Social Disorder and Level of Engagement of Small Business Owners in the Virgin Islands "

Advisor: Dr. Walter McCollum

University of Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ

M.A. in Management and Information Systems (2005)

Robert Morris College, Chicago, IL

B.A. Computer Networking (2002)

WORK EXPERIENCE

U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education, St. Croix, VI

Systems Analyst 2002-2013

Acting Assistant Director, Human Resources 2014