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A Qualitative Examination of Factors Potentially Impacting Displacement of Historically Black Communities

Daffney Moore
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

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Daffney Moore

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

A Qualitative Examination of Factors Potentially Impacting Displacement of Historically

Black Communities

by

Daffney Moore

MA, Jackson State University, 2001

BS, Murray State University, 1997

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Local Government Management for Sustainable Communities

Walden University

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Abstract

Historically, Black communities have often been discussed in the context of crime and poverty; however, most Black communities were flourishing neighborhoods with businesses, churches, and schools. Most of the literature related to gentrification and displacement does not address the root causes of the disappearance of Black communities, which generally centers on policies, legislation, force-outs, economic development, and racial disparities. This case study aimed to explore the displacement of a suburban historically Black community in St. Louis County, Missouri. Scholars have scarcely examined or written about the history of Black communities. The research question sought to explore the impact of displacement on Hadley Township, a historically Black community in Richmond Heights, Missouri. Critical race theory served as the theoretical framework. Purposive and snowball sampling was used to recruit 17 current and former residents, historians, developers, reporters, and political officials for semi-structured interviews. The data were coded and organized by themes using NVivo software. Four themes emerged from the data analysis: the resilience and self-determination of a community, the peripheral push of suburban Black community displacement, the impact of economic forces on Black community displacement, and racial economic dynamics. The themes supported the idea that race played a role in Richmond Heights' decision to urbanize Hadley Township. The potential impact towards positive social change may be to provide insights into how policies and programs may be improved to preserve historically Black communities and provide hope to its residents.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Catherine Moore, and in loving memory of my grandmother, Katie Bell Simon Ervin. My mom has been my rock and biggest cheerleader. I am grateful for her support and for keeping me balanced. My grandmother was a leader before her time. She taught me to keep moving despite obstacles and believe in myself.

To my siblings, thank you Andre Moore, Douglas Scott, Patricia Ferrell, Gloria Hamilton, and my brother-in-law, John Hamilton. To my dad, Jonas Moore, thank you for calling and checking on me. To my nieces and nephews, Brittany Ferrell, Raziya Ferrell, Diamond Johnson, Janaya Scott, Janitta Scott, Corey Hamilton, Shaquille Hamilton, Jonas Moore, and Rineys Moore: everything is achievable if you stay focused, never give up on your dreams, press through the pain, and keep fighting for yourself.

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“The circumstances that surround a man’s life are not important. How that man responds to those circumstances is important. His response is the ultimate determining factor between success and failure.” – Booker T. Washington

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Most conversations regarding suburbia in America have focused on White, middle-class families and individuals. However, most people know little about historically Black suburban communities in the United States (Wiese, 2004). Much of the research about historically Black communities (HBCs) focuses on inner cities and the struggles associated with living in those communities. HBCs are an essential part of the history of the United States, as these communities have played an essential role in the stability of Black families.

HBCs are inner-city and urban communities, and over 60% of their population comprises African Americans (Rothstein, 2017). HBCs resulted from segregation, covenants, redlining, and sundown towns. Black people often lived on the outskirts of town, and many lived in what is now known as inner suburb communities. There are few remnants and little knowledge of most HBCs and their role in the upward mobility, sense of belonging and community, and cultural significance in the lives of Black people.

These communities began to disappear as economic development and white flight led to more White people moving to the suburbs. HBCs remain vulnerable and an easy target due to their location and lack of resources to challenge eminent domain, housing policies, and low property evaluations. As Black people continue to be displaced due to the disappearance of HBCs, there is a need for acknowledgement of and dialogue about these communities (Knight & Gharipour, 2016; Marcantonio & Karner, 2014).

The primary purpose of this first chapter is to establish the research question that guided the study. It also outlines the problem and purpose of the research, discusses the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and provides an overview of the research design, study limitations, and significance. These aspects will be explored in greater depth in later chapters.

Background

Segregation along racial lines is a product of structural and systemic racism in American society (Akbar et al., 2019). While segregation has had devastating effects on the country, many thriving Black communities emerged because of its existence. Many of these communities date back to the mid-19th century and were created after the Civil War as a residual of slavery (Rothstein, 2017). Although most HBCs historically were either isolated rural communities or inner-city neighborhoods, many of these communities also emerged on the outskirts of towns, beyond city limits, due to covenants and laws established to prohibit Blacks and whites from living together (Rothstein, 2017).

Although HBCs are the product of racial segregation, today, countless African Americans in inner-city HBCs have been forced out of their homes across the country due to displacement, gentrification, redevelopment, and urban renewal in the name of rebuilding distressed inner cities (Chapple & Zuk, 2016; Hyra, 2016; Polanco, 2014). However, dismantling HBCs does not just occur in American inner cities. Suburban HBCs are also the frequent target of white encroachment due to their proximity to major thoroughfares, interstate intersections, and edge city business districts (Garreau, 2011; Hyra, 2016; Knight & Gharipour, 2016). Sales tax generation, rezoning, planning, and the

lack of adequate representation also play a role in the displacement of these communities (Knight & Gharipour, 2016; Marcantonio & Karner, 2014).

For the most part, much of the current research on the displacement of HBCs is related to the upper-middle-class transformation of distressed inner-city Black neighborhoods. The primary reason the disappearance of suburban African American communities has been neglected is that urban historians and other social scientists have only recently acknowledged the presence of Black suburbs (Jackson, 1985). Perhaps the best study of Black suburbanization is Andrew Wiese's *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (2004). While most scholars depict the Great Migration of Southern African Americans as a move from the rural South to inner-city ghettos, Wiese argues that this characterization omits much of the story (2004). Carefully chronicling the migration of many Southern Blacks into segregated Black enclaves on the periphery of Northern cities, Wiese dispels the notion that White people were the only original inhabitants of suburbia. Although most urban sociologists have come to recognize the movement of inner-city Blacks to inner-ring suburbs since the 1968 Fair Housing Act as an essential development in the last generation, urban historians have only begun to show that suburbs in the first half of the twentieth century were more than quaint neighborhoods with white picket fences and White residents (Cohen, 2018).

Albeit Wiese's (2004) historical overview of Black suburbanization ends with a discussion of how these segregated Black communities were beginning to disappear at the start of the present century, much more attention needs to be paid to the forces that

have led to the wholesale displacement of Black suburban enclaves over the last twenty years. Colin Gordon's recent work, *Citizen Brown: Race, Democracy, and Inequality in the St. Louis Suburbs* (2019), is an excellent first step in this examination. However, the focus of Gordon's review of conditions that led to the Ferguson unrest in 2014 is not primarily on the disappearance of segregated Black communities. The goal of the present study, then, is to examine the economic and political forces that led to the displacement of a particular Black community to provide an additional historical account to understand how and why these Black communities have disappeared. As Citizen Brown and Gordon's book *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City* (2009) indicates, the St. Louis metropolitan region, for various reasons, is very fertile ground for studying American systemic and structural racism in an urban context. Consequently, the community that this study examined is an inner-ring suburb in West St. Louis County.

Residents of urban cores and their suburbs—Black and White—are often unaware of the history of those HBCs that no longer exist or are almost obsolete. The history of these communities has been forgotten and, in many cases, is virtually inaccessible. The second goal of this study, therefore, was to uncover the history of one suburban HBC that has disappeared and to give the residents who were displaced the opportunity to share their experiences of living in a community that was displaced to create shopping centers and business districts for upper-middle-class White people. The hope is that this research will stimulate a much-needed dialogue about the existence of HBCs, their disappearance, and the work that needs to begin to stop the displacement of Black residents.

Though African Americans have been theoretically fellow citizens to White people since the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, White people have used the government to isolate African Americans in segregated communities in undesirable sections of American cities and suburbs (Freixas & Abbott, 2019; Gordon, 2009; Ryan, 2018). Utilizing legal and policy devices such as racial covenants and redlining to deprive African Americans of their right to live where they want—even after the 1968 Fair Housing Act—White people have constructed walls around these communities (Cohen, 2018; Freixas & Abbott, 2019; Rothstein, 2017; Ryan, 2018). Nevertheless, African Americans have often created stable and vibrant communities inside these walls. Indeed, they have used segregation to define who they are as a community. Moreover, in many cases, the very depreciation of Black communities by White people has been a significant factor in the economic stability of Black neighborhoods (Massey & Tannen, 2018; Perry et al., 2018).

Understanding the effect of displacement on HBCs is critical in determining the true impact that racism and segregation have had on African Americans. Research has suggested that the concept of race and its analog—racism—emerged simultaneously with the colonization of America (Crowe, 2012; Hine et al., 2004). Ever since Columbus, settler colonialism has been used to justify the subjugation and exploitation of Native and Black American lives (Wolfe, 2006). While the Civil War ended slavery, racism continues to have detrimental consequences for African Americans into the 21st century. Even though Reconstruction and the New Deal were supposed to provide liberation and opportunities for advancement and prosperity, both failed to produce outcomes to

integrate and build economic wealth for African Americans (Hine et al., 2004). Only a tiny percentage of African Americans became landowners following Reconstruction due to White reluctance to sell land to Black people and the federal government's decision not to redistribute land in the South (Logan & Temin, 2020). While millions of Americans benefited from programs under the New Deal, like Social Security and protections under the National Labor Relations Act, Black people were systemically excluded because occupations overwhelmingly possessed by them were cut from New Deal initiatives (Rolley, 2020).

However, for HBCs, this lack of “true” integration has usually resulted in economic and physical decay. Perceived as inferior to White communities, white-dominated institutions such as banks and insurance companies have used—and continue to use—this as a justification for not availing African Americans of the opportunity to invest in their communities. Over time, this disinvestment has deteriorated building conditions and depressed property values (Glick, 2008; Perry et al., 2018). Consequently, HBCs in cities and suburbs across the United States have been made vulnerable to what might be referred to as “economic imperialism.” Though initially formed in areas seen as undesirable, HBCs have been increasingly erased or displaced when these areas suddenly become desirable to White people. This can be due to geographical expansion or changing market forces. In central cities, this phenomenon has been well-researched. Over the last generation, many distressed Black neighborhoods have become attractive to young, middle-class White people attracted by the historic building stock often located there. As they buy up artificially cheap properties, property values and rents escalate, and

the existing African American residents are displaced. Although the government sometimes accelerates this process through planning initiatives and infrastructure improvements, this process primarily results from market forces (Perry et al., 2018).

However, the story of economic imperialism against suburban HBCs is seemingly fundamentally different. Often economically stronger than inner-city HBCs, suburban HBCs appear more resilient than inner-city HBCs in resisting market pressures. Although in most cases relatively modest compared to predominantly White suburban communities, the housing stock in most suburban HBCs comprises single-family houses. Not only do the owners of these properties tend to be owner-occupants, but they also tend to have lived longer in these communities than the typical residents of an inner-city HBC. As a result, it can be assumed that their commitment to and identification with their HBC is more substantial than would be the case in inner-city HBCs.

This situation is bolstered by the fact that because of structural racism, property values in suburban HBCs are artificially depressed concerning those in adjacent White suburban communities. The residents are keenly aware that they could not afford to buy a comparable property in a predominantly White suburban community if they were to sell for whatever reason. All of this suggests that residents of suburban HBCs have a psychosociological and economic incentive to resist displacement actively. Consequently, whenever a suburban HBC has been in the way of a proposed commercial or residential development, the dislodgement of that community has necessitated a more overt involvement of government in its taking.

Richmond Heights is an inner-ring suburb of St. Louis County. Hadley Township, a community of Richmond Heights, was the focus of this research study. In 2019, Richmond Heights was 77.1% White, 10.3% Black, 6.8% Asian, and 3.9% Latino or Hispanic (United States Census Bureau, 2018, 2019, 2021). Hadley Township was founded in 1907 as a business town for Evens-Howard Brick Works, a company that built houses for Black employees who had migrated from the South. Hadley Township was one of only a few places where Blacks could live in St. Louis County during that time (Gillerman, 2014).

Problem Statement

This study intended to address the impact of the displacement of suburban HBCs near metropolitan cities like St. Louis, Missouri. Specifically, it addressed the impact of the displacement of Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. The story of these Black communities that have disappeared due to displacement has been vastly untold (Crowe, 2012; Freixas & Abbott, 2019). This topic needs to be examined in greater detail to create a dialogue and address these communities' ongoing difficulties.

Market forces and public policies have contributed to these HBCs' displacement. Consequently, the residents who have been displaced have suffered a loss of self-confidence, long-term trauma, and emotional distress (Knight & Gharipour, 2016). Unfortunately, the ramifications of displacement extend far into the future. For the displaced, the disappearance of their HBCs destroys much of their identity. For the rest of society, it erases a valuable part of its history and the meaning that this history has in understanding the role that race and class have in America. At the core of the

displacement of suburban HBCs has been the raw use of power and privilege at the expense of those who are disadvantaged by systems of oppression that exist individually, institutionally, socially, and culturally. When considering this issue, the base problem is how the law and government policies have created a power differential that contributes to the erasure of HBCs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore more fully the impact of the forces that led to the disappearance of suburban HBCs in Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. This qualitative study focused on the formation of this HBC, the arc of its history, the conditions that made the site valuable for other uses, the process of the displacement, the response of the residents to the taking, and any attempt to trace the movement of the residents after displacement. The ultimate goal of the study was to develop policy recommendations to prevent the forcible displacement of HBCs in the future.

Research Question

The following research question guided this qualitative case study: How was Hadley Township, a historically Black community (HBC) in Richmond Heights, Missouri, impacted by its displacement?

Theoretical Framework for the Study

The theoretical base for the present study was critical race theory (CRT). The urban ecology theory was considered the theoretical framework but was excluded because of its limitations concerning displacement. Urban ecology theory views

displacement and gentrification as a natural part of urban evolution (Kleniewski & Thomas, 2010) instead of an intentional act of racism and classism. CRT, however, uses the lens of intentionality, suggesting that the disappearance of these communities is deliberate and a product of structural racism in America. As a result, CRT provides a better position from which to view the disappearance of HBCs since it recognizes that residential segregation is a function of American racism and not just natural group selection. In recent years, scholars have clearly shown that racist practices like redlining—residential security mapping—have led to the formation of HBCs (Gordon, 2009; Rothstein, 2017). Consequently, CRT can help explain how racially driven eminent domain or racially motivated real estate objectives can also lead to their disappearance (Price, 2010). This theoretical framework is discussed in greater detail in chapter two.

Nature of the Study

This study sought to explore the displacement and gentrification of an HBC in Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. This study employed a qualitative research method because it allowed the researcher to create a summary of information to establish an in-depth analysis of the meaning of the data (Yin, 2018). Qualitative research is a holistic approach that enables the researcher to consider multiple forces in understanding the depiction of the studies' data (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2018).

A case study design was used to answer the research question. The use of a case study approach in the proposed research allowed for the exploration of the topic of HBCs and displacement and gentrification more in-depth and the collection of multiple types of data, including historical background information, which is particularly essential in this

case since the establishment of this city in metropolitan St. Louis as a Black community dates to the nineteenth century (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003). Yin (2018) proposed using case study research when the research goal is to gain an extensive and in-depth description of some social phenomenon. Additionally, Yin recommended using a case study design when research questions seek to answer “how” and “why.” Research questions seeking to answer “what” can be answered without a case study design.

Because of the complexity of the research topic, a qualitative research methodology with a case study design is most appropriate to achieve a nuanced understanding of HBCs and their disappearance. This research methodology will best yield the data needed for awareness of Black neighborhoods’ history and ongoing struggles, decrease displacement, and reduce inequities between Black and White communities. A constructivist philosophy and approach was used for this study. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), the constructivist approach centers on the interaction between the researcher and the participants. It allows the researcher to focus on the meaning made by the participants based on their experience with a specific phenomenon.

For this study, Hadley Township—an HBC in Richmond Heights, Missouri—was the focus of the case study. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to recruit study participants. The perspectives and experiences of a minimum of 17 former residents and descendants were sought, as well as those of historians, developers, reporters, and political officials. Data were collected from face-to-face and virtual interviews with participants who were given the option. Interviews were recorded to maximize check-

recheck of information. While a vaccine for the COVID-19 virus is more widely available, this researcher desired to respect individuals' comfort levels and choices related to masks and social distancing.

In addition to interviews, maps, census data, county and historical data, newspapers, city data, observations, and field notes were used to collect data. Maps assisted in highlighting population patterns and visually demonstrated how the community changed over time. Census data provided detailed information on race, population, and economic trends in Hadley Township and Richmond Heights. County and historical data provided in-depth and comprehensive reports on community attributes and changes, community activities, and policies and laws. Newspaper articles provided additional information related to community events and activities. City data provided additional support during data analysis as it provided information on public hearings, legislation, planning, and other important neighborhood information. Interview data were transcribed and entered into NVivo software for thematic development. Field notes were taken as documentation and analyzed. These notes were used in conjunction with interview data for triangulation.

Definitions

The following terms were used consistently throughout this case study research. These terms and phrases have multiple meanings depending on the context; therefore, definitions are included to clarify meaning.

Black Suburbanization: The migration of African Americans from the inner city to the peripheral areas of the urban core (Clark, 2017; Massey & Tannen, 2018; Wiese, 2004).

Blighted: Refers to neighborhoods that have declined visibly and physically due to a combination of residents and businesses leaving the area, economic declines, and the cost of maintaining the quality of the infrastructure (Freixas & Abbott, 2019).

Displacement: Removing a generally economically vulnerable population from their community in the name of restoration. It usually occurs due to rising rent costs and higher home sale prices (Zukin, 1987).

Economic Development: The social and economic well-being for building an economic basis for individuals to live and work, and organizations and institutions to invest in communities to improve quality of life (Crowe, 2012; Feldman et al., 2016).

Fair Housing Act (FHA): Passed in 1968 after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., this piece of legislation was created to address housing discrimination. This act prohibited racial discrimination in renting or selling property, advertising homes for sale and rent, and in lease agreements and contracts (Massey, 2015).

Gentrification: The changing of a city's or community's low-income and working-class areas for middle-class residential use (Zukin, 1987).

Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC): Initially created during the Great Depression to support homeowners who were in default on their mortgages, the program later embarked on the City Survey Program, resulting in Residential Security Maps that led to redlining (Hillier, 2005).

Market Forces: Forces of demand and supply representing the aggregate influence of self-interested buyers and sellers on the price and quantity of the goods and services offered in a market. In general, excess demand causes prices and quantity of supply to rise, and excess supply causes them to fall (Jones, 2014).

Manifest Destiny: A phrase first used by John O'Sullivan to describe the superiority of the white race and their God-ordained destiny to conquer the territories of North America (Wilsey, 2017).

Political Economy: A social science that studies economic theories and how they affect different socio-economic systems along with the creation and implementation of public policy (Corporate Finance Institute, 2021).

Racialized Marginalization: To relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a racialized group due to social and economic advantages and unequal treatment (Cabrera & Corces-Zimmerman, 2019).

Racial Zoning: The regulation of real property by local governments to declare separate neighborhoods for Black and white families (Freixas & Abbott, 2019; Rothstein, 2017).

Redevelopment: Involves public actions such as direct public investment, capital improvements, tax benefits, and rezoning to stimulate activity in areas where private markets cannot provide adequate economic activity to achieve the desired level of expansion (American Planning Association, 2004).

Redlining: Residential security maps created by the HOLC ranked neighborhoods into four categories to determine which neighborhoods were a reasonable risk for a home

loan, regardless of the applicant's qualifications. The lowest category was color-coded with red, and African American neighborhoods were automatically coded red (Rheingold et al., 2001).

Restrictive Covenants: Originally a list of obligations that purchasers of property assumed, restrictive covenants later evolved into contracts among homeowners in a neighborhood to prohibit the sale of homes to Blacks. They are also referred to as racial covenants (Rothstein, 2017).

Structural Racism: The range of policies, practices, and attitudes that have been normalized and legitimized in the United States and that habitually produce cumulative and long-lasting adverse outcomes for people of color, especially black people (Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America, 2015).

Sundown Towns: Predominantly White communities that exclude African Americans or other groups of color after dark on purpose. The name is derived from the idea that people of color were only allowed in town during daytime hours but had to be gone before sunset (Esquibel, 2011).

Systemic Racism: A “white historical and systemic oppression of non-European groups that manifest in the structure and oppression of racist societies like the United States” (Elias & Feagin, 2020, pp. 15–16).

Urban Renewal: Characterized in the 1960s by James Baldwin as “Negro Removal” due to the targeting of underrepresented communities for “renewal,” it refers to Title I of the Housing Act of 1949 that provided funding for new construction in urban areas considered as “slums” (Freixas & Abbott, 2019).

Urban Revitalization: A set of initiatives intended to reorganize an existing city structure, particularly in neighborhoods in decline due to economic or social reasons, to improve urban landscape features (Rich, 2014).

Urban Ecology: “The study of spatiotemporal patterns, environmental impacts, and sustainability of urbanization with emphasis on biodiversity, ecosystem processes, and ecosystem services” (Wu, 2014, p. 5).

White Racial Frame: A predominant worldview encompassing significant racial beliefs, phrases, images, sentiments, and analyses that provide a fundamental and foundational frame from which many white Americans view society (Feagin, 2020).

Assumptions

There were several assumptions under which this study was conducted. The first assumption was that structural racism is engrained in American society and is the primary reason HBCs are targeted for economic development through the process of gentrification and displacement. The second was that HBCs are inherently valuable and must be protected for their historical contributions to the community and the greater society. The displacement of these communities significantly impacts generational wealth within Black communities. The next was that economic interests have been the primary determinant in displacing HBCs. Another assumption was that the secondary data retrieved from city websites and archives were historically accurate, that any information gathered through interviews with current or past residents was factual to the best of their knowledge, and that the research questions for the study would provide the information needed to make inferences about the impact of displacement on HBCs, as well as provide

information to assist policy and lawmakers with creating protective measures for residents in HBCs.

Scope and Delimitations

This study included African Americans who are current and past residents of a suburban HBC in metropolitan St. Louis. Only those residents who resided in the HBC when it was predominantly Black and current residents who lived in the city when it was predominantly Black will be included in the study. Because there is a possibility that a substantial portion of the population who resided in this HBC may be deceased, historians, developers of economic/housing development projects, and descendants who grew up in the community with original residents may also be included in the study.

Study participants were identified through Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, newspaper articles, contacts at Harris Stowe State University (HSSU)—a historically black college in St. Louis, library archives, books on St. Louis, and city and county records. I was born and raised in an HBC 25 minutes east of the HBC that was studied. I have also formed many personal and professional relationships with former residents and descendants of former residents from the studied area. Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church was the place of worship for many residents in Hadley Township and still exists in the county. Additionally, there have been several articles in local newspapers about the township. HSSU graduated many Black students in the community for several decades and may have descendants who work or went to school there, which could yield the participants needed for the study.

Findings from this study will inform future research related to HBCs, give voice to past residents of displaced HBCs, and provide current HBC residents with a better understanding of the displacement process. They may also help design policy recommendations for other HBCs that have faced similar challenges in dealing with displacement. The nature of the case study should be easily transferable to HBCs in displacement.

Limitations

The qualitative case study design had inherent limitations that affected this study. The first limitation was the focus on a single case study of the displacement of Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri, thus restricting the sample size. Additionally, many firsthand accounts were unavailable due to the passing of residents, and secondary sources on Black communities' experiences were scarce or inaccurate, reflecting the limitations of oral traditions and mainstream media's understanding of Black culture from the 1800s to the 1990s.

As the primary data collector, my city planning and management background could introduce research bias. To mitigate this, I used strategies like bracketing and adhering to an ethical code of conduct to set aside personal assumptions. Trustworthiness and member-checking ensured data integrity, and a comprehensive literature review supported accurate data interpretation, enhancing the study's validity (Creswell, 2017; Patton, 2015).

Significance

The study may fill a gap in the existing scholarly literature in the field of public policy on the ramifications of displacement and economic gentrification of HBCs. While several research studies have examined gentrification and displacement of Black people in urban areas (Delmelle, 2014; Freeman, 2009; Zuk et al., 2015, 2018), research is almost nonexistent about gentrification and displacement of Blacks in suburban areas. There is also a scarcity of focus on the economic value, or lack thereof, of HBCs in comparison to those communities once they have been gentrified and are predominantly White.

Very few studies addressed the failure of urban renewal to allow current Black residents to benefit from the renewal but instead displaces them. Furthermore, the displacement of entire Black communities that are inhabited by residents and do not consist of primarily vacant and abandoned homes and other properties has yet to be thoroughly researched (Holloway, 2015; Price, 2010; Rothstein, 2017). As a result, this study aimed to provide insight that may aid in preserving HBCs and provide opportunities to sustain housing and redevelopment without displacement and force-outs (Perry et al., 2013). The present study aimed to bring awareness for improving social capital, reducing inequalities, and making HBCs less susceptible to eminent domain and real estate-induced force-outs (Hyra, 2016; Macantonio & Karner, 2014). This study addressed implicit and explicit racial bias often harbored by urban planners, government officials, and business leaders that have contributed to the displacement of these

communities (Macantonio & Karner, 2014). I hope this study will lead to policies and systems that create stable communities for all people.

Summary

Segregation along racial lines is not a new concept in the United States. It is because of segregation that HBCs were formed. Located on the outskirts of towns, HBCs were once considered undesirable and a financial risk for mortgage lenders. However, once developers realized the potential of this land, Black people were forced out of their communities to make spaces for middle-class White people (Jones-Correa, 2000; Knight & Gharipour, 2016; LeBlanc, 2018).

This qualitative research study focused on a city in metropolitan St. Louis as its case study to examine the impacts of displacement and gentrification on this HBC. Purposive and snowball sampling was used to recruit study participants. The perspectives and experiences of 17 former residents and descendants will be sought via face-to-face or online interviews. Chapter 2 includes the literature review. This review of the relevant literature provides greater context for the study and illustrates the gap in the literature as it relates to the proposed research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Across the United States, HBCs have disappeared due to displacement, gentrification, redevelopment, and urban renewal (Crowe, 2012). While scholars have unpacked many of these stories concerning inner-city HBCs, the narrative of the disappearance of many suburban HBCs remains largely untold. As a result, much more research is needed to understand the ongoing difficulties faced by these communities. Like the inhabitants of inner-city HBCs that have disappeared, the displacement of residents of suburban HBCs has led to emotional distress and trauma. It devastates these communities in countless ways (Knight & Gharipour, 2016). An adequate understanding of the plight of suburban HBCs is essential in devising effective policies and practices to stem this movement.

Perhaps the best place to start this investigation is the body of research dealing with inner-city HBCs that has extensively examined gentrification and displacement of Black people in urban areas (Delmelle, 2014; Freeman, 2009; Zuk et al., 2015, 2018). However, this research will only take us so far. Even in inner HBCs, the displacement of entire HBCs—often the case with suburban HBCs—has yet to be adequately researched (Holloway, 2015; Price, 2010; Rothstein, 2017). Moreover, because of the economic and political forces behind the “taking” of suburban HBCs than what usually occurs in inner-city contexts, it will be necessary to fill the gaps in compiling a body of helpful literature with a wide array of previous empirical and theoretical work before beginning the study. To adequately address the implicit and explicit racial bias often held by individuals

responsible for the most vulnerable communities, this chapter reviews the current literature related to economic imperialism, gentrification, displacement, housing legislation, segregation, and marginalization, as well as past housing policy and practice.

Literature Search Strategy

Initially, Google Scholar was used to locate open-access journal articles. A search for peer-reviewed journal articles using the Walden University and Harris-Stowe State University online libraries was also undertaken. The search was conducted for peer-reviewed articles published between 2010 and 2023. It included the following databases: Academic Search Complete, ERIC, JSTOR, SAGE Journals, ProQuest Research, Urban Studies Abstracts, and SocINDEX with full text. The following search terms were used to locate journal articles specific to this study: *gentrification, redlining, security maps, urban development, redevelopment, urban renewal, economic development, private market forces, political economy, marginalization, Black suburbanization, manifest destiny, sundown towns, Fair Housing Act (FHA), and Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC)*. Variations of the terms were used to ensure an exhaustive search was conducted. A search was also conducted for the theoretical framework. Search terms included *critical race theory (CRT), critical legal theory (CLT), origins of CRT, and CRT tenets*.

The research related to the displacement of Black people in suburban communities was limited, so the search strategy was widened, and more general terms such as ‘displacement’ and ‘historically Black communities’ were used to identify additional research for this review. I also reviewed relevant books, organizational

publications, and historical timelines. Below is a summary of the literature review by search topic. The conducted search located 167 books, reports, periodicals, and internet sources.

Table 1

Literature Review Topics and Sources

Literature Topic	Periodicals	Books	Internet	Reports
Gentrification	12	2	17	0
Redlining	7	3	2	2
Security Maps	2	2	2	3
Urban Development	6	2	1	0
Economic Development	2	2	1	1
Redevelopment	4	0	0	0
Urban Renewal	5	2	5	2
Political Economy	2	7	0	0
Marginalization	5	2	5	0
Black Suburbanization	3	4	0	0
Manifest Destiny	5	0	6	0
Sundown Towns	2	1	2	0
FHA	10	0	4	3
HOLC	6	0	5	2
CRT	17	1	2	1
Totals	88	28	52	14

Theoretical Foundation

Critical race theory, or CRT, was chosen as the theoretical framework for this research study. CRT is the most appropriate theoretical foundation for this study because it uses the lens of intentionality to explore the disappearance of HBCs. Discriminatory practices such as redlining have led to the establishment of HBCs. CRT helped explain how this and other racially driven practices have led to their disappearance (Price, 2010).

CRT was developed in the mid-1970s by legal scholars and is based on critical legal studies (CLS). It was developed in response to the halting and rolling back of gains made by the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (Delgado, 2009). However, it was not until 1989 that the theory gained momentum at a workshop focused on intersectionality and essentialism convened in Madison, Wisconsin, by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw (Delgado, 2009).

Although CRT has its roots in legal studies, it has been applied to research in education, psychology, cultural studies, political science, and even philosophy (Crenshaw, 2011). CRT is also appropriate for use in public policy, particularly in this study about the disappearance of HBCs in the United States. Harris (1995) explained in her exploration of the relationship between slavery, race, and property that at the core of economic relations was the idea of slavery; slavery, race, and economic domination were all linked. CRT clarifies the connection between race, power, and privilege and their impact on wealth distribution and property rights. The theory also addresses the use of race and racism as the primary tool for excluding African Americans from the enjoyment of personal property ownership, which was the thesis of this study. Specifically, Harris (1995) explained that this theory best explains the maldistribution of land and housing because it considers that exclusion of others was the central principle of White identity and was a legal right of white people in the United States. CRT's exploration of whiteness as property is significant to this study as it directly relates to the devaluation of blackness, which includes their identity, liberty, rights, and, yes, even their ownership of property.

CRT has been widely used as a theoretical foundation for studies related to displacement and gentrification. Kent-Stoll (2020) argued that frameworks like CRT provide a deeper analysis of gentrification and displacement by explicitly naming the racial and colonial structures that shape gentrification. In her study of gentrification scholarship, Fallon (2021) asserted that it is crucial in studies of gentrification that race be analyzed, especially concerning class. Specifically, the researcher used a qualitative discourse to analyze 331 empirical studies of gentrification covering 40 years to examine how and when a critical race lens was used. Fallon, Kent-Stoll, and other researchers maintained that studies that focus on gentrification and displacement in terms of class without explicitly using a critical race lens ignore the role that colonization and the racialized processes of segregation and exclusion have played in housing and land use patterns (Fallon, 2021; Kent-Stoll, 2020; McElroy & Werth, 2019; Thurber et al., 2021).

Thurber et al. (2021) conducted an exploratory case study of gentrifying neighborhoods in Nashville, Chicago, Boston, and Pittsburgh using a multiple-case study design to identify themes better to understand the phenomena of social work and gentrification. The authors asserted that while examining gentrification through a political economy lens is valid, it is limiting. They believed that when a political economy lens is used exclusively, it negates racialized policies that result in inequities and perpetuate poor people and neighborhoods as damaged. The authors argued that the focus is generally building and preserving affordable housing as the solution to gentrification when it is only one part of the issue. When gentrification is not analyzed through a critical race lens, there is a lack of focus on the racialization of where and how

gentrification takes place and the risks carried by Black people in gentrifying neighborhoods. Using a critical race lens allows the researchers to trace how race and power shape society. As with the present study, Thurber et al. (2019) note that,

This is not to suggest gentrifying neighborhoods are only inhabited by people of color or incomers are always white. However, given the racialization of space...people of color are more likely to live in neighborhoods vulnerable to gentrification and thus are disproportionately harmed. (p. 5)

The authors also explained the importance of using a critical race lens when examining displacement caused by gentrification (Thurber et al., 2019). Without this lens, the displacement narrative tends to be that systemic disinvestment, white flight, and government neglect lead to revitalization, which increases property values and displaces poor and low-income residents. This narrative negates the residents' investments and the work put into preserving their neighborhoods (Thurber et al., 2021).

Similarly, McElroy and Werth (2019) discussed the importance of using a critical race lens in exploring gentrification and displacement. To better understand the recent tech-driven gentrification in Oakland, California, the authors suggested that postcolonial urban studies, critical race, and ethnic studies be used as a "crossroad of theories" to bring to the forefront the role of racial capitalism, policing, and refusal in gentrification and displacement. Cities like Oakland have experienced racial restructuring and removal due to racist geographies. The authors argued that failure to view gentrification through the lenses of postcolonial urban theory, critical race theory, and urban studies would erase the history of racial violence that was traditionally associated with urban

revitalization, especially in cities in the North. The authors believed critical race theory, specifically, showed that class relations are shaped and experienced through racial formations, that oppression linked to class is a result of racial capitalism, and that this pre-dates gentrification (McElroy & Werth, 2019). Additionally, the authors argued that in the United States, racial capitalism, thus racism, is the prerequisite and the result of profit-driven urban renewal and removal.

Literature Review

Many of the remaining suburban HBCs are on the brink of displacement due to gentrification, redevelopment, and urban renewal because of their location to central business districts and their proximity to major thoroughfares and interstate intersections, so this study was timely and necessary (Garreau, 2011; Hyra, 2016; Knight & Gharipour, 2016). Researchers believe that factors such as sales tax generation, rezoning, and planning play a significant role in the displacement of HBCs (Knight & Gharipour, 2016; Marcantonio & Karner, 2014). Although the literature on segregation and displacement is vast, it does not view these issues through the lens of intentionality. Segregation and HBCs are interrelated. Laws and legislation enacted under *de jure* segregation excluded African Americans from land and homeownership. These laws have had a lasting impact on the devaluation and disinvestment of Black communities.

This chapter highlights the emerging body of literature that details how segregation prevented Blacks from homeownership, home loans, and living in white suburban areas. The role of eminent domain, gentrification, urban revitalization, and urban renewal in maintaining segregation will also be examined. This review of literature

will first explore imperialism, colonialism, and manifest destiny to underscore the role of race and racism in economic dominance. An exploration of gentrification and displacement would be incomplete without a discussion of the role and impact of colonialism on racism and classism in the United States.

Imperialism, Colonialism, and Manifest Destiny

During his first voyage from August 3, 1492, to November 6, 1492, Christopher Columbus kept a diary detailing his experience of what we now know as the Caribbean. Upon encountering the native people, Columbus wrote, “They were well-built with good bodies and handsome features...They would make good servants” and “With 50 men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want” (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, 2022, para. 1). The Age of Discovery marked a time when countries like Portugal and Spain began expeditions to explore China and the East for wealth and undiscovered land. It also marked the beginning of colonial subjugation of land occupied by Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

In 1803, the United States purchased Louisiana’s territory from France, which became known as the Louisiana Purchase (Office of the Historian, n.d.). The purchase included 530,000,000 acres of land in North America and included what we now call Louisiana, Missouri, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Arkansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. It also included Kansas, Wyoming, Colorado, Montana, and Minnesota land. The eastern coast of the United States had already been invaded and colonized by the English in the early 1600s (Library of Congress, n.d.; Office of the Historian, n.d.). With

the Eastern coast and middle parts colonized, the United States set its sights on westward expansion.

Horsman (1986) discussed the belief system of white Anglo-Saxons to take and extend territories across America. As expansion continued in the American republic in the 1800's, race played a critical role in how communities were occupied. The presumption white Anglo-Saxons believed as they annexed land excluded Indians and other nonwhites from citizenship. There was no regard for human dignity, only the acquisition of land. The Native people were dehumanized by White people and thought of as inferior.

The scientific attack on the Indian as inferior and expendable, which burgeoned from 1830 to 1850, gave many Americans the authoritative backing they needed for long-assumed beliefs. Frontiersmen were as pleased to accept the scientific condemnation of the Indians as slaveowners were to accept scientific attacks on the blacks. The dominant scientific position by the 1840s was that the Indians were doomed because of innate inferiority, that they were succumbing to a superior race, and that this was for the good of America and the world. The impotence of the federal government in the face of the massacres of California Indians in the 1850s has to be viewed against the widespread intellectual and popular view that the replacement of an inferior by a superior race was the fulfillment of the laws of science and nature. (Horsman, 1986, p. 191)

The phrase “manifest destiny” was first used by newspaper editor John O’Sullivan to describe what had already been idealized by White Americans—the white race was

inherently superior and was destined by God to conquer the territories of North America (Wilsey, 2017). O’Sullivan, the co-founder of the Democratic Review in 1837, believed it was “the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent” because Anglo-Americans were the only people able to “civilize the land and make it productive” (Wilsey, 2017, pp. 16–17). This commonly held belief, especially by politicians, was the justification used by President Andrew Jackson in 1830 to persuade Congress to pass the Indian Removal Act.

As a major general, Andrew Jackson assisted in negotiations of nine of the eleven major treaties to remove Native Americans from their land (Office of the Historian, n.d.). Once elected to the presidency in 1829, Jackson established the Indian Removal Act of 1830 as a systematic method to remove Native peoples from their land. The Act created a process that allowed the President to give land west of the Mississippi River to Native American tribes who agreed to surrender their homelands. Native Americans, in exchange for the desired land, were provided financial assistance to move to a new location and were guaranteed property protection by the United States Government forever, thus beginning the establishment of reservations. The Act allowed Jackson to persuade, bribe, and threaten tribes into signing removal treaties. By the end of his presidency, Jackson had removed nearly 50,000 Native Americans from their homelands and signed into law nearly seventy removal treaties (Office of the Historian, n.d.).

The *Trail of Tears* was a phrase first used to describe the removal of the Choctaw Nation from their homeland in 1831 (National Institute of Health & Human Services, n.d.). It described the removal of many Native tribes from their homeland in the 19th

century, including Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee Creek, and Seminole. The phrase is most associated with the 1838 removal of the Cherokee Nation to Oklahoma. Over 17,000 Cherokee were removed from their homeland in the Southeast by the United States Department of War, and over 6,000 Cherokee men, women, and children died on the 1,200-mile trek to Oklahoma (National Institute of Health & Human Services, n.d.).

Land ownership in the United States is framed by race and racism. From the Spanish expedition to ‘settle’ land to manifest destiny, white supremacy has been at the forefront of land ownership and expansion. Native Americans suffered greatly at the hands of colonizers who were hell-bent on taking land for what they believed was their God-given right to be fruitful and multiply and expand racist ideologies of inferiority of Black, Indigenous, and people of color and superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. This established a structural and systematic method of exclusion in education, healthcare, law (policies and legislation), and land ownership.

Systemic and Structural Racism

For more than 400 years, structural and systemic racism has played a part in the disparities and missed opportunities experienced by Black Americans. Feagin (2014) defined systemic racism as a material, social, and racially framed reality that has manifested in all major institutions for over four centuries and involves both deep and surface structures of racial oppression. Similarly, Elias and Feagin (2020) described systemic racism as “white historical and systemic oppression of non-European groups that manifest in the structure and oppression of racist societies like the United States” (pp. 15-16). Systemic racism in the U.S. includes a complex system of anti-BIPOC

practices, unfairly gained economic and political power by White people, inequalities along racial lines in economic and other resources, and rationalization of power and privilege through a racial framework created by White people (Feagin, 2014). Likewise, structural racism is a feature of the social, economic, and political system where public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms perpetuate racial group inequities by allowing privileges for association with “whiteness” and disadvantages for association with “color” (The Aspen Institute, n.d.).

To better understand the continual impact of structural racism, Powell (2007) suggested it be examined through Professor John Calmore’s model, which uses a systems approach to view structural racism as continual actions across various organizations. Calmore highlighted the role racism has played in the unequal distribution of resources and the economic outcomes that have led to racial disparities. He argued that historical factors, including institutions and federal policies, have had the most significant impact. Elias and Feagin (2020) agreed with Powell and Calmore’s argument. The authors discussed systemic racism and the structures established in American society that have allowed White people to gain political and economic power by controlling narratives and creating generational disparity among BIPOC. The white racial frame—the doctrines and ideologies that created white supremacy—have justified the marginalization and devaluation of Black and Indigenous people through a racial lens that perpetuates racism. As discussed by Feagin, the white racial frame is a predominant worldview encompassing significant racial beliefs, phrases, images, sentiments, and analyses that

provide a fundamental and foundational frame from which many white Americans view society.

Although Black social scientists have been excluded from mainstream analyses of racial frames, the literature produced by the likes of W.E.B. DuBois, Ida B. Wells, Marcus Garvey, and Benjamin Banneker has discussed the realities of slavery, Jim Crow, and other atrocities inflicted on Black people. This literature is critical because it demonstrates centuries of oppressive beliefs that created and capitalized on white-framed mainstream racial analyses (Elias & Feagin, 2020). While some would like to cease discussions of systemic racism and racial oppression because of efforts made over time to correct injustices in the United States, the fundamental structures of systemic racism have not evolved much outside of creating new systems that continue racist practices that are packaged to appear to be progressive.

Discussing the white racial frame is integral to understanding the systems and methods used to oppress Black, Indigenous, and people of color in the United States. White racial frame hindered upward mobility in political, economic, educational, and other institutional arenas for centuries and continues to result in inequalities in communities of color (Feagin, 2020). Brown et al. (2019) reported that the research of the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., was related to structural and systematic racism within policy research, academia, and philanthropy. Data were collected from 23 organizations that represented a spectrum of organizations. The research aimed to help organizations determine ways in which they could approach and learn from systems

embedded in their respective institutions to understand structural racism within their organizations and larger fields of policy and research better.

The researchers highlighted racist policies in the United States that prevented people of color—Blacks in particular—from economic mobility, access to housing, educational opportunities, and other fundamental human rights through policy and laws. Specifically, the authors identified several instances where federal policies significantly created economic disparities (Brown et al., 2019). Many of the policies that were detrimental to the economic upward mobility of Black people were those specific to housing.

Residential Segregation

Segregation, deeply entrenched in American history, is marked by the Supreme Court's rulings in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 and *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* in 1954. These rulings were deliberate and reflected the United States' systematic efforts to segregate the races, particularly Black and White people. The study of segregation, while diverse, is approached here from the perspective of land and homeownership.

While residential segregation exists in rural contexts, it is generally seen as an urban phenomenon. At the beginning of the 20th century, in response to the Great Migration, there were evident efforts to segregate Black and White people through local policies and legislation. For example, racial ordinances and restrictive covenants were written and enacted to prohibit Black people from living in predominantly White areas of town. Deed restrictions were also a common practice. In the case of *Buchanan v. Warley*

(1917), the Supreme Court ruled a Louisville, Kentucky ordinance unconstitutional for not allowing Black families to occupy houses as residences in neighborhoods where most of the houses are occupied by white people.

Most scholars in the last half-century since the Civil Rights movement have maintained that most forms of racial segregation in the United States that have prevailed since the 1960s have been the unintended consequences of ill-conceived policy or demographic trends. Indeed, even most pre-1960s segregation has been viewed as resulting from individual white decisions or actions rather than as a matter of law or public policy, which is to say that it has been the product of accidental or *de facto* segregation. The case of *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1945) was viewed as *de facto* segregation. The Supreme Court unanimously opined that racially restrictive covenants did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment if private parties did not seek judicial enforcement of the covenant.

However, in recent years, there has been a growing group of scholars who have argued that racial segregation in the United States—both before and after the Civil Rights movement—has been deliberate and by design (Massey & Denton, 1993; Sugrue, 2005). In *Segregation by Design*, Freixas and Abbott (2019), as well as other scholars, argued that contemporary segregation is a deliberate pattern of continued promotion of segregation and the primary contributor to the existence of HBCs (Hirsh, 2009; Gordon, 2019; Massey & Denton, 1993; Sugrue, 2005). Indeed, Rothstein (2017) argued rather forcibly in *The Color of Law* that segregation in the United States has been and continues

to be intentional and that it is sanctioned by law and public policy. In short, it is *de jure* segregation.

While the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments prohibit the unfair treatment of citizens by the federal government and the unfair and unequal treatment of citizens by states and local governments, respectively, residential racial segregation was and is enforced by government policy. Even though the United States Congress ostensibly passed legislation as early as the 1866 Civil Rights Act to prohibit actions, such as racial discrimination in housing, Rothstein (2017) insisted that the American government has not only tolerated racially discriminatory practices but has actively promoted them. Even after creating the 1968 Fair Housing Act, *de jure* segregation was implemented in public policies and practices. *De facto* segregation is generally considered the consequence of private practices and separate from *de jure* segregation. However, *de facto* segregation is a direct result of *de jure* segregation and, therefore, will not be discussed as a separate practice in residential racial discrimination. Residential segregation in the United States is an outcome of such *de jure* segregation practices by way of racial zoning, restrictive covenants, ordinances, and laws and public policies that shaped American communities.

HOLC AND FHA

The stock market crash in 1929 began a downward spiral in the United States economy until 1939 (Office of the Historian, n.d.). The worst of the Depression occurred from 1929 to 1933 under the Hoover administration. In March 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt was sworn in as president, and within his first 100 days of office, Congress enacted much of his program to combat the Depression, which he called the “New Deal.”

Essentially, the New Deal expanded the federal government's powers to create a group of institutions and programs designed to stabilize the economy, create jobs, and provide relief to the most vulnerable populations (Office of the Historian, n.d.).

The New Deal, often called the Third American Revolution, was believed to have presented more opportunities for Black people. In addition to Eleanor Roosevelt's commitment to social and racial justice, Black women became more empowered to create community organizations to improve their rights (Hine et al., 2004). While the New Deal expanded the role of government for the benefit of everyday citizens, it was detrimental to Black people and HBCs. Rothstein (2017) contended that the New Deal was responsible for the wealth gap between Black and White people through its government programs. The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) were two programs.

Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC)

In 1933, the Homeowners Loan Act was passed as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal. The Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) was created from this act, a federal agency responsible for refinancing home mortgages in default or at risk of foreclosure because of the Stock Market Crash 1929 (Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, 2016). The US housing market landscape was significantly transformed by the federal government's implementation of the HOLC. An unstable housing market, World Wars I and II, the Great Depression, and the lack of employment opportunities led to the federal government creating the HOLC and implementing

additional legislation to assist banks and developers and to promote homeownership (Jackson, 1985).

Most of this legislation, however, added to widespread discrimination and segregation. Millions of White homeowners were able to refinance home loans, while Black people were not offered the same refinancing benefits. Creating residential security maps of major cities in the US allowed loan officers, appraisers, and real estate professionals to evaluate mortgage lending risk based on race, which led to the devaluation of urban cities and Black neighborhoods (Jackson, 1985; Mitchell & Franco, 2018). These maps were used to determine mortgage qualifications, readiness, and approval.

Federal Housing Administration (FHA)

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968 as a follow-up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VIII of the act, known as the Fair Housing Act, was enacted to prohibit discrimination based on race or color, ability, national origin, sex, religion, and familial status in the sale or renting of housing (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, n.d.; U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Gotham (2000a) argued that housing policies like the Fair Housing Act and Section 235 Program, instead of improving racial division and segregation, further complicated these issues. The Section 235 Program was created to eliminate the disparities caused by segregation and to provide homeownership opportunities to African Americans. Gotham (2000a) argued, however, that the programs created a “racialization of state policy” and further segregated White people and African Americans. He further argued that the program created a space

where the real estate industry, including developers, local government, and mortgage lenders, abused federal housing policies to build in suburban areas while disinvesting in inner cities and taking advantage of African Americans.

Under the Fair Housing Act, The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) replaced the HOLC as the insurer of mortgages. This significantly expanded the length of mortgages, spurred development, overwhelmingly changed homeownership, and drastically increased suburban housing. The FHA used the same criteria as the HOLC, including an explicit policy not to give Black people loans (Gordon, 2019; Ross & Yinger, 2002). These policies led to segregated communities and HBCs and caused Black people's properties to become undervalued, which in turn led to a hindrance in economic development and wealth building. The policies harmed HBCs and led to disinvestment in those communities. State policies prohibited insuring mortgages in suburban subdivisions where banks provided Blacks' mortgages. The impact of these government policies and practices caused the devaluation of homes in the Black inner-city neighborhoods and prevented Blacks from sharing wealth creation in the suburbs.

Racial Zoning. In the early twentieth century, Black people were forced from small towns to create White urban neighborhoods. This effort was easily accomplished in many western and midwestern towns where the Black population was small. However, it was impossible to expel them from those neighborhoods in southern and border states with more significant numbers of Black people (Rothstein, 2017). Zoning rules, or segregation ordinances, were enacted to create separate communities for Black and White families. These ordinances prohibited Black people from buying homes in communities

where White people were the majority. Likewise, the ordinances prohibited White people from buying homes in communities where Black people were the majority.

Baltimore was the first city to adopt such ordinances, with several cities, including Atlanta, Birmingham, Miami, Oklahoma City, and St. Louis, following suit (Rothstein, 2017). In 1917, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racial zoning and segregation ordinances were illegal in *Buchanan v. Warley*. While racial zoning and segregation ordinances could no longer be used to enforce residential segregation, realtors and property owners developed a new means of excluding Black people from homeownership in predominately White neighborhoods: restrictive covenants (Freixas & Abbott, 2019).

Restrictive Covenants. In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Shelley v. Kramer* that covenants that forbade the sale of residential properties to African American buyers were unconstitutional—prior to this ruling, restrictive covenants, or deed restrictions, allowed for the modification of deeds to prohibit sales or rentals of property to African Americans (Freixas & Abbott, 2019). These covenants were contracts among homeowners in neighborhoods that allowed neighbors to sue if an African American family purchased a property in the neighborhood (Rothstein, 2017). Restrictive covenants continued to be regularly enforced even after the *Shelley v. Kramer* case ruling. The FHA continued to insure developments with racially restrictive covenants.

Deed requirement by FHA assisted in promoting covenants and protection of White households if African Americans moved into their neighborhoods (Loewen, 2018; Rothstein, 2017). The racially restrictive covenants allowed for the continued segregation

of Black and White communities (Loewen, 2018; Rothstein, 2017). It also diminished the opportunities for African Americans to live in their desired neighborhoods and preserved HBCs (Loewen, 2018).

Redlining. The color-coding of residential security maps was a product of the HOLC and the FHA to designate areas where mortgages were safest to insure. Specifically, green areas were rated *best*, blue areas were *still desirable*, yellow areas were *definitely declining*, and red areas were *hazardous* (Mitchell, 2018). This is where the term redlining was derived. Black and Latino communities were disproportionately redlined and therefore denied access to capital investment, which could have improved their housing and economic opportunities.

Gotham (2000b) explored the role of restrictive covenants in segregation among White and Black neighborhoods. The author discussed community builders and homeowner associations in Kansas City, MO, to emphasize the prevalence of racial restrictions in medium-sized cities. Gotham (2000b) contended that the history of racialization in urban spaces stemmed from the housing market through the real estate industry, the FHA, local developers, and restrictive covenants by establishing redlining. Additionally, Gotham highlighted the actions of developers and homeowners to exclude African Americans from suburban neighborhoods, including discriminating policies, protests, restrictive covenants, and court cases.

The author also expressed the importance of viewing racial discrimination through the lens of racism and oppression and not just as racial bias (Gotham, 2000b). Similarly, Rothstein (2015) discussed racial segregation and its impact on the Ferguson,

MO civil unrest. Long-standing local, state, and federal governmental policies shaped these communities through the FHA. These policies catalyzed the rise of poverty and segregation of families (Loewen, 2018). The St. Louis area, which includes Ferguson, promoted segregation through deed restrictions that limited where Blacks could live (Gordon, 2019; Rothstein, 2015). Eventually, Black neighborhoods started to deteriorate, and some were demolished, which led to the displacement of Black families. Thus, many moved to areas already occupied by Black households in the inner ring of the suburbs (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020).

Displacement

CRT has shifted the perspective on the unintended effects of displacement to a deliberate effort to displace HBCs. For example, urban renewal, eminent domain, and gentrification are considered unintentional consequences of individual economic decisions but are indeed the results of purposeful, public actions of the government. Several tools are attributed to the displacement of HBCs and will be discussed here.

Urban Renewal

Several policies contributed to disinvestment in urban areas, leading to the migration to the suburbs. Economists such as Homer Hoyt and Frederick Babcock helped to create systemic racial discrimination through rating systems, FHA policies, and real estate in Black neighborhoods (Naparstek & Dooley, 1997). However, several community organizations were developed to change FHA practices' dynamics and invest in urban areas. Additionally, legislation was established to hold individuals, organizations, and governments more accountable.

Naparstek and Dooley (1997) discussed the importance of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act and the Community Reinvestment Act in helping reduce redlining and discrimination. Community Development Corporations (CDCs) were also established to rebuild neighborhoods and develop strategies and federal policies to provide resources to cities. The Empowerment Zone and the Urban Revitalization Demonstration Project, known as Hope VI, were also established to assist with the revitalization of distressed communities.

Following the exodus to the suburbs, there was a sharp decline in urban housing. President Harry Truman passed The Housing Act of 1949 to address this decline, stating that all Americans were entitled to a decent home and proper living environment. Included in the act were provisions for slum clearance and urban renewal, FHA mortgage insurance, new public housing units, and mortgages to purchase or repair rural single-family homes (Lang & Sohmer, 2000). According to von Hoffman (2000), The Housing Act of 1949, from the beginning, was a contradictory piece of legislation. The housing problem in American cities was a complex one that the act attempted to solve with simple solutions. Lang and Sohmer (2000) agreed, asserting that while the Housing Act of 1949 allowed millions to participate in homeownership, it simultaneously interrupted the lives of those displaced by urban renewal.

This was the case for African American communities. The Housing Act of 1949 was one of several federal laws that allowed local governments to participate in the legal displacement of African American communities as part of “Negro Removal” (Gordon, 2019; Loewen, 2018). Specifically, the act placated the redevelopment and relocation of

these communities by giving latitude to how the local government defined blighting. In St. Louis County, for example, the major redevelopment projects during urban renewal were in historically African American communities (Gordon, 2019). Residents were rarely relocated, and when they were, funding for relocation was inadequate. In this way, urban renewal caused more damage to African American communities. Segregation increased, and displacement for public purposes through local land use and zoning policies was forced upon African American communities (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020).

Public-Private Forces in the Displacement of Historically Black Communities

The displacement and devaluation of African American communities have taken place over time through many forms by public and private markets for community expansion and economic development purposes. Urban renewal paved the way for a new form of blighting and displacement of HBCs (Gordon, 2019; Rothstein, 2015). Urban renewal emerged as a justifiable means to legally take land and pressure African Americans to move from their communities. The subtleness of government, private industries, and the affluent and middle-class chipping away at the redevelopment of HBCs caused widespread displacement and the disappearance of HBCs (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015).

Eminent Domain

The Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave the federal government the power to acquire property for public use, given that the landowners received adequate compensation for their property. Traditionally, eminent domain was used to acquire property to enable transportation, supply water, construct public buildings, and aid in

defense readiness (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Gradually, the use of eminent domain began to change as city governments began to redevelop blighted sections of communities. As interest from private markets continued to grow, the rules and regulations, as well as laws under eminent domain, were used as a justifiable means of acquiring property to redevelop large sections of communities, typically minority communities, resulting in disinvestment and displacement of HBCs (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015).

As developer interest in public-private markets continued to grow and the desire to be in prime locations in communities rose, the use of eminent domain became pervasive, and people and communities challenged the government's use of the doctrine as a means for public use for private markets and economic development (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015). On June 23, 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in *Kelo v. New London*, that public use also included acquiring property for economic development purposes if it would benefit the public (National Conference on State Legislatures, 2014). This ruling allowed public-private markets to displace sections of the community and often impacted HBCs due to the location and proximity to major intersections and highways. The decision also made it easier to blight areas in the community, which assisted in the start of gentrification.

Gentrification

Glick (2008) discussed gentrification and its economic impact on household wealth for African Americans and Latinos. Specifically, he argued that while gentrification increased property values in surrounding areas, in many U.S. metropolitan

areas, white people often benefited more because their home equity increased in ways that it did not for Black and Latino homeowners. The data from Glick's study revealed that when predominantly Black and Latino communities were part of reinvestment programs, wealth in home equity was not equal to their White counterparts, and they were often pushed into other areas, further gentrifying the neighborhoods.

Like Glick, many scholars argued that gentrification was the new displacement tool for HBCs and low-income communities (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015). HBCs have always been attractive to public-private markets through blighting in the form of tax abatement, TIF, and other development financing tools for revitalizing urban and suburban communities throughout the United States. As gentrification begins, the economic status of African Americans rarely shifts upwards, causing a gap in the positive economic impact (Johnson, 2020). HBC residents are forced out of their communities because property value increases, which causes tax policies to change (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020).

The private housing market, lack of affordable housing units, redevelopment of a region, and highway improvements often cause the gentrification of the HBCs and lead to displacement (Gordon, 2019; Rothstein, 2015). Many HBCs feared blighting, pressure by the government to move, and increased property taxes, which forced many to relocate to other segregated areas to afford housing and rent (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020). Policy-driven decisions by the government have aided private markets in being attracted to communities for reinvestment that further gentrifies a city (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015). HBCs are primarily unprotected from the ongoing overpowering of

economic forces and private dollars to be able to fight off gentrification, tax policies, city policy-decision, and blighting of their communities.

Sundown Towns

Communities known as sundown towns banned African Americans from living in their communities and being in the town after dark (Crowe, 2012; Loewen, 2018).

Sundown towns existed throughout the United States and were prevalent even in the early 2000s (Loewen, 2018). While these exclusion policies were often not written, they were designed to segregate, racially intimidate, and maintain high property values (Loewen, 2018; Rothstein, 2017). This practice greatly impacted economic development and capital in the community. These towns emerged because of laws and local policies prohibiting African Americans from moving into white communities (Freixas & Abbott, 2019; Loewen, 2018).

Because of sundown towns, Black people were forced to reside in underdeveloped communities with subpar conditions where white flight had already occurred. This led to disparaged opportunities for quality employment (Loewen, 2020). Loewen (2020) and Wiese (2004) argued that this lack of employment hindered the upward mobility of African Americans and their ability to establish financial stability. There were rare occurrences of Black people residing in sundown towns, but only to minimize the racial perceptions about the community. In these cases, they were relegated to one area of town (Wiese, 2004).

Smithsimon (2012) focused his study on Randallstown, a city in Baltimore County, which was once a Jewish community but was transformed into a predominantly

middle-class African American suburban community. He explored the measures taken by the local government to control racial conflict while Black people moved into the municipality. He concluded that the goal was to prevent White people from fleeing the community so that property would not be devalued. One key to the success of this initiative, Smithsimon concluded, was community support and the maintenance of property value through the creation of community associations to regulate the upkeep of property, intentionality in business selection, and minimizing public transit.

Black Suburbanization

According to Wiese (2004) and Gordon (2019), African Americans have lived in suburban areas since the 1900s. This conflicts with the longstanding myth that black suburbanization is a new phenomenon. Long before the housing boom attracted White people to the suburbs, African Americans were residents in these communities, especially in the 1940s (Loewen, 2020; Wiese, 2004).

Massey and Tannen (2018) examined census data to explore segregation in the United States in suburban areas. The data showed that while the number of Black people, Hispanics, and Asians living in the suburbs has increased, White people still make up most suburban residents. The authors highlight the ease with which Hispanics and Asians can assimilate into the white suburban culture. At the same time, Black people face barriers that cause them to struggle with achieving economic success and successfully integrating into these predominantly White communities. Barriers such as redlining and FHA policies have, for decades, prevented Blacks from taking part in these communities.

Black suburbs are a direct product of segregation. CRT helps explain the perception of black suburbanization as an accidental byproduct of individual choices and market forces. While segregation physically separated Black and White communities, it also helped define Black identity and created a sense of home (Freixas & Abbott, 2019). Black suburbs fulfilled many needs for Black people and were not just places to live but also expressions of community and culture. Black suburbs had more homeowners than inner-city HBCs, stronger roots, pride in homeownership, and more stable communities. While Black suburban communities were not as affluent as White communities, Black suburbs meant much to its residents as it was their American dream.

Marginalization

Perry et al. (2018) discussed the marginalization of Black people through the devaluation of assets in housing properties in their neighborhoods. The real estate market in Black neighborhoods is estimated to be devalued by about \$156 billion. This has severely impacted Black homeowners' ability to build long-term wealth. Rothstein (2017) further argued that racial zoning played a considerable role also in devaluation through segregation. Specifically, racial zoning enables industries to pollute Black neighborhoods and create slums.

A 2017 report by the Metropolitan Planning Council discussed the impact of segregation on Chicago communities. The report outlined the socioeconomic effects of segregation on Black and Latino communities in comparison to White communities. It further explained the effects of segregation on education, employment, and crime. The

report argued that disinvestment was the root cause of barriers to growth in those communities.

Summary and Conclusions

CRT has been used to explore whiteness as property and the devaluation of blackness regarding identity, liberty, rights, and property ownership (Harris, 1995). The theory connects race, power, and privilege and their impact on wealth distribution, property rights, and public policy. CRT is beneficial in explaining segregation as intentional as opposed to individual choices shaped by market forces. *De jure* segregation, segregation sanctioned by law and public policy, had a lasting impact on the devaluation and disinvestment of Black communities (Rothstein, 2017). When *de jure* segregation was no longer socially acceptable, eminent domain, gentrification, urban revitalization, redevelopment, and urban renewal emerged as justifiable means to displace HBCs.

Gordon (2019) examined the displacement of two suburban HBCs in St. Louis County that are somewhat outliers. Meacham Park in the city of Kirkwood and Elmwood Park in the city of Olivette were considered distressed HBCs. Examining the disappearance of stable and somewhat prosperous suburban HBCs is essential. CRT helps explain how segregation was not just individual choices shaped by market forces. However, the potential for economic gains leads to the intentional use of government powers to segregate communities (i.e., it is a manifestation of economic imperialism).

The identification of tactics to aid in the preservation of HBCs and the development of policies to sustain housing and redevelopment without displacement and

force-outs and to improve social capital, reduce inequalities, and reduce HBCs susceptibility to eminent domain must be a priority. This study could be a first step in developing policies and systems to create stable communities for all people. Chapter three will outline the research design and methodology to collect and analyze data from Black residents in an HBC in St. Louis County, Missouri.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore more fully the forces that have led to the disappearance of suburban historically Black communities (HBCs). Specifically, this study explored factors that led to the disappearance of a particular suburban HBC in metropolitan St. Louis. The qualitative study focused on the formation of this HBC, the arc of its history, the conditions that made the site valuable for other uses, the process of the displacement, the response of the residents to the taking, and any attempt to trace the movement of the residents after displacement. Critical race theory (CRT) was used as the theoretical framework to examine the intentional and deliberate disappearance of these communities through practices such as redlining, racially driven eminent domain, and racially motivated real estate practices (Price, 2010).

The study employed a case study research design. Data were collected from Black residents in an eastern Missouri suburb—a Black community largely displaced—and analyzed. This chapter includes the research design, rationale for the design, role of the researcher, participant descriptions, instrumentation, data collection methods, and ethical considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

The following research question guided this qualitative case study:
How was Hadley Township, a historically Black community (HBC) in Richmond Heights, Missouri, impacted by its displacement? According to Yin (2018), qualitative research begins with assumptions. It includes a worldview, a theoretical lens, and the

study of problems that inquire into the meaning made by individuals or groups about the problem. Similarly, Jones et al. (2006) contended that qualitative research allows the researcher to gain greater insight into the rich lives of people and the world in which they live. Therefore, a qualitative research design was chosen as the most appropriate approach for this study since it will lead to the most prosperous overview of the selected community and provide the most thorough analysis of the data generated (Yin, 2018).

Case study research encompasses studying an issue explored through one or more cases within a setting or a context (bounded system). It is investigated over time through in-depth data collection involving multiple sources including, but not limited to, interviews, observations, and documents and reports (Yin, 2018). Many HBCs date back to the 1800s, so multiple data sources are vital in understanding these communities' displacement. Additionally, the case study approach applied to this study because this qualitative approach focused on real-life, everyday experiences and complex issues (Bryman, 2004).

A case study research design also allows for a holistic research approach and strengthens data collection for a broad range of issues to be studied (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003). As Hsieh and Shannon (2005) argued, the case study design is ordinarily appropriate when there is limited research literature or existing theory. As evidenced by the literature review, research on the displacement of suburban HBCs is almost nonexistent. Most of the existing research related to the impact of displacement, gentrification, and urban renewal on HBCs was focused on inner-city communities found in large metropolitan cities like Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Chicago, Harlem, and

Nashville (Betancur, 2011; Boyd, 2008; Brown-Robertson et al., 2017; Kirkland, 2008; Schaffer & Smith, 1986). As a result, as the researcher, I was forced to piece together various literature sources to ground the research design.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I conducted all study aspects, including interviewing, compiling data, data analysis, and reporting results. According to Erlandson et al. (1993), while the researcher may employ a variety of instruments to collect data, the researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative designs. This makes data collection and analysis an interactive process. According to Ely et al. (1991), it is not unusual for the researcher to be familiar with the research setting. Familiarity with the subculture, jargon, and codes of behavior enables the researcher to better probe into the research more easily than someone unfamiliar with the studied environment.

I have held several leadership positions in city management, economic development, urban planning, and city zoning in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Erlandson et al. (1993) stated that the researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative research designs and that for this reason, it is imperative to the study that the researcher has an expansive knowledge of the research topic and field of study. I have 20 years of experience in city planning and management and have resided in an HBC. Moreover, while my professional and personal experience with the research topic is unique, in the present study, my role was that of an observer.

Researcher Bias

Maxwell (2012) defined bias in qualitative research as how the researcher's values, preconceptions, and theory alter data collection or analysis. Maxwell advised against concerning oneself with eliminating these alterations, as they are to be expected, but instead with understanding how the researcher's values, preconceptions, and theory influence the collection and analysis of the data. Stake (2010) agreed, arguing that the researcher's time would be best used to minimize the impact of bias on the research instead of focusing on eliminating perceptions based on preconceptions, values, and beliefs.

In recent years, the inclusion of the researchers' identity and experience in the research study has gained theoretical and philosophical support, dispelling traditional beliefs that those experiences of the researcher would lead to bias and should be removed from the design (Maxwell, 2005). My involvement in city management, economic development, urban planning, and city zoning has significantly impacted my interest in contributing to research focused on HBCs, especially those in the suburbs. My choice of this dissertation topic was greatly influenced by my desire to end the displacement of communities of color, in particular Black communities.

Methodology

This research used a case study design to examine the forces that led to suburban HBCs' disappearance. Consistent with data collection methods for case study research, this study utilized multiple data sources to develop an in-depth description and analysis of a suburban municipality in metropolitan St. Louis, Missouri. An inductive approach

was used to categorize the data and identify key themes. The data were then analyzed and organized into themes using NVivo.

Participant Selection Logic

The first Black residents settled in this metropolitan St. Louis city in Missouri in the selected community as early as the early 1900s (Lewis-Thompson, 2019). Since segregation in St. Louis city limited where Black people could live, this metropolitan St. Louis city remained predominantly Black until around the mid to late 1960s when retail developers began to take an interest in this and other cities like it in the area to create a business district (Weiss, 2020). Current and former Black residents of Richmond Heights are the target population for this study. Historians, developers of economic/housing development projects, descendants of former residents, and elected officials governing at the time these communities existed will also be included in the study as a large portion of the population who resided in the city when it was predominantly Black are deceased. According to Robinson (2014), when a large portion of a targeted population is deceased, it is appropriate to include others who may know the case being studied. The sample size was 17 residents or others directly connected to the HBC being studied.

Purposeful and snowball sampling were used to identify study participants. Purposeful sampling, or purposeful selection, is a strategy where a deliberate selection of settings, people, and activities is made to provide information that cannot be gotten as thoroughly from other choices (Erlandson et al., 2005). Furthermore, case studies traditionally use purposeful sampling (Patton, 2015).

I identified study participants using census data with St. Louis city and county resources, including libraries and librarians, religious institutions, colleges/universities, research centers, and organizations and associations in Richmond Heights and surrounding communities. Prospective participants were initially contacted via email and U.S. mail (see Appendix A), with follow-up contact via telephone. Snowball sampling was also employed to identify additional participants. Snowball or chain sampling enables the researcher to identify cases of interest from people who know others who can provide information-rich data (Patton, 2015). These two sampling methods yielded a sample size that led to saturation. Saturation occurs when emergent patterns in the data are continuous or the researcher starts to hear, observe, or read parallel information related to the categories of analysis (Jones et al., 2006). Yin (2018) argued that in case study research, the focus should be more on reaching saturation and less on achieving a predetermined number of cases. It is only when themes and categories are saturated that sampling should cease (Jones et al., 2006).

Instrumentation

Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were conducted with each participant using open-ended questions to help the researcher better understand the participants' experiences. Interviews were audio-recorded to assure accuracy. Initial interviews took 45-60 minutes. Nineteen interview questions were developed based on the research question and intentionally written to create a dialogue experience between the researcher and the participant to understand better the impact of displacement on the HBC in Richmond Heights, Missouri (see Appendix B). The interviewer took additional notes for

observation purposes. Observations were unstructured, so no observation checklist was used. Field notes and journal logs were kept to document insights, assumptions, and ongoing ideas about methodology and to take notes from interactions related to the research study (Ely et al., 1991; Erlandson et al., 1993).

Data collection primarily involved interviews, but additional information included maps, census data, county and historical data, journals, field notes, and observations. City maps from OpenStreetMap, the United States Census Bureau, and the East-West Gateway Council of Governments were used to collect geographical data. The United States Census Bureau was also used to collect census and historical data.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Former and current residents and their descendants were target participants. I also interviewed government officials in office from the early 1960s through 2015 and county historians, developers, and reporters. Several of these individuals still resided in eastern Missouri and were active community members, even teaching at the HBCU in the area. Census data was used to identify residents and their descendants. Census data provided the names of community residents as well as members of their households (Missouri Census Data Center, 2021). Additionally, I utilized Harris-Stowe State University, Missouri Historical Library and Research Center, St. Louis County Historical Society, Richmond Heights Library, and the Landmarks Association of St. Louis to locate contact information for study participants, including current and former residents, government officials, historians, academics and policy leaders.

Initial contact with participants was made via email and U.S. mail. Once a response was received, the initial interview was scheduled. An informed consent form was emailed (see Appendix C). The informed consent provided information to study participants concerning the purpose and scope of the study as well as withdrawal information. An affirmative response to the informed consent email will be obtained prior to the start of the interview.

In-person interviews are generally preferred; however, the current pandemic makes this problematic. Interviews conducted online or by telephone are also acceptable when direct contact with participants is not an option (Creswell, 2007). The interviews were conducted via Zoom and telephone for participants who did not want to be interviewed in person. During video interviews, observations of participants' level of eye contact, body language, and other forms of nonverbal communication were made. This helped to add context to the interview (Ely et al., 1991). All interviews were recorded for review and transcription.

Data Analysis Plan

Conducting interviews is a major part of qualitative research because it allows the researcher to gain first-hand knowledge of people's stories, words, and thought processes (Patton, 2015). In the present study, interviewing residents of HBCs and their descendants added the perspective of those most impacted by displacement to the case study. Census and historical data, maps, and interviews with government officials pertinent to the case provided insight into the reasoning for the location and HBCs and their subsequent displacement. The Landmarks Association of St. Louis and the Missouri

Historical Society Library and Research Center were used as resources to locate data and maps.

Before transcription, interview recordings were reviewed, and notes were taken as the first step in data analysis. Maxwell (2012) expressed the importance of listening to interviews before transcription to develop categories and identify relationships. Once transcribed, data were organized into electronic files and coded to group data into units using qualitative data analysis software. Observation notes were also organized and coded in the same way as the interviews. Coding organizes data into units or segments in preparation for categorization. Saldana (2009) defined coding as the method that allows the researcher to organize and group data that share characteristics and are coded similarly into categories. This is the beginning of pattern development and the establishment of themes.

Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) was chosen to assist in analyzing the responses to open-ended questions and sorting data (Bright & O'Connor, 2007). Specifically, the data analysis software NVivo was used for this study because it allowed for both textual and audiovisual data sources for collecting, importing, organizing, and coding the data (Basit, 2003). Furthermore, NVivo allowed multiple codes to be created, attributes assigned to the data, and interpretations and notes added (Lewis & Maas, 2007).

Issues of Trustworthiness

The validity of qualitative research is established by credibility and trustworthiness and is evaluated by the consistency of the results and the ability to repeat

application (Tracy, 2010). Tracy maintained that eight critical markers are needed to establish trustworthiness: worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, significant contribution, ethics, and meaningful coherence. These markers create an environment to develop quality criteria, which help create legitimacy for one's research. This study established credibility by allowing participants to review the data to ensure the accuracy of transcripts and consistency of the presented data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This member-checking process was used with peer debriefing to establish credibility further. All interviews were reviewed once and transcribed to ensure trustworthiness (Ely et al., 1991). Finally, triangulation was used to establish credibility and trustworthiness further.

Creswell (2007) suggested using triangulation to further shed light on a theme or perspective. Triangulation requires at least two data sources to substantiate findings (Ely et al., 1991) and decreases the likelihood that conclusions about the data will be based on personal biases (Maxwell, 2005). Responses from interview questions, notes from observations, and field notes were used as methods for triangulation. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested using a reflexive journal to keep notes about methodological decisions and the researcher's values and interests. The researcher used field notes and journal logs in this study to establish confirmability.

Ethical Procedures

Researcher ethics plays a vital role in a qualitative design and is essential to the research process and validity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Because qualitative designs use interviewing as a primary way to collect data, transparency and confidentiality are

paramount (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). Ravitch and Carl (2016) discussed the need for a relational approach to eliminate bias and effectively build relationships with participants. This study aimed to examine the forces that have led to the disappearance of suburban HBCs. Specifically, the role of displacement, gentrification, redevelopment, and urban renewal on a particular HBC in eastern Missouri was explored. This study addressed topics that are sensitive and threatening to some. Exposing racial inequities involving city, county, and other government officials is always a danger; however, the benefits of conducting this study far outweighed the risks. Urban planners, government officials, and business community leaders often overlook the racial bias that has created urban decay or displacement in Black communities. Research in this area is necessary if effective policies are to be developed and implemented to redevelop and create sustainable communities of color.

One area where special care was taken was during interviews with former and current residents. As was previously noted, the topics discussed in this study are sensitive and may evoke strong emotions for some participants. Jones et al. (2006) stressed the importance of being aware of signs of discomfort or emotional distress in participants, especially in studies where the recall of painful memories is possible. In these situations, I used my skills in active listening and empathy; however, I also had information about counseling services available.

Institutional Review Board

Data collection commenced after Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. The IRB was developed to eliminate unethical research practices that

harm participants and comprise research creditability and trustworthiness (Walden University, n.d.). Initial and ongoing communication with participants outlined the research's purpose and questions. Information concerning how the data will be used and the time commitment required to participate was included in the recruitment letter.

An informed consent form was disseminated to each study participant before data collection. Confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy were clearly outlined in the informed consent and reviewed with each participant (Jones et al., 2006). To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, study participants were assigned a number. Furthermore, any identifiable information from interviews was excluded from the results. All information related to the study, including emails, forms, and data, were kept private on a newly purchased jump drive, and hard copies of data were kept in separate envelopes and locked in a desk at the researcher's home. Upon completion of the study, all records, including audio recordings, will be destroyed after five years.

Summary

This study employed a qualitative approach to conduct case study research. The unit of analysis for this study was Hadley Township, an HBC in Richmond Heights, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri. Current and former residents, historians, developers, and politicians were selected as study participants using purposive and snowball sampling strategies. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were the instruments used to collect the data.

To address trustworthiness, researcher bias and personal interest were discussed. Additionally, data sources were triangulated, and peer debriefing was used to further

address concerns about trustworthiness and credibility. Informed consent forms were distributed and discussed with all participants to ensure ethical considerations were met. Data analysis was conducted using the data analysis software program NVivo for thematic development.

Chapter four provides an overview of participants' demographics. It also discusses the study's findings, data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The data will be examined within the context of the research questions and theoretical framework.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore more fully the impact of the forces that led to the disappearance of suburban HBCs in Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. Specifically, this qualitative study focused on the formation of Hadley Township, the arc of its history, the conditions that made the site valuable for other uses, the process of the displacement, the response of the residents to the displacement, and any attempt to trace the movement of the residents after displacement. The central research question addressed by this study was as follows: How was Hadley Township, a historically Black community (HBC) in Richmond Heights, Missouri, impacted by its displacement?

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the present study's findings. It also explains data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The chapter culminates with an examination of the findings within the context of the research question and the theoretical framework, critical race theory (CRT).

Setting

A case study design was used to explore the displacement and gentrification of a historically Black metropolitan St. Louis community that dates back to the nineteenth century (Patton & Appelbaum, 2003). Participants for this study were initially recruited using purposeful sampling. Census data and records from historical societies and community organizations were used to identify former and current Hadley Township residents, politicians, and community and religious leaders. While this sampling method

yielded prospective participant names, it did not provide current contact information for many former residents. Emails were sent to former politicians and community and religious leaders seeking the names and contact information of individuals who fit the research study criteria (see Appendix A). An informational flyer (see Appendix C) was also used to recruit prospective study participants. This flyer was placed on the Richmond Heights Public Library bulletin board and posted on the researcher's primary social media pages on LinkedIn and Facebook. Purposeful sampling led to ten research participants. Each of those ten participants was asked to give the researcher names of other individuals who met the research criteria. This snowball sampling led to the recruitment of seven additional participants.

The criteria for participation in the study were former/current residents or descendants of former Richmond Heights and Hadley Township residents who identify as Black or African American or have extensive knowledge and expertise of Richmond Heights. The 17 study participants were emailed detailed information about the study. Once participants confirmed they were interested in the study and met the criteria, they were emailed the informed consent. The participants reviewed the consent form and were allowed to ask any additional questions. Participants were required to reply to the email containing the informed consent with the phrase, "I consent to be interviewed for the study." Due to age and location, one participant requested consent via the telephone. After receiving consent, interviews were scheduled based on participants' availability and preference for in-person or online. Fourteen interviews were conducted via Zoom, two in

person, and one via telephone. All interviews were recorded for transcription and analysis.

Demographics

Study participants were current and former Black residents of Richmond Heights, descendants of former Black residents, elected officials, historians, developers, and academic and policy leaders familiar with development projects in Richmond Heights. Of the 17 study participants, 58.8% (n=10) identified as male, while 41.2% (n=7) identified as female. Forty-seven percent (n=8) were historians, developers, or elected officials. Fifty-three percent (n=9) of the study participants were current or former residents or descendants of former residents. To maintain anonymity, study participants were assigned a number and designated as Participant 1 through Participant 17. Table 2 provides a detailed overview of the study participants' demographics.

Table 2*Participant Demographics*

Participant	Status	Gender
1	Descendent of former resident	male
2	Descendent of former resident	female
3	Not a descendent or former resident	male
4	Descendent of former resident	male
5	Descendent of former resident	female
6	Not a descendent or former resident	male
7	Not a descendent or former resident	male
8	Not a descendent or former resident	male
9	Descendent of former resident	female
10	Descendent of former resident	female
11	Not a descendent or former resident	male
12	Current resident not a descendent	male
13	Descendent of former resident	male
14	Not a descendent or former resident	female
15	Not a descendent or former resident	male
16	Descendent of former resident	female
17	Not a descendent or former resident	female

Data Collection

One-on-one interviews were conducted with each of the 17 participants. The setting of the interviews was face-to-face, virtual conference via Zoom, or over the telephone. The data collection consisted of 17 participant in-depth interviews lasting between 45 minutes to 60 minutes maximum. The interview consisted of 19 open-ended, semi-structured questions developed for the study and approved by Walden University IRB (approval number 08-08-22-0426972). The participants were either descendants of former residents, current or former residents, elected officials, historians, or developers. The participants selected their preferred meeting location, date, and time. The interviews

were audio-recorded using Zoom's integrated audio-recording feature and a recording device with open-ended interview questions.

A few unexpected circumstances during data collection led to four individuals dropping out. One individual missed the appointment and did not respond to communications about rescheduling. The second person was sick and never rescheduled. The third person thought the study was on the Hadley Township Democrat for the same area. The fourth person had studied the background of the City of Brentwood, a neighboring Black community bordering Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, but did not know much about Hadley Township.

Throughout the interview process, privacy was carefully upheld, and participants' identities were anonymized in this study. To safeguard participant privacy and maintain anonymity, each participant was assigned an identification number ranging from 1 to 17. The data were recorded using hand-written notes. Before each interview, the research question was reviewed, and participants were then guided through the interview questions, actively engaging in the study. Study participants had the opportunity to arrange additional interviews to update their initial responses, demonstrating their active role in the research process.

The complete set of questions for the semi-structured interviews is detailed in Appendix B. Following the initial interview, participants were sent their interview transcripts via email for confirmation, except for one participant who did not have access to email and gave verbal approval of her feedback. While the overall content was error-free, two participants shared extra insights after reviewing their transcripts. These two

participants were explicitly concerned with the accuracy of details of street names, titles, and business names, emphasizing correct spelling. The remaining participants had no additional comments and confirmed the accuracy of their transcripts in their follow-up responses.

Data Analysis

According to Yin (2018), qualitative data analysis is a systematic and rigorous approach to interviews and observation that uses distinct data analysis strategies, including coding, thematic analysis, and pattern matching. Data analysis for this qualitative case study began with reviewing each interview recording and transcript, taking notes, and making observations to start coding the data. Once interview transcriptions were completed, the data were organized into codes considering the research question about Hadley Township, an HBC in Richmond Heights, Missouri, impacted by displacement. At the onset of the data analysis phase, I formulated a Word document and generated codes derived from interview notes for each participant, subsequently grouping them into three distinct categories (Saldana, 2016). However, this Word document coding approach proved inefficient for effectively organizing the data. As a result, the Word document was replaced with NVivo for coding, a transition that significantly improved the efficiency and organization of the data analysis process.

The data analysis in this study was carried out through a thorough process that involved organizing information collected from interviews. In preparation for analysis with NVivo, transcripts were systematically formatted using Microsoft Word, structuring the content with question headers followed by participants' responses. The transcripts

were subsequently imported into the NVivo software program, facilitating the efficient management and organization of the transcript data. The data were labeled with codes developed and categorized based on critical concepts, word frequency, and patterns. The data were then broken down into manageable chunks for coding to begin grouping codes together to identify broader patterns and themes.

Member Checking Process

Following each participant's interview analysis, a member check document was created. Study participants received invitations through email to engage voluntarily in the member-checking phase of the data analysis. Participants were provided with their interview transcripts to verify accuracy. They were also allowed to arrange a subsequent interview, call for any further questions, or offer feedback on potential omissions from the initial interview. The content was accurate, but two participants provided additional insights after reviewing their transcripts. Two individuals specifically focused on verifying the precision of street names, titles, and business names, emphasizing correct spelling. The rest of the participants had no further comments and affirmed the accuracy of their transcripts in their subsequent responses. As Creswell (2017) noted, extended interaction with participants facilitates data integrity and validity, enhancing trustworthiness and minimizing bias risks. The member-checking process, as detailed in Appendix D, was crucial for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of the data collected, underscoring the study's commitment to data integrity and validity.

Themes Generated

After creating codes in the NVivo 20 platform, they were consolidated into emerging themes. Codes were checked against the research question. This helped to develop a detailed understanding of each theme and how it related to other themes in the study. Data were continuously evaluated during the analysis to ensure the accuracy of emerging themes. Four themes were generated from the data by reviewing the connections within the categories. The themes that emerged from the study were (a) resilience and self-determination of a community, (b) the peripheral push of suburban Black community displacement, (c) the impact of economic forces on Black community displacement, and (d) racial economic dynamics.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

My commitment to upholding the study's trustworthiness was unwavering, as I meticulously adhered to the methodological procedures outlined in chapter 3. I ensured that participants' responses remained intact, preserving the integrity of data interpretation. The criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were rigorously met. These four principle components are integral to evaluating and addressing concerns about the quality and validity of qualitative research findings (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In this section, I provide credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical procedures. Each component of data trustworthiness can provide value to the research.

Credibility

Credibility is one of the four pillars of trustworthiness in qualitative research. It reflects the accuracy and truthfulness of the study's findings from the participant's perspective (Merriam, 2020). Credibility is crucial because it helps ensure that the interpretations of the data accurately represent the participants' experiences and not merely the researcher's perceptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Acknowledging credibility is imperative to adhere to ethical standards to abate any form of bias that may compromise the integrity of the research findings. Teddlie and Yu (2007) emphasized the importance of ethics in research to prevent potential biases. This approach underscores the necessity of maintaining objectivity and ensuring that the researcher's preconceptions do not influence the research outcomes. A thorough review of the relevant literature was necessary to minimize any individual bias in determining results and keep the focus on the specifics of the study.

Participants' consent was obtained for this study. Triangulation was used to substantiate the data and ensure the validity of the findings. Triangulation is crucial in utilizing various qualitative research data sources, methods, and perspectives. It is also used to validate data and boost the trustworthiness of results (Creswell & Poth, 2017). By using diverse approaches to explore, the researcher can deepen their comprehension of the study, reduce bias, and strengthen the reliability of the findings. Triangulation preserved the research findings for accuracy and truthful representations of the participant's experiences and perspectives. The participants' authentic engagement with the inquiry process substantiated the study's trustworthiness. To verify the validity of the

data collected during the interview, participants were invited to participate in voluntary member-checking. Study participants were provided with their interview transcripts and were requested to assess the transcripts' fidelity to their original contributions for accuracy.

To further enhance the study's trustworthiness, each interview transcript underwent a thorough analysis using the NVivo software suite. This approach allowed for detecting distinct patterns and themes within the data. The credibility of the findings was further reinforced through intensive and repeated data observations, thus ensuring accuracy and clarity in the research outcomes. This methodological approach served to bolster the credibility of the research findings.

Transferability

External validity in qualitative research involves demonstrating that the findings of a research study can be applicable in other contexts, situations, times, and populations (Merriam, 2016). It gives the potential relevance and applicability of findings beyond immediate study, offering valuable insights for broader application and understanding in future work (Creswell, 2017). This study's thick descriptions detailed the research, history, geographical locations, and methods, allowing individuals and researchers to assess the similarities and differences in other communities (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Morse & Richards, 2020). Transferability was demonstrated through the study's relevance to broader contexts while maintaining a rich framework to facilitate confirmability.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) highlighted that the primary role of a researcher is not to create a measure of transferability. Instead, their responsibility lies in offering a comprehensive data set that enables others to assess the potential applicability of the research findings in various contexts. I created the study's transferability by including the research design, the strategies implemented for sampling, and the data collection process, which aims to facilitate the replication of this study by subsequent researchers. In so doing, this enhances the applicability and relevance of its outcomes in similar contexts.

Dependability

The study's dependability was demonstrated by its consistency and replicability, ensuring the research was reliable and trustworthy. Data saturation was achieved, with no new information emerging. For accuracy, transcripts were sent to participants for review and accuracy checks.

Confirmability

Confirmability, an essential aspect of credibility in qualitative research, centers on maintaining the objectivity and impartiality of the research outcomes. Confirmability requires including appropriate details to enable other researchers to duplicate the process to expand upon the study, examining it through an alternative perspective (Lincoln & Guba, 2018). The derived findings accurately reflected the participant's responses, ensuring the authenticity and integrity of the data. Several actions that satisfy confirmability were taken, including data triangulation, member checks, thick descriptions, and IRB approval. Comprehensive explanations, analytical approaches,

theoretical frameworks, and reasoning were presented to illustrate how findings and conclusions were derived.

Results

This study addressed a gap in the literature and helped identify themes related to how HBCs are impacted by displacement. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore more fully the impact of the forces that led to the disappearance of suburban HBCs in Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. The research question for the study was: How was Hadley Township, an HBC in Richmond Heights, Missouri, impacted by its displacement?

Following a thorough analysis of interviews with 17 participants of descendants, residents, elected officials, historians, and developers, four main themes emerged from the data in response to the research question that captured the impact of the forces that have led to the disappearance of suburban HBCs in Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. The four themes that emerged from the study were (a) the resilience and self-determination of a community, (b) the peripheral push of suburban Black community displacement, (c) the impact of economic forces on Black community displacement, and (d) racial economic dynamics. Theme descriptions are as follows:

1. Resilience & Self-Determination of a Community - refers to the resilience and adaptability of Hadley Township in the face of external threats. Study participants shared stories about establishing Black-owned businesses, entrepreneurs, Black home ownership, and creating a community over a century old. Black people in Hadley Township formed the backbone of a thriving Black and self-sustaining

community. According to participants, despite the many challenges, some families and individuals from Hadley Township achieved significant success in their new environments. Community members emerged in response to the displacement, advocating for the displaced residents' rights and keeping Hadley Township's memory alive. Despite the fragmentation and displacement, there was a sense of community resilience. Some residents held onto their homes, reflecting a sense of determination and resistance to displacement.

2. **The Peripheral Push of Suburban Black Community Displacement** - this theme refers to the idea that a Black community in a city's suburban outskirts ("the periphery") faces unique challenges. It denotes their geographical location and the precariousness of their position in the face of urbanization and other displacing forces, addressing disparities and inequities in property values and economic mobility. The present study indicated that— as voiced by the participants about policy effectiveness and the determination of entities to pursue their interests in economic development and transportation—the erasure of the community's historical and cultural identity was slowly being chipped away because of the location of Hadley Township which made it challenging to prevent displacement.
3. **The Impact of Economic Forces on Black Communities** - refers to the disproportionate impact economic development projects can have on Black communities, leading to a shift in land use and demographic changes that displace residents. It provides a framework for understanding the challenges faced by Black communities undergoing economic development. In this study, participants

described economic development projects intended to benefit Richmond Heights and its residents and caused the displacement of many of the residents in Hadley Township. Participants recalled the economic development decisions and the impact they had on the black community, which ultimately led to big box and chain retailers and the disappearance of the Richmond Heights Black community. This theme highlights the innate connection between economic forces and racialized dynamics, specifically how development can lead to the displacement of Black communities like Hadley Township. The role of economic forces and development in the transformation of Richmond Heights uncovered the root causes and implications for Black residents. In this study, participants shared how economic forces contributed to the vulnerability of Hadley Township through policies and practices. Participants emphasized the economic factor's role of commercial development in reshaping Black areas in Richmond Heights. This underscores the participant's observations that economic interests often precede service to the community and well-being.

4. Racial Economic Dynamics - This theme refers to the idea that beneath the visible displacements occurring in Hadley Township, there was a deeper, more subtle undercurrent of historical racial dynamics shaping and influencing those outcomes. Study participants stated that race and racism played a significant role in the displacement of Hadley Township residents. This highlights the racial dynamics and discrimination involved in the community's transformation over time. Participants indicated that race was not just a passive background factor but

actively influenced and shaped the underlying forces that led to the displacement of Hadley Township. Participants suggested deep, often unseen, powerful forces with wide-ranging impacts, akin to how race subtly yet profoundly affects various societal structures and decisions to redevelop communities.

Theme 1: Resilience and Self-Determination of a Community

The first theme that emerged during data analysis was the resilience and self-determination of the community. This theme focused on the significant success of residents in creating a self-sustaining community and their resourcefulness in preserving cultural identity and community spirit despite facing systemic racial challenges. Most participants described their connection to Hadley Township and the migration of Black people to Richmond Heights, as well as community dynamics, challenges, and changes over the years.

Building the Community

Hadley Township, nestled within St. Louis County, Missouri, emerged as an autonomous, predominantly Black community. The area was initially attractive to Black families due to employment opportunities at local businesses such as the Evans Howard Brickyard, which spurred the development of the community. Before the development of Hadley Township, the property was a farm owned by Charles and Mary Rannells in the mid-1800s. In 1837, the land was acquired by Charles P. Chouteau, and one of the most extensive producers of firebrick, fireclay, pipes, and other manufacturing products, Cheltenham Fire Clay Works, was established (Webster University Archives, n.d.). J. C. Evens and R. J. Howard purchased Cheltenham Fire Clay Works in 1867 and renamed it

the Evens Howard Firebrick Company (Community Churches and Schools of the Hadley Township Neighborhood, 1998; Webster University Archives, n.d.). According to historical maps and other archival data, this area was what we now know as Brentwood and Richmond Heights.

In the early 1900s, the Great Migration of Blacks from Southern to Northern states for work and to escape the oppression of Jim Crow considerably shifted the demographics of many northern cities. In St. Louis County, the Evens Howard Firebrick Company brought many Blacks seeking refuge and employment to the area. While Black people began to populate the area in the late 1800s, it was not until the Great Migration that many Black people moved to the area. Several study participants discussed that their families migrated to Hadley Township for work with the brickyard.

Participant 14: Well, there was a company that employed Black people, and I don't remember what kind of company it was, but they needed to have Black people be able to get employment.

Participant 13: When Richmond Heights was formed as a city in 1932, as you can see from the timeline, this area was already a vibrant community. So, in dividing things out, this area was called Hadley Township. It originated as a community for workers for the Evans Fire Brick Company. Evans also built a sister community in Brentwood along Eager Road.

Participant 16: What attracted them to that area was this company, brick company, Brick Factory; I think it was called Evans Brick Company or so, and it's located right where the Home Depot is. And so, they had a brick furnace and

all of that where they were making and store and bricks and everything. And so, when the blacks moved up from the south, that's where they were gainfully employed. So that community, you know, was I, and I think the brick company had something to do with helping to form that community.

Participant 15: Brick company employed a lot of African Americans, you know. And so, when they employ people, the company, I think, helped to start the neighborhood. Black people moved into the neighborhood, and then it became a whole Black community.

Housing and Homeownership

As St. Louis County was still segregated at the time, Evens Howard needed housing for Black workers as there was no public transportation to get workers to the plant. This spawned the development of Evans Howard Place in Brentwood. The homes, known as two-by-twos, had no indoor plumbing or electricity and were rent-free for Black workers (Brentwood Historical Society, 2021; The Historical Marker Database, 2022). Evens Howard built and sold homes to Black workers in Richmond Heights, flourishing as a Black community in Hadley Township (The Historical Marker Database, 2022).

While many of the earlier homes were built by Evens Howard, later Hadley Township homes were built by Black workers and were well-maintained, reflecting the resourcefulness and pride of the residents.

Participant 5: The brick company here, and they employed a lot of African Americans, you know. And so, when they employ people, I think they actually

provide housing for them. This neighborhood was what I would call a very nice neighborhood.

It was predominantly African American, but it was interesting that a lot of the homes were, you know, passed down from generation to generation. And so, their families chose to stay in Richmond Heights.

Participant 2: They worked right across from the Brickyard Evans Howard built. I think they built a couple of houses for some of the people who had moved here. People started building their own houses or, you know, living with family members or things like that. They built a brick house; they built it themselves. A lot of the homes were paid for.

These homes were often passed down through generations, indicating a deep-rooted connection to the area. **Participant 13** shared, “You know there, there were homes that, that had been there, you know, families that had been in those homes, you know, over 120 years in the same house, but the house was 120 years old.” Despite the simplicity of some residences, the overall standard of living was relatively high, with well-kept properties and a community-oriented lifestyle.

Participant 14: The way they built these houses, you know, housing over there in Hadley Township was very inexpensive because they didn’t have, you know, these were almost like little shotgun houses.

Participant 17: There’s something about, you see, this is, these homes have been taken care of by these people who live there. And they don’t have a lot of resources, but they may, you know, it’s just enough to maintain.

Education and Values

Hadley Township's educational history has had a lasting impact on the community's identity. Racial segregation greatly shaped the educational system. From 1846 to 1863, Missouri law prohibited the education of Black children. The first school for Black students was established in St. Louis in 1863 by the Freedman's Relief Society (The Historical Marker Database, 2020). The first school in Hadley Township, Lincoln School, began in a rented space at a church on Dale Avenue in 1909. In 1916, with funds allocated from a \$100,000 bond, a two-room school was established for Black children at 8023 Dale Avenue. From the 1920s through the 1950s, improvements and additions were made to schools for Black children in Hadley Township, with a delineation between the New Lincoln School and the Old Lincoln School (The Historical Marker Database, 2020). Black students attended Lincoln Schools, while white students attended Maplewood in Richmond Heights. Participants recounted what they remembered and what their parents shared about attending school in Richmond Heights.

Participant 4: We talked a little bit about education starting off when my mother went to school and when I went to school in Richmond Heights, it was a little wooden school on Dale Avenue, right at right where the, the heights are, you know. And you know, schools were segregated then. So, the Blacks went to Lincoln, and then eventually, they built what we call a new Lincoln.

Participant 14: That's where we would go from, I guess, the fourth to the eighth grade. That was another plus about this community because the educational system

is, you know, small, and people had a lot of time to spend, you know, with the young people. So that, you know, helped it to thrive.

Participant 10: Because there's a history also in the Hadley Township. They had a school called Lincoln Elementary. And that was just for the Blacks because that's where we live, and they really didn't want us into Maplewood. So, when things started to happen, they shut the school down. It was more like a recreation center for us to go and play. And then they started moving the kids over to Maplewood School. So that hurt it right there because we had to go into a place where it wasn't really accepting the kids into the school district.

The presence of local teachers, who often were educated at nearby Stowe Teacher's College (1890) and who lived within the community, played a critical role in enhancing the educational experience. **Participant 3** recalled:

They prided themselves on education. I noticed the connection between a lot of the folks who lived in that community who had gone to Harris Stowe at that time. Harris Stowe was a teacher's college. And so, our teachers in the school system were from the Richmond Heights area.

While schools designated for Black students were a product of segregation, they were also a source of pride and cultural affirmation, nurturing the talent and intellect of Black students in a safe and understanding environment. These schools were also a source of community building.

Participant 16: But then they also used to have summer concerts. And the summer concerts, people would, from the neighborhood would come and, you know, it'd be

on a Friday and a Saturday, and they would have these concerts in the evening time, and it was barbecue and yeah, it was a whole lot of fellowship back then.

Before the landmark decision in *Brown v the Board of Education* in 1954, Missouri state law had begun requiring Maplewood Richmond Heights School District to provide transportation for Black students who attended city high schools or Hadley Technical School to Douglass High School in North Webster Groves, Missouri. This process, called ‘busing,’ was intended to provide equal educational opportunities but often resulted in significant upheaval. Busing disrupted established community ties and forced students to adapt to new environments that were not always welcoming. Eventually, students transitioned into Maplewood Richmond Heights School District but remained separated. Several participants shared their experiences with the transition.

Participant 6: We couldn’t go to high school in Maplewood; we had to catch a little dinky streetcar to go from Webster Groves to Douglas High School. And that’s where the black people mostly went to Douglas High School

Participant 10: Growing up with the majority of African Americans going to the Maplewood Richmond Heights High School district, Maplewood was more known as the white side.

Participant 16: I went to West Richmond grade school and then went to Valley Junior High for middle school. The challenge that I can remember is that it started with the school. So, when I said I mentioned I went to West Richmond third grade up until third grade and fourth grade at that point, something was happening, I guess with the schools or something. And so, they started this busing program, so

it split us up. And so, there were people on one side that were going to Cheney School. And then there were other people on one side going to Valley. And so, and even all the way to, not just the middle school, but even the elementary schools. So, because I got a chance to go to West Richmond and my brother, he ended up having to go to Bruce and he's like four years younger than me.

The Lincoln Schools, later transitioned for other community uses, including the Richmond Terrace Assisted Living Community, reflect a broader narrative of adaptation and continuity within the community (The Historical Marker Database, 2020). The legacy of these educational institutions continues to influence current generations, illustrating the central role of education in community history, cultural preservation, and social cohesion.

Participant 16: Lincoln School. And so, Lincoln, I don't remember the school ever really being in session, but what I remember most about the school is that was our playing ground. So, we go up there, all the kids in the neighborhood; if we weren't playing on the streets in front of our houses, we were up at the schoolyard playing kickball and football.

Participant 2: Lincoln School is used as a nursing home called Richmond Terrace.

Participant 4: I think they have a senior citizen home in that building.

Black Businesses

Hadley Township was once a vibrant community defined by numerous Black-owned businesses contributing significantly to its local economy. These enterprises, from grocery stores and filling stations to confectionaries and service-oriented businesses, were deeply integrated into the residents' daily lives, reinforcing the community's self-

sufficient character. Study participants highlighted the integral role these businesses played in the fabric of the community. For instance, some participants noted that African Americans locally owned many businesses, underscoring a close-knit environment where business owners and residents were often neighbors and friends.

Participant 11: Most of the businesses that were located there, even though they were primarily residential, were probably locally owned. They were owned by African Americans because they were close.

Participant 8: The irony is that both Hadley Township and Evan's Place had their own self-contained businesses. At one point in time, they were predominantly black and run and owned by Black people, but of course, they were uprooted and taken down.

Participants 1 and 6 reminisced about businesses like Crenshaw's Confectionary and Burke's Grocery Store, which were not just places of commerce but also communal gathering spots where locals, especially children, would frequent for everyday treats and necessities. These establishments were more than just economic entities; they were vital social hubs that helped forge and maintain community bonds.

Participant 1: It was called Crenshaw. It was a little confectionary. And that's where all the Black peoples, you know, went, and the kids went for popsicles. And there also was another Black business at the top of the hill when you, cause you, you go down the hill to Crenshaw and then up the hill to Hadley Road. There was a, I can't remember that guy's name. But he was there for at least 20 years. He had a filling station, you know. About one pump in those days.

Participant 6: We had a grocery store, two grocery stores. We had what we call Chaney's Grocery Store and the Burke Grocery Store. Okay, we had a tavern. Eventually, we had a filling station that was owned by the Burkes. I remember later on, there was another little confectionary store by Foot. Okay, they called it Foot. Cheney's Market was right next to the church. Smith, the Smith, had a filling station right there on Hanley Road.

The study participants painted a picture of a self-sustaining township where commerce was often intertwined with daily social life. **Participant 13** described a system of bartering and trading that predates the formal establishment of many businesses, indicating a foundational culture of entrepreneurial spirit and mutual assistance.

Participant 3 further detailed how residents leveraged their land for various businesses, including agriculture and service-oriented ventures like hauling and demolition, which were essential for the community's sustenance and growth.

Participant 13: They had their own little stores, you know, basically they did, you know, trading of, of goods and services as, as any little, small township or town would do. So before, you know, folks started moving in and building houses. And so, you know, people would barter with people with trade. It was a vibrant, self-sustaining community. See, all of the little Black businesses are gone. There's not a single Black business left. There was Foot's Store and Crenshaw's Store. So, Crenshaw was right on Dale, right at the creek.

Participant 3: You could get an acre here, an acre there, and you could have some, you know, some animals and, you know, you could either conduct a

business or whatever, whether it was hauling or, you know, growing eggs or, you know, it was entrepreneurial. The types of businesses that were there originally were basically the, you know, service-oriented businesses, demolition, you know, roofing, farming, and when I say farming, I mean more like truck farming, where you sold eggs, sold hogs, that kind of thing because they were land-based.

One participant shared a story about local businesses evolving from simple grocery deliveries to complex operations like laundromats and concrete mixing companies.

Participant 4: Having a house and land and raising their families in that area, most of the families were in business. And back in those days, the white folks didn't go to the grocery store. They had trucks. And most of the young guys like myself and some of who used to drive pickup trucks for food and delivered from the stores and that kind of thing. Opened up restaurants and bars and things like that. A lot of people have started going into the landscape business. Burkes, they opened up a grocery store. As a matter of fact, I designed a laundromat for him. After, you know, some of these families got pretty established, some of them really went into a serious hauling business. Like the Sanders. Because you had space for vehicles and things like that in the concrete and the asphalt buildings, you knew Willman Jefferson and Ed Jefferson. Ed Jefferson ended up owning one of these mixing concrete companies that makes concrete. It was a Shell, I think. When he built it, he built the first one. There was a, I think it was a standard station then. But he lived right next door there. That's right where minorities were right in that area. And he owned, yeah, Dale and Hanley. He had a pretty good

education, and I think he went to Tuskegee. And that whole family, some lived in Richmond Heights, and some lived on the Brentwood side. I guess when they moved to Richmond Heights, they came with an education related to inspecting meat.

This proximity fostered a unique relationship where business transactions were combined with personal care and community support. Participants recalled how family-owned businesses would offer goods on credit, showcasing trust and mutual support within the community.

Participant 16: There were at least two, three mom-and-pop kind of like stores there. There was Mr. Jones had one on Hickman Street. Then there was another one on, I believe, Eleanor Street. And then there were, oh, at least four. But we would be able to walk to those stores and they were stores that, you know, you could go there and, and they'd have every and anything that you wanted. They weren't the most modern, but they served their purpose. That, you know, they gave people food on credit and so forth. These were people; the owners of the shops were people in the community. Residents in the community, Mr. Jones, in the summertime, had this watermelon truck. The little stores were owned by the community residents and families.

Participant 2: We had a little confectionary store where you could go get a quarter's worth of bologna and stuff. But they had the little, small stores where if you needed to just send the kids over to get that, you know, or we didn't have enough milk to make this mac and cheese, they would help us out.

The Black-owned businesses of Hadley Township were foundational to its economic stability and social cohesion. They provided employment, goods, and services, but more importantly, they fostered a strong sense of community and belonging among the residents. The study participants' recollections highlight the economic impact of these businesses and their role in shaping community dynamics and sustaining the community's cultural heritage.

Church and Community Dynamics

The Black churches in Hadley Township served as places of worship and critical community centers that fostered social and civil engagement. Data collected from participants highlighted the deep-rooted significance of churches held within the community, family generational ties, and community dynamics. For example, **Participant 10** shared, "We had small churches where family grew up in that church." The loss of these churches had a devastating impact, disrupting the community fabric and reflecting the broader social changes affecting the area. Mount Zion Baptist Church was repeatedly noted for its broader role beyond religious gatherings. As "a focal point of civil rights activity," the church hosted significant figures like Marcus Garvey. This historical context exemplified the church as a site of profound social significance, intertwining religious purpose with activism and community leadership.

Participant 12: Two churches came down, the one church that was there by the old elementary school, there was a church that was closed for a while, but I remember, I mean, the steeple was an amazing site to see because it was a copper steeple.

Participant 13: There was a Black church on the same side as Crenshaw's, but it was on the other side of the creek. It's gone. So, we lost a Black church. We lost First Baptist Church in Maplewood. Mount Zion Baptist Church, the loss of Mount Zion Baptist. No, you don't have a clue. It was a campground. It was a campground before it was a church. It was a focal point of civil rights activity. That property was actually owned by the Marcus Garvey Society. Marcus Garvey actually spoke on those grounds on multiple occasions. Then, for a very short time, it was owned by a Muslim organization. Mahalia Jackson sang in that church.

Participant 16: It's a Panda Express and, you know, Chipotle and all of them, but there was a thriving community and thriving community church. You know, that, you know, was kind of like the hub of the neighborhood, you know, outside of the little pubs. The church that used to be there was relocated to Bridgeton. Had the people had a voice in that decision, they would've fought to keep that church there because that church meant a lot. It was the root of that community.

Participant 6: The Black church that was there, the Mount Zion Baptist Church, and I think the Methodist Church was on Dale Avenue. I think Mount Zion Baptist Church was the most prominent church there. And that's the only church I ever belonged to until, you know, 1976. The church was at 1500 South Hanley Road. They built a new church. Okay. In 1958. But there were two churches. There was Long Island Church on Hanley Road.

Hadley Township reveals that the black churches were more than just places of

worship. They were vital to the community's social structure and central to its identity and continuity. The churches of Hadley Township played a multifaceted role in spiritual engagement and community support. The loss of these churches signifies a physical removal and a profound impact on the community's heritage and social dynamics.

A New Community

Several participants discussed the formation of Bennett Place, a historically Black community adjacent to Hadley Township. Bennett Place was established in 1945, and 30 homes were constructed by 1968 (U.S. Department of the Interior National Parks Service, 2008). The community was developed as a grassroots effort by Dr. Thomas and Ms. Georgia Rusan. Dr. Rusan was born and raised in Hadley Township. Upon returning to Hadley Township after completing medical school in Nashville, Tennessee, Dr. Rusan petitioned Black citizens to join him in creating an upper-middle-class neighborhood for Black professionals that was modern, family-centered, and safe for families. T

The lack of land and meager homes in Hadley Township prompted Dr. Rusan, a medical doctor, to create a community reflective of his professional lifestyle (U.S. Department of the Interior National Parks Service, 2008). The lots for Bennett Place were located on the opposite side of Hadley Township in Hampton Park. This white community had been intentionally separated from Hadley Township by the construction of Highway 40 (Interstate 64). The Rusan's were met with many obstacles, including racially motivated ordinances, delayed permits, and reluctant professional builders. Bennett Place would eventually symbolize Black resilience and prosperity (U.S. Department of the Interior National Parks Service, 2008).

Study participants shared that Bennett Place became a notable enclave of African American success. The area was inhabited predominantly by Black professionals such as doctors, dentists, and real estate agents. This concentration of Black professionals defied the typical racial and economic boundaries of the time and fostered a strong sense of community and mutual support. The quality of the homes in Bennett Place, described as “far superior” to those of nearby White communities, underscored a significant achievement in Black homeownership and architectural distinction.

Participant 1: Black people lived where Highway 40, Dr. Rusan is from, and was born and raised in Hadley Township. Dr. Rusan was a physician. We had stayed in Hadley Township before we even built out there on Bennett. There were about seven houses on the side of the street where we were. Mr. Hudlin and Arthur Ashe lived there with him for a while. And there were about four or five on the other side. Four of them were doctors or dentists. On the other side of the street, there was a real estate man. And everybody was a physician or a dentist except for Mr. Butler. And so, everybody was fairly well privileged as far as Black people were concerned. And the houses that we built on Bennett were, you know, far superior to the houses that the white people lived in and around there.

Participant 5: Off Laclede Station Road, you know, in that part of the neighborhood that was African American. And so that part was historically considered to be like Bennett, those streets up in there. You know, typically, more prominent or African Americans with more money tended to live over there.

Participant 4: So, a lot of this work at that time since his highway was coming through was Rusan had started this development where his house is located. The Black dentists, Dr. Flores and Dr. Davis, and a lot of them, I can't remember all of it was several of all were home of Phillips folks. Dr. Sinkler and I designed all those houses on Bennett. As a matter of fact, it was something put together by the National Registry of People, a historical thing about Bennett Avenue.

Participant 13: It was located parallel to Hadley on the other side of Interstate 64. It was developed because Black doctors and dentist elites were not allowed into the adjacent community known as Hampton Park, a very exclusive neighborhood. But they were mostly doctors who bought homes or built there. There were doctors from Homer G. Phillips and other locations. Dr. Russell was one, and Dr. Forest was a dentist, was another...I think there were a couple of others there. Oh my God. But, you know, right there at the corner of Bennett. And it is a designated historic community. It has a historic community designation with the federal government. But what's going to be ironic is that within a matter of 10 years, it's going to be all white.

The construction of Highway 40 inadvertently facilitated the creation of a segregated community that thrived independently. The highway acted as both a barrier and a catalyst, fostering a separate but prosperous Black community at Bennett Place. Ultimately, though, the construction of Highway 40 facilitated the disappearance of both Hadley Township and Bennett Place.

Theme 2: The Peripheral Push of Suburban Black Community Displacement

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis was the role the construction of the interstate highway system played in the community's disappearance. Furthermore, the fundamental role of infrastructure development in reshaping and displacing Black communities emerged as part of this theme. In this study, interstate highways emphasize the interwoven narratives of progress, connectivity, and unintended consequences of infrastructure development on the displacement of established communities, particularly vulnerable communities impacted by racial disparities.

Highway and Infrastructure Development

The construction of highways, particularly the interstate highway system, emerged as a prominent theme. Participants discussed the highway as the primary factor in destroying community structures and networks and contributing to the economic development along Hadley Road and within Hadley Township. The data revealed a complex relationship between highway construction, infrastructure development, and the displacement of Hadley Township residents in Richmond Heights. Participants overwhelmingly identified highway construction as a disruptive force, particularly Highway 40/Interstate 64, and a significant factor in fracturing the community.

Participant 1: And black people lived where Highway 40 comes through there. Highway 40 was not there when we first built out there. They took the highway and all of that; everything that belonged to Blacks condemned it. There was the need for a highway, and they were going to move forward, and it was going to be determined by displacing as few white people as possible.

Participant 3: Obviously, the highway was a, you know, a key that split the community apart. The urban transit system, what do I call that? Mass highway system that split the community apart. You know, if I wanted to put, that's really what happened with the highway system. It was easier to buy out a bunch of poor people and build a highway or train system.

Participant 4: The highway was the big driver. I would imagine that, over the years, that highway would be extended. See, the highway used to stop at Skinker. Well, again, the highway was the big driver, and I guess over time, you know when I mentioned that I'm 85, you're talking about going back a hundred years, you can see that the families started getting older and older.

Participant 14: It also has to do with traffic patterns in a particular area in terms of, you know, where economic development might best be specific.

Several participants also shared that the community's location near major transportation corridors made Hadley Township prime real estate for development.

Participant 15: It's near a couple of major arteries for vehicle traffic in the county, so it's easily accessible.

Participant 16: Really, when you look at Hadley Township, it is prime real estate because you're right there near Highway 40. Highway 40 is a main corridor through the city of St. Louis. And so, I think that it was because that's prime real estate. Look at where it is located. It is centrally located in, you know, the city of St. Louis, and we have a sense that, well, there's a lot of redevelopment that's

taking place downtown. So, Hadley Town is probably 15 minutes from downtown.

Participant 11: I think it's because of this, where it was located, because of the traffic volume that you have on Hadley Township and 40/I 64, that it had much more potential commercially.

Participant 12: And it was right next to Hanley Road, which is a corridor that basically runs, basically it's the Grand Avenue of the county. Hadley Township is one of those things that I really want to...I would feel really honored to give my time and service because it is really one of those pockets that are really and truly bordered by a highway, other municipalities, and two thoroughfares.

Participant 7: So now we have this area right next to this highway that can basically support this interstate instead of actually supporting the neighborhood that's right there.

Participant 9: When superhighways came in, well just highways period, but especially interstate highway systems, it provided an avenue for other folks, for white folks, especially the business community, to make connections through those, those areas, because they could basically take the land.

Furthermore, some participants suggested racial bias in highway placement, targeting the Black neighborhood for easier acquisition. The narrative of progress and connectivity associated with highways clashes with the reality of displacement for Black residents, according to participants.

Participant 17: Why doesn't I-170 go all the way to I-64 so that it would connect?

Well, I know why, because it would have to go through Webster Groves and Kirkwood. That's why they don't connect. If those had been Black neighborhoods, I bet, no questions asked.

Participant 14: Several of the other highways, you know, we've heard this eminent domain, they took other Black neighborhoods in St. Louis City. So, you know, even in the nineteen forties and fifties, this happens. So, it's really, you know, the same thing just being repeated.

The data showed that highway construction significantly impacted a community. While highways brought development, they fractured the social fabric and displaced residents. Hadley Township's proximity to major highways and the city center made it more vulnerable to displacement for revitalization.

Private Market Forces

Market forces are based on demand and supply and represent the aggregate influence of self-interested buyers and sellers on the price and quantity of the goods and services offered in a market. In general, excess demand causes prices and quantity of supply to rise, and excess supply causes them to fall (Jones, 2014). According to participants, these market forces prioritized capital investment at the cost of Hadley Township. Developers desired properties in Hadley Township and intended to develop them commercially. Two participants discussed that developers targeted Hadley Township because the land could be acquired cheaply to maximize profit potential. This

tactic was evident in Hadley Township, where developers bought properties at low prices, leaving them vacant and resulting in blighting.

Participant 2: I can imagine people right now in Hadley. As soon as they knew it was an area that was open, the developers just swooped in. I know this from talking to one of the developers. They try to spend the least amount of money to get the most property. You know, that's why the area was chosen.

Participant 5: Developers started buying up property over here in Hadley Township, and they left it vacant. And then the neighborhood just started deteriorating. Some people, you know, just were very anxious to go, so they took whatever he was offering and left, but then they didn't do anything with the property. I guess it's because they couldn't get enough pieces of the property, and the city allowed him to come in and buy up these pieces of property and leave it vacant. And so, I've become quite disturbed over the past few years. So, you know, we've been through three potential buyouts.

Participant 16 underscored the sentiment, expressing that big businesses exploit prime real estate, displacing longstanding communities for profit. This reflects a broader pattern of economic displacement.

Participant 16: I think real estate is one. When they started developing this area, they really moved forward and brought in more businesses. The capitalization, you know, people, big businesses coming in and wiping out communities, you know, for the sake of profit, you know, taking advantage of prime real estate property, you know, and just really driving up the cost where some residents can't

even afford to stay there. Because not only do we look at Hadley Town, but you know, we look at where the Target is now. The Target that was Brentwood, that was, you know an African American community, and I think it was part of Brentwood. So where are those people now? So again, Brentwood and Hadley Town, I think there were some things over in Kirkwood, Meacham Park. Yeah. I mean, if we really start looking at all the African American communities, they seem to be vanishing.

Many participants conveyed that the redevelopment of Hadley Township was driven by both a desire to take advantage of its geographic desirability and the perceived economic undervaluation of the predominantly Black community. **Participant 8** noted, “I knew that eventually, Hadley Township was going to be a part of that because they always saw that entire area as prime real estate. So, I wasn’t shocked to see them start to pick, you know, pick away at Hadley Township. **Participant 11** agreed, stating, “People want their land, and in the case of, you know, Hadley Township and that development they were talking about because of transportation patterns, it became extremely valuable, and cause of the potential value that it had, developers are going to push to try to acquire that property.”

Several participants felt that developers had taken over a stable and thriving community. **Participant 6** contended, “I don’t like it because it just seems like the Black community is always messed over. All I can say is if it’s a Black neighborhood, they’re going to come in sooner even if it’s a thriving neighborhood like Hadley.” Furthermore, **Participant 15** reasoned, “What I do understand is 25 years ago, 20 to 25 years ago, it was

a thriving, or it was a community that had residential housing and then they started this process of redeveloping portions of it to a commercial center.” Another participant (**Participant 7**) stated, “How do we go in and basically remove one area that’s on one side, that’s a certain race, but right next, on the other side of the highway, there’s a totally different race, totally different economic status that was developed in a certain, in a different way?”

Several participants believed that private market forces intentionally target Black communities because of a perceived lower economic value, weaker resistance, and fewer resources to fight back.

Participant 16: You’re talking about homes that are already paid for it. And then, for what you are trying to give me, that’s not enough for me to pay off a home in full. So here I am on a fixed income, you know, and you’re trying to put me in another house or put me in a nursing home, and I don’t want to go. And so, you had some residents on that street that really kind of fought hard to keep their property.

Participant 4: You’re talking about going back a hundred years. You can see that the families started getting older and older, and the young people—some of them returned and some of them did not return—were still on their feet. It wasn’t a community that went so bad. It wasn’t because of deterioration or anything like that.

Participant 17: So, it seems to fit this whole pattern of development displacing Black communities because we don’t have the resources to stop it or to fight that.

Right. I can't think of any instance where a Black community, you know, threatened with displacement, was actually able to fight that. There's something about, you see, these homes have been taken care of by the people who live there. And they don't have a lot of resources, but they may, you know, it's just enough to maintain. So, you know, as long as you have racism under undergirding, everything, you know, economic mobility is really going to be tough. And in the eyes of a developer, you have to understand if it's a Black area, nobody's living there. Do you understand? It's there; in their eyes, they don't really matter.

This perspective was reinforced by **Participants 3 and 13**; they asserted that it is easier to displace people with fewer resources. **Participant 3** said, "Money. It is easier to displace people who don't have anything than it is to displace people who got something." **Participant 13** stated, "It was the easiest land to take. They were coming to get the property. And so, they were getting it undervalued. And so, what they did was they displaced the lowest valued, the lowest residential economic value residence, which was ours. And it's the truth." Moreover, the belief by some that African American communities do not "drive the economy" supports the systemic undervaluing of these neighborhoods, making them attractive targets for high-capital developers.

Participant 7: I will say that I, from my perspective, in my opinion, people don't look at African Americans, Blacks, and specifically historic Black areas as being able to drive the economy as being a force in the economy.

Participant 13: Here's the vulnerability. We, in general, do not tend to put as much money into our homes because we don't have that money set back to protect the value of our homes.

Participant 1: My father couldn't get a loan because he had contributed to a couple of Black activists. He started the only black bank in the entire state of Missouri, Gateway Bank. Nobody would loan him any money.

Blighting, pressure from the government to move, and increased property taxes are factors that greatly impact vulnerable communities like Hadley Township (Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020). The present study's data showed a complex association between property value, taxes, and land in Hadley Township, which disproportionately impacted its Black residents.

Property Taxes

According to participants, property values in Hadley Township were significantly influenced by racial, systematic, and socioeconomic factors, which caused property taxes to rise. Participants consistently raised the problem of land value, which led to the issue of property taxes in Hadley Township, which presented another layer of hardship for residents. **Participant 16** emphasized the housing disparities for residents.

Housing and people's ability, or African-American's ability or opportunity to own housing, and what essentially would happen when that land became valuable, and then how other groups would want to come in and either take over that land, move those African American residents out or make it where it was too difficult for

them to stay there to remain there, which then gave other people the opportunity to move in or to take over that land or take control of that land.

Participant 10 expressed, “It was mainly African Americans, and let’s find a way to get them out. So, we’re going to bring in these stores, which will build up the community. It’s good for the school district as far as property tax and everything to help the school out. But you took away your family and dynamics because it’s not here.”

Older African Americans on fixed incomes and those already struggling with the economic implications of such high taxes were most impacted by increased property taxes.

Participant 12: My neighbors in Hadley Township were schoolteachers, people who worked at Southwestern Bell, Ford, and city government, whether in Richmond Heights or other city governments. They were on a fixed income and had most likely been living on inflationary raises.

Participant 10 discussed the implications of high taxes. They said, “I would say it’s harder for some families and especially African American families and older African Americans who are still here to live because they’re struggling to pay their property tax. **Participant 10** recalled her former neighbor’s situation: “I still stay in touch with my neighbor, and her house is paid off, but she struggles to pay her property tax. So here she is in her seventies, still working. And that is the biggest complaint from everyone who lives in the Hadley Township is the property tax.” Despite the lower valuation of properties, the tax burden remained substantial. Participants shared their concerns about this impediment.

Participant 2: A lot of them had gotten behind on those taxes. You know, So, you know, when you go to that third year, it goes to the courthouse. You know, and then

they can, they can sell. And that is how several people lost their properties. And our taxes are not cheap. My tax bill is like \$4,000.

Participant 5: I actually complain to the mayor all the time about how, you know, I'm paying \$6,000 a year in taxes. The taxes are huge.

Participants discussed the

Property values escalated in Hadley Township due to racial and socioeconomic factors, which drove up property taxes and placed a significant burden on the Black community. Study participants noted actions to displace African American residents, including complicated land ownership processes, heightened taxes, and strategic development efforts. This systemic issue disproportionately affected older residents and those on fixed incomes who found it challenging to manage tax obligations, even with fully paid mortgages.

Theme 3: Economic Development and Displacement

The third theme from the data was the intentionality with which Hadley Township was targeted for economic development. The goal was to transform the area into a commercial hub and attract a wealthier demographic to Richmond Heights and surrounding communities. This transformation came at the economic and cultural expense of the local Black community. The introduction of large commercial enterprises and the emphasis on retail over residential needs led to displacement and a significant change in the community fabric. Economic benefits were unevenly distributed, highlighting racial disparity in the benefits of economic development.

Economic Development

Hadley Township's central location and proximity to the highway, commercial areas, and residential communities made it desirable for developers, who saw the area as prime real estate. Study participants overwhelmingly suggested there was a prioritization of big-box stores, franchises, and commercial enterprises in the economic development plans that led to the displacement of Black residents and businesses in Hadley Township. **Participant 17** shared, "It's the development that's really different. It's the commercial development." **Participant 8** agreed, "There seems to be an over-emphasis on commercial businesses. I mean, large-scale retail stores, franchises, restaurants."

Some study participants specifically discussed how economic development impacted community dynamics. **Participant 12** stated, "Hadley Township, more and more of it, is encroaching upon commercial development. Two churches came down, the one church that was there by the old elementary school." **Participant 11** explained, "Obviously, there's much more commercial. And the commercial is mostly retail, big box retail. And now thinking about it, there's probably been a lot more construction of rental properties than new single-family construction." This further alluded to a plan to attract a new demographic of residents.

Study participants discussed the decline in Black-owned businesses and a focus on commercial development, which did not translate to increased opportunities for the Black residents or their small businesses. The overall sense was a disregard for the cultural significance of the Black community, and economic forces were perceived as intentionally catering to a different demographic, leading to the displacement of Black

businesses and residents. **Participant 1** shared, “None of the gentrification or revitalization had anything to do with helping Blacks or even anything to do with them, period. Cause the Blacks were normally eliminated.” **Participant 8** further explained that there was a “total disregard for the history that’s there. Disregarding the people who had roots there in Hadley Township.”

Participant 16 explained in detail about the impact of the development.

I think that the economic development back then was, again, the mom-and-pop shops. You know, that was them, you know, making their money outside of working for the brick factory or whatever other jobs they had. But as we look at it now, and really, I’m switching gears here, but you know, back then, what was being poured into the community. If there was any economic development on the plus side that was happening, it might have been happening for the whites in Richmond Heights. But as far as the African Americans, there was not much being poured there; it is for the benefit of, you know, the companies and the local government.

Study participants repeatedly mentioned businesses like Walmart, Menard’s, and Starbucks as new developments that benefited the local government. As stated by **Participant 13**, “So, whatever opportunity for changing, getting revenue in that movement to bring in Menards and all that, that was for revenue.” **Participant 10** agreed:

For instance, we have, you know, a Starbucks Vitality Bowl. Those are not like it is. When they started putting up Walmart, I was like, okay, everybody has a Walmart. But when they built Menards and brought in businesses that you usually

don't see in the inner city, it's here. So, that was like, they really trying to cater not just to the Hadley Township, but we're surrounded by Brentwood and Clayton. So, it is what they start bringing in. You knew who they were catering to in that neighborhood.

Economic development may have hindered economic mobility by displacing Black-owned businesses and the community's economic mobility. **Participant 16** explained, "So, the little stores were owned by the community residents, families. And so, what we see today now is totally different. These are people, you know, more established businesses that are coming in, franchises. You know, bigger businesses just wiping out the community." **Participant 3** stated, "Big box operations, corporate offices, the shopping centers, and the big names. But that all was a matter, in my opinion, a matter of the value of the ground and the opportunity for those businesses to buy out the small property owners and, you know, build large 20, 30-acre commercial enterprises." **Participant 7** highlighted, "as far as the Richmond Heights area, the big box is branded stores. It's more like strips in the strip malls in the sense of how we can get these retailers in here to build up the economy in that sense that we can compete with the other municipalities."

The economic development of Hadley Township led to displacement and economic disparities. The development strategy, aiming to enhance the commercial footprint, inevitably increased property values and living costs, excluding long-term, less affluent residents. The economic forces that influenced development disproportionately

affected Black resident displacement in Hadley Township, who faced the loss of their homes, businesses, and community ties.

Housing Challenges

One of the initial reasons developers were attracted to Hadley Township was the low property valuation. **Participant 2** explained, “I think one of the reasons that Hadley was chosen for redevelopment was the housing stock. And well for what they paid for these homes, and I know because my parents, I remember what they paid. I think that they paid what was like \$20,000.” According to **Participant 11**, “Well before the development, from what I now know, most of the area that was taken for the project was residential, mostly a community of homeowners of single, small, single-family residences.” **Participant 15** expounded:

Housing and people’s ability, or African-American’s ability or opportunity to own housing, and what essentially would happen when that land became valuable, and then how other groups would want to come in and either take over that land, move those African American residents out or make it where it was too difficult for them to stay there, to remain there, which then gave other people the opportunity to move in or to take over that land or take control of that land.

The commercial development led to a significant increase in property values, creating pressure on existing residents to sell their properties at a lower valuation. This left Black residents vulnerable to being uprooted from their stable community, especially older residents. For example, **Participant 14** contended, “It’s not fair to cause someone to leave a situation like this and then have to go somewhere where they have to figure out

how they're going to pay a mortgage. Especially people who are older and, you know, just retired or what have you. What are they going to do?" **Participant 16** further asserted:

You're talking about already paid for homes. The houses were, we didn't have new houses and all of that stuff in there. So, these are people that are up in age. So, some people fought to say, you know what, I don't want to move. I have been here all my life. This is my home. I should not have to leave. And then, for what you are trying to give me, that's not enough for me to pay off a home in full. So here I am on a fixed income, you know, and you're trying to put me in another house or put me in a nursing home, and I don't want to go. And so, you had some residents on that street who really fought hard to keep their property.

Participant 10 elucidated, "Their home's been built forever, and the property tax is killing them."

Once developers leveraged lower valuations and began to buy properties to redevelop Hadley Township residents, they were met with a new challenge: blighting.

Participant 10 said, "A lot of families started looking to buy property elsewhere because they were ready for the buyout, and then the buyout didn't happen right away. So, those families lost out. And they end up losing their property, too." **Participant 12** stated, "Here were people still living in their homes were blighted, and there were some empty parcels." **Participant 5** explained, "I think a lot of what happens is like what we started to see over here where the neighborhood just started being broken down. Where all of a sudden, there were a bunch of vacant homes."

Subsequent commercial development led to a surge in property value, which pressured existing residents to move because the area became unaffordable. **Participant 2** shared:

So, from \$20,000 to \$200,000, who can come up with that money? And what bank wants to lend you that money and think they'll get it all back before you're gone? You're already 60, so how will that work well for you? Who wants to take on a big loan like that? P2 housing prices are the cost for one thing. I mean \$200,000, and, you know, these little two-bedroom homes are selling for \$200,000."

Participant 5 added, "Even going down West Bruno, which are very small homes. You know, I always look to see how much those homes are selling for. It amazes me that those little, small homes are selling for almost \$300,000." **Participant 6** reported, "We sold a house for like \$65,000, and whoever bought it got over \$200,000 for the place. And all that area where that development is where Black people lived." **Participant 10** further explained the difficulty of living in Hadley Township once economic development started:

Just to buy a home here from the house that has been around since the fifties or sixties, two bedrooms, one bathroom, you probably will pay almost \$200,000. But when we think about revitalization and economic empowerment, who are they really catering to or considering when they think of that? And who are they not considering when it comes to that? I say that because even in Brentwood and Hadley Township, you're not going to find anything under \$1,300 a month. So, if

a young single mom wanted her child to come to the school district, it would be very hard for her to live. Even in Maplewood, there are not too many apartments you can find under \$900. And so, as I think about that, if, like I said, the family's not already here and they have their property, their house, where generations can continue to live, you won't be able to do it.

Developers' development strategy and the city's approval to expand the commercial footprint inevitably increased property values and living costs, excluding long-term, less affluent residents. The redevelopment fractured the close-knit Black community that existed in Hadley Township for over a century. The economic development initiatives in Richmond Heights had adverse effects on Black residents.

The City of Richmond Heights

Richmond Heights, Missouri, is a city focused on economic growth through various development projects that have significantly altered the community, often to the detriment of its long-standing Black residents. These initiatives have turned Hadley Township into a commercial center to boost the city's visibility and tax revenue. However, this transformation has mainly led to the displacement of Black residents, highlighting a recurring trend where economic goals take precedence over maintaining community ties and diversity (Open Street Map Foundation, 2018). Study participants indicated that these development strategies disproportionately affect minority communities, suggesting a governance model that values financial gains over the well-being of its people.

Participant 5: I think the biggest one is economics. Richmond Heights claims they want diversity, this, that, and the other. I can't necessarily say I agree with that because you won't price people out if that's what you want. They built that apartment complex in Hadley Township. And it's extremely expensive." The city's decision to transform Hadley Township into an economic commercial hub despite the displacement of a historically Black community demonstrates the power dynamic between Richmond Heights and Hadley Township.

Participant 3: It's a matter of who has the power to make decisions. One is about decisions about whether it's going to happen, whether development or economic activity is going to happen, and two is the power to create a balance in terms of what you get for giving up land and ownership. And what I get in terms of, you know, the development activity I want to create."

Study participants revealed a pattern of displacement directly connected to new development by the City of Richmond Heights. For example, the city's construction of the Richmond Heights Recreation Center on Argus Street was referenced. **Participants 1 and 2** discussed the displacement of Black residents to make way for the facility.

Participant 1 said:

Argus had about eight houses on each side of the street. They were all Black owned and ended right into the wall of the highway. They annexed that entire street, got rid of all the people, and built that recreation center there. Richmond Heights Recreation Center, where my son and I belong. Because we go swimming out there. They have a wonderful swimming pool. They have a track, and they

have weights, and it's a state-of-the-art recreation center. And as usual, it comes at some expense. And the expense was a street called Argus that we had stayed in before we built out there on Bennett.

Participant 2 stated, "I grew up on Argus. And I said, you know, you have torn these houses down. This was before they built, they did the development, but that's where the community center went. The community center was supposed to be up on the corner." Similarly, the construction of large retail chains and upscale residential complexes was seen by participants as strategic displacement of Hadley Township by the city to boost local tax revenues and commercial profits.

While the developments are economically beneficial for the city in terms of increased tax revenues and retail profits, according to participants, they disproportionately affect Black residents who face the loss of their homes, businesses, and community ties.

Participant 15: I think that it played a major part because, if I remember correctly, part of the reason why they wanted to change Hadley Township was to increase its commercial footprint. And that desire to increase the commercial footprint came at the expense of a Black and brown community."

Participant 11: The city felt that these larger chains would generate more revenue. And so that's it. By having larger stores, they have fewer businesses with which to coordinate. Cities will typically want to go along with that because they can realize, you know, an improvement in their tax base and what you have. This

particular area was not desirable 50, 60, 70 years ago, but because of development patterns it became, the location became extremely valuable.

Participant 13: The community was based on property values, and tax dollars were not very high. And so, you displaced all these people, you brought in, you know, like Menard's, and now you know, you're talking, you know, millions of dollars in tax revenue that you would not have received for the city. So, whatever opportunity for changing, getting revenue in that movement to bring in Menards and all that was for revenue."

Participant 7: I think it was economic development. I think it was basically, let's bring in tax and retail revenue to support this. My understanding of the way that our revenue structure and tax structure is made up is that it's not conducive for us to not look at revenue streams, localized revenue streams."

Participant 5: The way to bring in more tax money is to have commercial property.

Study participants had a critical view of the local government's role in facilitating these developments. The government's actions, or lack thereof, in protecting and supporting the displaced residents were seen as a significant factor in the ongoing displacement and community degradation of Hadley Township. Participants discussed the area's transformation influenced by the decision of Richmond Heights and surrounding communities that prioritized economic development. According to **Participant 16**, as the city brought more businesses in, the community shifted:

I realized that Richmond Heights was bigger than I knew it to be. And the bigger part is where I started to see more whites. And even now, a lot of what has happened to the Hadley Township area is the commercializing of, you know, bringing in more businesses and apartment dwellings and so forth. I think that there's a lack of respect and support for African American communities, especially from the local government because the local government had a role that they could have played in their support. You know, when you look at Richmond Heights, their community, Richmond Heights, local government,

Participant 13 emphasized that Richmond Heights was competing with the neighboring community, Brentwood:

The city of Richmond Heights offers high-quality services to the community, and in offering those high-quality services, they have to look toward paying for those services. Richmond Heights is landlocked. We're not fortunate like Brentwood. You see, Brentwood was doing all that massive redevelopment along Brentwood's back, right to the South. Richmond Heights doesn't have that. So, whatever opportunity for changing, getting revenue in that movement to bring in Menard's and all that, that was for revenue. And so, what they did was they displaced the lowest valued, the lowest residential economic value residence, which was ours. And, and it's the truth.

Other participants corroborated these statements.

Participant 2: You know, there were other businesses; Brentwood was really flourishing, you know, across the street from us. Excuse me, Maplewood got

Walmart. So, I think it was a good spot to develop a retail-type developer, you know. It was a good, smart move for them.

Participant 5: Since Walmart was over there and Maplewood's making all this money, I think, you know, Richmond Heights felt like, well, we need to get in on it too. You know, across the street, Brentwood had Home Depot, Cooler Hands, some other restaurants, McDonald's, and all kinds of little things. And so, I think just that it was an opportunity for Richmond Heights to get in on bringing in some money.

Participants also discussed that once the city began allowing development, Hadley Township was slowly chipped away similarly to other historically Black communities.

Participant 8: But with Hadley Township, very much like Meacham Park, they said, oh, we're only going to take one little park, but we're going to leave the neighborhood intact, but we're only going to take one more."

Participant 9: When the cities around it began to grow, other industries picked up. People came in with roads and highways and said, sorry, but you got to go. They just gobbled it up. And so, it didn't matter who was in their way, mostly Black people or farmers, it didn't matter. They just took it. And, of course, once they took it, they could start portioning up the land however they wanted to do it. That's one of the reasons why we have all the shopping areas in Richmond and Hanley Township now.

Hadley Township became a focal point for the city, according to participants, for redevelopment to boost its revenue streams. This decision underscores a governance

approach where economic objectives overshadow community welfare. The local government prioritized economic gain in the process and displaced residents and businesses in HBCs. This approach has been widely critiqued for its lack of equitable negotiation with the affected communities, reflecting a governance model that appears to place a higher value on financial outcomes than on the welfare of its community members.

Theme 4: The Impact of Economic Forces on the Black Community

The fourth theme from the data was related to the deeper, more subtle undercurrent of historical racial dynamics shaping and influencing the displacement of Hadley Township residents. Race and segregation as factors contributing to Hadley Township and the community's transformation over time was a common theme across study participants. These historical dynamics, as highlighted by the participants, suggested that the patterns of segregation and discrimination dictated not only residential layouts but also deeply ingrained socio-economic divisions that have persisted even as the community evolved.

Segregation

Segregation along racial lines is greatly rooted in American history. From *Plessy v. Ferguson* to Jim Crow and *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, the United States' intentional and deliberate efforts to separate the races have been enshrined in American law. Laws and legislation enacted under de jure segregation excluded African Americans from land and homeownership and has had a lasting impact on the devaluation and disinvestment of Black communities. Racial ordinances, restrictive

covenants, and deed restrictions were standard practices that excluded Blacks from home ownership (Brown et al., 2019). Participants discussed enforced residential boundaries and challenges faced by African Americans when attempting to purchase homes.

Participant 1: It was illegal, against the law in the state of Missouri and the city of St. Louis for Black people to purchase land on that street. [My dad] moved on the all Black street I was talking about named Argus. And I think that the reason for that was that it was segregated and that we never had any equal integration. It was just segregation that was unequal. Dr. Rusan had already built a house out there where only white people were supposed to live. By getting an attorney, we got a white attorney to purchase the land. We found out that the deeds said land was not to be sold to Negroes. It was written on the deed. That was news to me. I knew they did that, but I had no idea they actually had it in writing.

Other study participants discussed laws and policies that explicitly prevented them from living in specific neighborhoods, except for designated areas like Hadley Township.

Participant 12: I started to find out that I lived in Hadley Township, which is, if I was born in the 1950s, and it was, you know, in the 1960s and 70s, that's where I had to live. At this point within St. Louis County, Hadley Township was the place where African Americans could reside.

Participant 8: Much of Hadley came from the restrictive covenant and segregation policies. These situations were mostly precipitated by law, originally segregated; they were self-contained communities.

Participant 13: Well, see, the thing about this was, basically, the community was self-sufficient. But connecting with other surrounding communities, except for the sister area in Brentwood, was an issue. Separate the Black folks and where they live from the rest of the community... a neighborhood that was intentionally segregated to be Black.

Participant 14 discussed that Hadley Township was purposely built for segregation. They stated, “My understanding is it was formed because Black people didn’t have anywhere else to lay. Other participants recounted their experiences growing up during that time.

Participant 6: We had separate schools, of course, we didn’t know any better. It was the only school we had. You know, we couldn’t go to the movies. We couldn’t go to the swimming pools. We couldn’t go to the community center. We couldn’t do anything like that in the Richmond Heights-Maplewood area. I mean, it was strictly separated.

Participant 2: There were a lot of racial challenges. I do know. We went to school in our neighborhood, and I know that my class was the first to start kindergarten when integration started.

Participants’ statements and historical context surrounding segregation highlighted the deeply embedded racial division in American society, depicted through the experiences of residents in Hadley Township. These testimonies underscored the realities of de jure segregation that legislated racial separation and its consequences in the

daily lives of Black Americans. Restrictive laws barred Black families from living in certain areas except Hadley Township.

Race As a Factor

Hadley Township's redevelopment underscored the complex interplay between urban development, economic interests, and racial considerations. Participants highlighted a troubling pattern: Black communities were primarily affected and displaced by Richmond Heights' aspirations to compete with Brentwood. Participants indicated that race and socio-economic factors were instrumental in shaping the township's economic development strategies.

Participant 15: It was an older subset of a neighborhood or community, primarily Black people. It did not have a lot of resources. What I will say in general is that I think race played a part in the city's development of Richmond Heights. I think that it played a major part because, if I'm remembering correctly, part of the reason why they wanted to change Hadley Township was to increase its commercial footprint. And that desire to increase the commercial footprint came at the expense of a Black and brown community.

Participant 10: It was majority African American. It was African American families. It was older generations there. Some of the houses probably weren't at par. It was an opportunity to get rid of African Americans. I highly believe race played a role.

Participant 3: It's just impossible for race not to be a factor. And that factor is in the things that race makes in day-to-day decisions. I'm not going to clean your street. I'm not going to pave your street. I'm not going to put lights on your street.

Participant 13: Absolutely, race played a role, as did the neighborhood being one of the oldest in Richmond Heights, one of the poorest quality homes, and its location along one of the busiest streets in the county, Hanley Road. All these factors played a role.

Overwhelmingly, participants agreed that race was a, if not the factor, for Hadley Township's demise.

Participant 16: It always does. You know, I think that African American communities are always vulnerable always.

Participant 7: Yes, race played a role. Race and some money played a role at some point.

Participant 8: I wholeheartedly believe that much of this development was racially motivated.

Several participants emphasized that decisions about redevelopment were strategically planned to minimize the impact on white communities; however, justifications were used to facilitate the displacement of Hadley Townships' residents. Many of their comments shed light on the broader economic structures supporting racial biases in urban development.

Participant 13: The thing about that was that the city then had the township put in very little infrastructure. And so, what they did was they displaced the lowest-valued, lowest-economic-value residence, which was ours. And it's the truth."

Participant 1: They decided, first of all, there was the need for a highway. And it was going to be determined by displacing as few white people as possible."

Participant 11: Well, it certainly made it easier, and it made the justification easier. I suspect that the justification for taking it was that it was a low-income neighborhood anyway and that the residents would benefit from being bought out. And that because they were African Americans, it wouldn't be necessary to actually ask them if they felt the same way.

Participant 14: Well, I think those other things...it is race. It's, well, it's race and economic status. And when we make these kinds of decisions, you know, why do we always pick a Black community versus a white community? How does this always happen? Because realistically, that's always how it happens. You know, it's either a Black community or it's a poor community.

Participant 17: Racism is one of the keys that undergirds development. The Black communities don't matter. We are talking about Black lives don't matter! Black communities don't matter. The key thing is that they're black communities. They're Black communities. Okay. That's what's key, and it doesn't matter if they're middle-class or lower-class Black communities. What's operative is that they're black. We have an economic structure that affirms and supports racism.

Participant 6: Oh my God. Discrimination was a factor for sure. I remember my brother got, well, they took him to the jailhouse for just looking at the swimming pool in Maplewood. And it was just very prejudiced over there. Oh yeah. Race is always at play. But, Richmond Heights, you know, there was a pretty nice community when I named the streets like all up and down Bruno. We had nice homes. People were making it. They worked at the brickyard and steel companies, making and acquiring nice homes. Yes. I do think it was racially motivated. Yes.

Only one study participant did not believe race was the sole reason for the displacement.

Participant 12 stated, “I don’t think it played a direct factor, but I think it would be obvious in whatever research was done, it would be obvious. So, but I don’t think it was a concerted effort.”

The redevelopment of Hadley Township highlights the complex interplay between race and economic development. Participants’ narratives revealed that the intersection of race and socioeconomic factors significantly influenced the strategies used, primarily affecting the Black communities in Richmond Heights. Most participants noted that race was not a peripheral issue but a crucial element driving the decisions that shaped Hadley Township’s landscape.

Racial Demographic Shift

Study participants discussed the interplay of economics, commercial development, and population changes that reshaped the historically Black community of Hadley Township. Participants revealed that new commercial and residential developments catered to a different demographic, often excluding residents who had long

contributed to the township's vibrancy. According to participants, the transformation in Richmond Heights carried significant racial implications, including the loss of Black-owned businesses and residents and an impact on their economic mobility.

Participant 17: I assume that the community as such really doesn't exist anymore. We got that new standard, the new apartment complex, and stuff. It's the development that's different. It's the commercial development."

Participant 14: If you ask me now about Black businesses in Richmond Heights, I cannot think of a single one. I can't think of one in Richmond Heights now. But back then, you had a number of them."

Participant 1: I know that man's name so well at the filling station. He would've been the one person we would've thought would've been able to stay. But I think they forced him out in some kind of way."

Participant 15: Like other black communities that had previously existed and then are no longer, it was not just blue-collar. I can't say that it was all just white-collar, but decent people who had decent jobs well-to-do and who saw this as an opportunity to build a life for their families in the communities that they intentionally chose.

Participant 16: I go back to say the Great Migration pushed us up here, but what tended to happen is that once we got here and our communities were thriving and so forth, and as the city was developing, then we started looking at, you know, how this is prime real estate. And so now in Hadley Township, and I watched, you know, as I grew up, you know, Hadley Township, it was a small, contained

community. Everything we needed pretty much was there within driving distance. I mean, we didn't have a bigger grocery store, where we went to is, was right there, right on the corner of where they got a high rise there now. So, the little stores were owned by the community residents and families. And so, what we see today now is totally different. These are people, you know, more established businesses that are coming in franchises. You know, bigger businesses, just, you know, wiping out the community. So, it's attracting more people differently; it's not attracting the African Americans, it's attracting more of the whites, the Caucasians.

Redevelopment significantly impacted Hadley Township, Black residents, and the families who called it home. Many participants shared the devastation caused by redevelopment. Specifically, they reflected on the apparent change in demographics. Class and race were the most noticeable demographic changes in the community.

Participant 12: You do see other ethnicities. I know other races coming into Hadley Township. You see a lot of young couples coming into Hadley Township when a house is sold, generally, you know, a two-bedroom, one-bath or a three-bedroom, two-bath type thing type house. Right. But you don't see, and I think I could see I could say this uncertainty you don't see too many young Black families coming to Hadley Township. You do see a considerable number of Caucasian families moving into Hadley Township. But you don't, I don't see very many young families of color moving to Hadley Township.

Participant 14: It's obvious, but the way they built these houses, housing over there in Hadley Township was very inexpensive because they didn't have, you know, these were like little shotgun houses almost. And now, Richmond Heights, generally speaking, your houses are probably, you know, \$300,000 houses. This is a dramatic difference.

Participant 8: I see them as more catering towards wealthier whites with disposable income, and not necessarily from the area, from far-reaching areas to come there to spend their money in a community they don't even live in. I wholeheartedly believe that much of this development was racially motivated.

Participant 6: All I can say is that if it's a Black neighborhood, they're going to come in sooner, and it's going to be a thriving neighborhood. Yes, highways are coming through. You know, big businesses are taking over because Black people don't have the means to build Lowes and Home Depots and all that kind of stuff.

Participant 1: To me, the only racial demographics that changed were that there were fewer Black people there because they bought all those homes. They bought, they bought all, they bought every single Black person out just about that was from Hadley Road down to Laclede Station Road. But on Laclede Station Road, they had a couple; they had a few fairly, really nice houses that were Black right down there at Laclede Station Road and Dale. And for about, you know, a half a mile down the street there. But the only real change came when the Black population was decimated. So, 75% of them were bought out. The others that had been there probably had been there for 30 or 40 years before I did, because Dr.

Rusan was from there. And used to have picnics. It'd be 200 or 300 people at his picnic.

Participant 10: Drive through Hadley Township, which is mainly Richmond. The Heights is not the same, the feeling is not the same, and the family is not the same. It is more catered to the, what I want to say, rich white.

Participant 16: So, it's attracting more people differently, it's not attracting the African Americans, it's attracting more of the whites, the Caucasians." Participant 2 said, "I think is the housing prices, the cost for one thing. all the white people are moving in. Participant 5 said, "The people on scene moving in, they're, you know, predominantly white. I have not seen black people moving to any of the homes. Probably the past 10 years or so.

Participant 7: I know it's not majority Black. It's not diverse. Racially, it's not diverse economically. I think there are little pockets in Richmond Heights currently, but it's not a truly diverse makeup in that regard.

Participant 6: That township is just like all the others. I mean, redevelopment comes in, takes over, and puts people out of their homes. You know, I have to move to North County. Right. You know, it's just a destructive thing but on the other hand, it's just like out here in Chesterfield, I am for progress. I'm for progress, but I'm for progress that includes us.

Participant 13: Back then, Hadley Township had a strong sense of community. You know, there was a village mentality, so to speak. Okay, so here, let's take this

dead, double dead end. Seven years ago, there were no whites down here. Just a double dead end. Let's see. Now, it's more than 50% white.

Participant 14: It differs tremendously from what it used to be. I don't think of Richmond Heights as a neighborhood anymore. Richmond Heights, generally speaking, you know your houses are probably \$300,000 houses. This is a dramatic difference.”

Study participants vividly described the significant changes in this HBC brought about by economic forces and commercial development. The redevelopment, catering mainly to a wealthier, non-resident demographic, caused significant demographic and economic shifts, systematically displacing Black residents and eroding the cultural and economic fabric that once defined the area. The loss of Black-owned businesses and long-standing community members marked this transformation.

Saving Hadley Township

Hadley Township's transformation into a prime commercial real estate area sparked an emotional dialogue on community preservation and Black communities. Participants in the study expressed concerns that the decisions affecting their community had been predominantly profit-driven, often neglecting the profound social and cultural impacts. Despite these challenges, participants remain uncertain about the feasibility of preserving or revitalizing Hadley Township, what is left of the area, and the remaining residents.

Participant 9: The growth has been phenomenal, and it continues to grow. I'm concerned about those folks who are still holding on, and they will come since the

politics is somewhat changing now, black or white. I wouldn't be a bit surprised in the next 20 years. You don't see a lot of those residential structures there. They don't have any place else to go. It's because now we have Big Bend and Hadley, and that's attractive.

Participant 6: It just seems like the Black community is always messed over. Take Richmond Heights, for instance; all along Hadley Road were businesses, Black businesses, homes, and people. I remember skating up and down Hanley Road, you know? Yeah. And we had as young people and, and we could stop in a grocery store and buy a, an ice cream cone. But you can't do that now. You can't, you know. Yeah. Hey, it's just gone."

Participant 7: Richmond Heights [Hadley Township] used to be, what it looked like, how prominent, successful, and integral it was to the black community and the St. Louis region, and it was just wiped out.

Communities like Hadley Township and its neighboring Black communities are targeted disproportionately for economic development. Blighting and high crime are excuses given to justify the displacement of these communities, but in many instances, this is not the case. The impact of displacement has a lasting and devastating effect on Black people.

Participant 8: Neither one of the neighborhoods was run down. Neither one of them suffered from any level of high crime. They just scattered our people and put them in places that were not as community-friendly. Because in both those communities, regardless of their rivalries, there was just a sense of close

community, fellowship, and, you know, camaraderie. People took care of each other. People looked out for each other. So, that sense of respect and community was demolished.

Participant 16: I think that there's a lack of respect and support for African American communities, especially from the local government, because the local government had a role that they could have played in there to support. you know, when you look at Richmond Heights their community, Richmond Heights, local government, there's no, I think my, my aunt was the only African American female that served on the city council. You know, there's only a few, I think before her. There may have been no I think she might have been the first one. But there, you know, again, there's no support from the local government.

Participant 17: You have to remove race as a part of the equation in order for them not to be economically exploited, you would have to remove race from the equation. And right now, race is a major part.

Communities like Hadley Township, predominantly Black, low-income communities near the interstate system and prime real estate, are not likely to survive urban renewal.

Consequently, study participants did not believe the community could have been saved.

Participant 13: It was not going to survive. It's as simple as that. We're going to do some gentrification in the process of gentrification. We don't get it all, so we leave a residual Black neighborhood. So now we have this pseudo diversity, and then as those residual Blacks die, we'll become a non-diverse community.

Participant 3: I'm not quite sure that you could have prevented the displacement, whether you were talking about a Black developer or a white developer. When you have properties that reach a period of obsolescence or inefficiency, at some point, somebody would have wanted to take advantage of the opportunity, whether they were Black or white. The problem is that no Black person was, or no Black people were charged with enough information, education, money, and contacts to do the development themselves.

Participant 6: I don't know if it could have been prevented. I don't know. Because, like I said, we don't have the money. We can't even get the money. We can't go to the banks and ask for a decent loan to build.

Participant 10: As I said when you looked at surrounding communities, and they started developing it, it's going to sooner or later it's going to happen.

Participant 4: Well, this highway again, I mean, access and Clayton had started booming see most of the businesses from like Brentwood and the Clayton area and the Richmond Heights area now I mean it's, that's some of the top commercial real estate.

Participant 9: They ran those highways through and made those connections from those other communities, connecting 70, 64, and 44, which was just in the seat of the saddle right there. And the proximity to St. Louis and the other parts of West in the suburb. I mean, it was prime for the taking.

Participant 8: I knew that eventually, Hadley Township was going to be a part of that because they always saw that entire area as prime real estate. So, I wasn't

shocked to see them start to pick, you know, pick away at Hadley Township. But I've seen other places that, I've seen other white areas that you could do that, but you wouldn't dare even go knock on their door because you know what they would say. But you depend upon the fact that, unfortunately, on many occasions, we, as black people would have not had the best advantage economically in this country since we've gotten here.

Some participants shared that while they did not believe Hadley Township could be saved, they did believe policies, compensation, or planning could have affected how residents in the community were treated.

Participant 7: I'm thinking about what policies need to be in place now for this not to happen again. The sad part is I think if someone wants it, they're going to go ahead and get it. So, you can say policies, you can say that there actually has to be all these rules and check marks, but at the end of the day, my pessimistic opinion is if someone wants it, they're going to get it because they're going to distinguish language enough that actually showcases whatever policies in place.

Participant 14: I'm not going to say that it should not have been displaced. I'm not going to say that. I would say that appropriate compensation should have been made and other services provided to ensure that individuals were made whole in the process. And when we make these kinds of decisions, you know, why do we always pick a black community versus a white community? How does this always happen? Because realistically, that's always how it happens. You know, it's either a black community or it's a poor community.

Participant 11: Probably not, but I think the residents would've had much more of a say in what was going to happen and how they could potentially benefit. So, if the land was going to be taken, then there should have been a plan for how they could share in the increased value of the site. They should have been, you know, made good if they were going to move elsewhere. And so, whatever they should have had replacement cost.

The narrative about Hadley Township's transformation reflects a community struggling with the dual pressures of commercial development and cultural erasure. Participants expressed a profound sense of loss, not only of their homes but also of the vibrant cultural heritage that once thrived in the predominantly Black community. The prevailing sentiment among participants is acknowledgment and recognition of the challenges in preserving Hadley Township, highlighted by the persistent feeling that economic interests have consistently overshadowed their community's social and historical essence.

Summary

Chapter 4 provided the data analysis for this qualitative case study. The interview protocol ensured that participants responded to the same questions. The results from the audio-recorded web-based and in-person interviews with seventeen participants revealed four themes: resilience and self-determination, peripheral pus of suburban Black community displacement, racial and economic dynamics, and the impact of economic forces on Black communities

The first theme, resilience and self-determination, emerged from participants' descriptive experiences of the spirit and adaptability of the Hadley Township community in response to systemic barriers. Residents of Hadley Township demonstrated a strong sense of self-determination and a collective effort to maintain identity and culture to build a thriving community. The second theme, the peripheral push of suburban Black community displacement, emerged from participants' experiences of the unique challenges Black residents faced and their geographic and social position within Richmond Heights. Being on the city's peripheries increased vulnerability to development pressures, causing displacement of residents.

The third theme, racial and economic dynamics, emerged from participants' experiences and reflections about the interplay between racial and economic factors that underpinned the visible displacement in the Hadley Township community and the context of the economic landscape where race significantly influenced economic opportunities and outcomes in the redevelopment of the community. The fourth theme, the impact of economic forces on Black communities, emerged from the description of participants' experiences and reflections on the economic development decision that disproportionately led to demographic shifts and displacement of Black residents and the significant transformation in land use.

Chapter five discusses these findings relative to the literature review, research question, and theoretical framework. It also includes an interpretation of findings and study limitations. Finally, it includes recommendations for lawmakers and implications for future research..

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the factors that contributed to the disappearance of suburban HBCs, a topic of significant importance with potential to inform policy and practice. The lack of research concerning the displacement of suburban HBCs compelled me to synthesize a diverse array of scholarly materials to frame the research design for this study. More specifically, this study aimed to identify the research focused on the influences behind the disappearance of Hadley Township, a suburban historically black community (HBC) in Richmond Heights, part of the St. Louis metropolitan area in Missouri. I sought to examine Hadley Township's formation, historical overview of its history, the conditions that made the site valuable for other developments, the mechanisms that caused the displacement of residents, the community's reaction to these changes, and the subsequent dispersion of its residents. This study sought to contribute to a broader understanding of the challenges faced by similar communities and to inform policy and practice that aim to mitigate the adverse effects of urban developmental pressures on vulnerable communities' displacement, offering hope for a more equitable and just future.

A qualitative research methodology was meticulously employed in this comprehensive study. Qualitative researchers can reach underlying meanings and perspectives shaped by individuals and groups concerning a problem by exploring a phenomenon through multiple lenses to gain insight into how people live and their worldviews (Jones et al., 2006; Yin, 2018). The qualitative research methodology was

deemed most suitable for this study to provide a comprehensive overview of the selected community and a thorough analysis of the data collected (Yin, 2018). The primary data source for this was in-person and virtual interviews via Zoom. Purposeful and snowball sampling was used to identify 17 participants who were former or current residents of Hadley Township, or descendants of those residents, or possessed extensive knowledge and expertise concerning Richmond Heights, Missouri, and Hadley Township. Data analysis was performed using NVivo software to code data and align themes.

The study's notable findings contained four main themes that emerged from the data analysis in response to the research question that captured the impact of the forces that have led to the disappearance of suburban HBCs in Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. The four themes that emerged from the study were resilience and self-determination of a community, the peripheral push of suburban Black community displacement, the impact of economic forces on Black community displacement, and racial economic dynamics. In this chapter, I present the interpretation of the study's findings, limitations, recommendations, implications, and conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

The interpretation of the findings in this qualitative study was based on the research question: How was Hadley Township, a historically Black community (HBC) in Richmond Heights, Missouri, impacted by its displacement? The findings provided significant insight into how historical and current socio-economic and racial factors influence community stability and identity. A conclusive interpretation acknowledges that the theoretical framework employed in this study, critical race theory (CRT), and the

central research question are fundamentally rooted in race and marginalization. Participants believed that race played a role and had an impact that led to the disappearance of Hadley Township. Drawing upon the theoretical framework of CRT, I argue that the disappearance of these communities is not merely a coincidental outcome but a deliberate consequence of systemic racism in America (Elias & Feagin, 2020). This assertion aligns with the core tenets of CRT, which suggests that racism is embedded within the very fabric of American institutions and society. As Delgado and Stefancic (2023) argued, CRT's foundation is based on the fact that racism is a perpetual feature of American society. The study intended to address the impact of the displacement of suburban HBCs in cities like Richmond Heights, Missouri. The findings revealed the resilience and evolving dynamics of Hadley Township to understand the multifaceted impacts of urbanization and economic development on suburban Black communities.

Resilience and Self-Determination of a Community

The findings in this study align with the works of several past researchers who found that Black people lived in suburban areas (Wiese, 2004; Gordon, 2019; Loewen, 2020; Massey & Tannen, 2018). The literature review in chapter 2 detailed how Black communities were established in suburban areas before widespread white migration there, as Lowen (2020) and Wiese (2004) documented. Although segregation physically separated Black and White communities, it also played a crucial role in shaping Black identity and fostering a sense of belonging. As Freixas and Abbott (2019) argued, Black suburbs served as more than just residential areas; they were spaces where Black communities could express their culture, build strong social networks, and experience

greater homeownership than their inner-city counterparts. The present study revealed a community of resilience, self-determination, and cultural preservation within Hadley Township, a predominantly Black community in St. Louis County. This community, formed around the economic opportunities provided by the Evens Howard Firebrick Company, became a cornerstone of stability and identity for its residents.

Study participants recounted migration stories from the late 1800s to the early 1900s and the entrepreneurship of Black residents and other local businesses. They crafted a robust community despite the barriers of segregation and systemic racial discrimination. The township's story contributes to a broader understanding of how such communities navigate and counteract systemic challenges through communal solidarity and economic self-reliance, highlighting essential lessons in cultural persistence and the stability of the community (The Historical Marker Database, 2022). The findings are inconsistent with Black suburban communities not being as affluent as White suburban communities (Rothstein, 2017; Freixas & Abbott, 2019). Contrary to the prevailing narrative, the study revealed that Hadley Township and Bennett Place in Richmond Heights, Missouri, demonstrated higher levels of affluence than nearby white neighborhoods. Bennett Place, a private street, was populated by professionals such as doctors, lawyers, and dentists, defying the typical socioeconomic patterns of the era (United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, 2008). Hadley Township residents were homeowners and entrepreneurs and had stable employment.

The Peripheral Push of Suburban Black Community Displacement

Another key finding of my study was the peripheral push of suburban Black community displacement. Garreau (2011), Hyra (2016), and Knight and Gharipour (2016) highlighted the critical role that location plays in the displacement of Black communities. The proximity of suburban HBCs to major transportation intersections and the private market forces to develop commercial districts make HBCs attractive targets for development, leading to displacement. The literature review discussed how federal policies played a significant role in the displacement of Black communities throughout the United States (Gordon, 2019; Hine et al., 2004; Johnson, 2020; Lang & Sohmer, 2000; Naparstek & Dooley, 1997; Rothstein, 2017;). These policies have often created racial disparities in housing, transportation development, urban renewal, and economic opportunities, leading to forced relocation and the erosion of Black communities.

The findings in this study are consistent with participants' views on the impact of Hadley Township's location and the policy decision on interstate highway development on the displacement of Black residents in the community. As participants described, the construction of Highway 40/Interstate 64 in Hadley Township is a striking example of how such projects and policies, while designed for economic development and connectivity, fracture community networks and displace long-standing residents. Another finding was that the role of private market forces was repeatedly underscored, with developers perceived as utilizing Black residents' location and economic vulnerability to maximize development opportunities.

Gordon (2019), Johson (2020), and Loewen (2018) note that urban renewal and the Housing Act of 1949 paved the way for public-private forces for high demand centrally located real estate and the systemic undervaluation of properties in Black communities, compounded by limited resistance capacity among these communities. As detailed by Perry et al. (2018), the devaluation of real estate in Black communities is in the billions of dollars and is a consequence of systemic racism. This devaluation of property has devastated the financial stability of Black homeowners and the real estate market in HBCs. The intersection of these forces results in a cycle of displacement and economic marginalization, leaving behind blighted areas and diminished community cohesion.

Economic Development and Displacement

Another study on Hadley Township's economic development and displacement revealed a complex interplay between urban revitalization efforts and socio-economic impacts on the local Black community. The present study, supported by Gordon (2019) and Rothstein (2017), referenced the gradual and often unnoticed actions of governments and private markets that significantly impacted the decline of HBCs, which led to significant displacement. Study participants discussed the strategy to transform the township into a commercial hub, which was intended to attract wealthier demographics and revitalize the local economy. This is consistent with what Gordon (2019) and Rothstein (2017) explained: that the affluent and middle-class are helping to push HBCs out of communities for larger redevelopment projects. However, this transformation displaced the original residents and businesses, predominantly affecting the Black

community. The present study underscored a significant disparity in the development's economic benefits distribution. Large commercial enterprises and big-box retailers were prioritized, contributing to a shift in the community fabric from one centered around local, small-scale businesses and residential needs to a focus on retail and commercial profits. This shift not only displaced many Black-owned businesses but also failed to provide comparable economic opportunities for these residents, thereby exacerbating economic inequities. (Glick 2008; Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015).

The Impact of Economic Forces on the Black Community

The interpretation of the findings from the present study demonstrated deep-seated policies of racial segregation, like restrictive covenants and racial zoning, which historically dictated where Black people could live and own property (Crowe, 2012; Hirsh, 2009; Massey & Denton, 1993; Sugrue, 2005). These findings are consistent with previous literature about Black people being prohibited by law from living in communities with White people and being segregated into Black communities (Gordon, 2019; Loewen, 2018; Rothstein, 2017). My study has added to the research literature, establishing that Black people were excluded by law and policies of where they could live. This institutionalized racism laid the groundwork for persistent socioeconomic disparities and segregation, according to scholars (Loewen, 2018; Rothstein, 2017; Wiese, 2004).

Participants noted that Hadley Township was the sole area where Black people were permitted to reside and felt that racial factors contributed to the erosion and eventual disappearance of their community. Like previous research studies, my research shows

that redevelopment efforts in Hadley Township were often portrayed as economic progress but came at a significant cost to the existing Black communities (Glick, 2008; Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015). According to participants, the push for commercial development typically prioritized economic gains over the needs of long-standing residents. This study finds this pattern is indicative of a broader trend in urban development where historically marginalized communities are displaced under the pretext of revitalization, often without fair compensation or consideration of the residents' and historical ties to the area (Glick, 2008; Gordon, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Rothstein, 2015). Participants pointed to the broader economic structures that support and perpetuate racial biases in development. The findings suggest that similar patterns of displacement and marginalization will continue without significant changes to these structures.

Limitations of the Study

Qualitative case study design is subject to inherent limitations often associated with this research methodology; therefore, limitations were associated with the present study. The first limitation is that I only focused on a case study for the displacement of the suburban community of Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri. This limits the number of sample sizes used in the study. Another limitation is that many firsthand accounts from some residents were unavailable due to their passing. Furthermore, secondary sources detailing Black communities' experiences, oral history, and activities were scarce or inaccurate, reflecting the limitations of oral traditions and mainstream media's understanding of Black culture during the 1800s and 1990s.

Furthermore, as the primary data collector for the interview and data analysis, my professional city planning and management background could result in possible research bias. To mitigate researcher bias, I employed strategies such as bracketing; an ethical code of conduct was used, which is required in urban planning to set aside personal assumptions and preconceptions. Trustworthiness and member-checking were used to ensure the data had integrity and that participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences and accurately interpreting the data. Integrating a comprehensive literature review supported accurate and reliable data interpretation, enhancing the study's overall validity (Creswell, 2017; Patton, 2015).

Recommendations

Based on the literature review in Chapter 2 and the limitations of the present study, there are several recommendations for further research. The first recommendation is a call for policies that prevent displacement and ensure that communities are actively involved in decision-making processes in which they benefit from economic development in their areas. Data interpretation suggested that future research should evaluate urban redevelopment strategies for inclusive, equitable, and sensitive histories and the needs of HBCs. The policies should prioritize community engagement, fair compensation, and preservation of the cultural and social structures of HBCs and its residents.

A second recommendation is to address the systemic bias and sometimes racially motivated decisions during redevelopment projects that strategically minimize impacts on white neighborhoods while disproportionately affecting Black people. Future research should examine the subtle and often overlooked policies, practices, and behaviors

contributing to HBCs displacement. Communities must learn from displacement to preserve HBCs and explore strategies for safeguarding Black communities' long-term sustainability and vibrancy. This could include looking at models that invest in community development, prioritize resident ownership and cultural preservation, and minimize biases.

The third recommendation for future research is to investigate a comparative case study of cities where highway construction locations disproportionately impacted suburban Black neighborhoods. Analysis of highway route justification and exploration of alternative proposals that might have minimized displacement should be examined. A fourth recommendation for future research is to expand policy to investigate measures to protect HBCs from displacements, such as zoning restrictions, affordable housing initiatives, and increased funding for HBCs to rebuild communities and increase property valuations. A final recommendation for future research is to compare the experiences of other suburban HBCs in different locations and across the United States to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the lasting impact of displacement HBCs.

Implications

HBCs often face higher displacement and systemic racism effects of urban development, which leave residents and communities vulnerable to displacement (Favors et al., 2020). This study underscores the necessity for solid policy frameworks that prioritize the preservation of HBCs as integral to the cultural and historical fabric of urban landscapes. The study addressed a gap in the literature and provided new

knowledge for understanding HBCs and its residents' lived experiences and how they were displaced and disappeared.

This qualitative study uncovered a wealth of information to understand the historical and ongoing struggles of Black neighborhoods, displacement, and the inequities between Black and White communities. This study's research addressed real issues substantiated in the growing body of literature on the displacement of HBCs. It may promote broader social justice, equity, and inclusivity within urban development for positive change. Through participants' lived experiences and knowledge in the study, they described the phenomena of community members and the complex factors contributing to Hadley Township's displacement. Participants discussed and described challenges faced by HBCs, racism, and development. Participants also highlighted the resiliency and strong sense of community pride and culture that once existed in their community and is still within them.

My research study may impact positive social change at the individual, organizational, and societal/policy levels. At the individual level, the study's findings can potentially and significantly impact HBCs by empowering community members to organize, advocate, and influence local decision-making processes in the development of their communities. It can also help shed light on the need to preserve HBCs and bring awareness to the barriers and challenges these communities face in the fight against displacement. These study findings provide a sense of stability and belonging for Black people and families, especially those with deep historical roots in these communities, to tell the forgotten stories about HBCs.

At the organizational level, the findings of this study can inform the development of community-based organizations and initiatives that protect HBCs to help educate communities and promote their economic vitality by providing resources to help them prevent displacement. They can support community organizing efforts to empower residents and build a strong sense of collective action. These study findings can also inform the creation and development of policies and practices for equitable development and measures to eliminate HBCs' displacement from their homes and communities.

At the societal/policy level, the study's findings can contribute to developing more equitable and inclusive policymaking that prioritizes the preservation of HBCs and the well-being of their residents. Specifically, the study findings can inform government and legislative leaders on establishing legal protections that safeguard HBCs, such as historical preservation statutes or land use regulations that prioritize community stability and heritage over economic development pressures. The study can also assist in informing legislation that examines how economic incentives are given to prevent displacement and help in crafting programs that support community-owned businesses, affordable housing, and local employment opportunities, strengthening the community's economic base and reducing vulnerability to displacement.

Conclusion

The results of this study suggest that more work is needed to prevent the displacement of HBCs and systemic racism in communities and development. The findings reveal a stark contrast between the goals of connectivity and progress and the lived experience of Black residents, who face loss of heritage, community, and economic

stability. This study underscores the need for policies to advance urban development while protecting communities vulnerable to the adverse effects of development to ensure that infrastructure improvements do not come at the expense of social equity.

This study examined the lived experiences of HBCs to understand the barriers and challenges residents face and to learn about what the community was like versus what has been historically told. Positive change may be fostered at the individual, organizational, and societal/policy levels. Individuals may be empowered to learn more about how to advocate and influence decision-making in their community. Organizations can support HBCs through education and provide resources to help prevent displacement and residential displacement. Societal/policy can contribute to the development of legislation and laws that are more equitable and inclusive, which prioritize preservation over the displacement of HBCs and their residents.

This case study of Hadley Township highlights the ongoing difficulties HBCs face in maintaining their communities and preventing displacement. It emphasizes the need for policies that foster inclusivity and equity in economic development. Participants shared their feelings of loss, not just of their homes but also of the connections and cultural heritage that once flourished in this predominantly Black neighborhood. This research aligns with the study's research question, examining the disappearance of HBCs and the patterns of displacement and redevelopment that ensue. It represents a microcosm of larger systemic issues, where racial and economic biases are deeply embedded in economic development processes. Ultimately, this study offers essential insights into the

need for more equitable and inclusive development practices that recognize and respect the communities they affect.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Participate in the Study

Dear Prospective Participant,

I am requesting your participation in my dissertation research study.

I am a doctoral candidate in Walden University's Public Policy and Administration - Local Government Management for Sustainable Communities Program. My dissertation study has as its focus the disappearance of historically Black communities (HBCs), specifically the displacement of Black residents in the Hadley Township neighborhood in Richmond Heights, Missouri. The criteria for participating in the study is as follows:

1. Current or prior Black resident of Richmond Heights
2. Descendent of a current or prior Black resident of Richmond Heights
3. Current or prior held local government position in Richmond Heights
4. Historians, developers of economic/housing development projects in Richmond Heights

Since your name is listed in public historical documents, I am contacting you to see whether you would consent to participate in the study.

Your participation would be entirely voluntary. You may opt to withdraw your participation at any time for any reason. By participating in the study and sharing your personal experience and expertise in this community, you will have the opportunity to enhance your knowledge and scholarly literature concerning the gentrification and displacement of HBCs.

I look forward to hearing from you soon and to the opportunity to have a more in-depth discussion on the study and its objectives. You may contact me by e-mail at xxxxxxxx.xxxxxx@waldenu.edu or by telephone at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

Kind regards,

Daffney Moore
Ph D Candidate
Public Policy and Administration
Local Government Management for Sustainable Communities
Walden University

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. Are you or were you acquainted with Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, Missouri? If yes, in what way?
2. What is your understanding of how Hadley Township was formed? How did it become a historically Black community?
3. How would you describe the community?
4. Were there any challenges faced by the township to your knowledge? If so, what were they?
5. How would you describe the racial demographics of Richmond Heights today? How is it different now than when you were acquainted with the area?
6. What differences, if any, have you noticed in the types of businesses located in the community?
7. What factors do you believe have contributed to any noticeable changes in racial demographics and types of businesses in Richmond Heights?
8. What factors contributed to you no longer being acquainted with the community?
9. How has your relationship with the community changed?
10. Are you familiar with the following terms and concepts: revitalization, displacement, redevelopment, economic development? What do those terms and concepts mean to you?
11. What impact, if any, do you believe economic forces, displacement, redevelopment, and economic development have on the economic mobility of residents of historically Black communities?

12. What do you believe leads to the vulnerability of certain communities and the displacement of specific groups of people?
13. Are you aware of how neighborhoods are selected for redevelopment?
14. Why do you believe Hadley Township was selected for a redevelopment project?
15. In your opinion, did race play a role in the displacement of Hadley Township?
Please explain.
16. What role, if any, do you believe displacement and economic development played in the demographic changes in Hadley Township?
17. What policies could have been used to prevent Hadley Township residents from being displaced?
18. How would you characterize development in Hadley Township over the last 25 years? What factors have influenced it?
19. Do you have any final thoughts about Hadley Township in Richmond Heights?

Appendix C: Flyer





RESEARCH STUDY

RICHMOND HEIGHTS, MISSOURI

HADLEY TOWNSHIP

If you or someone you know is a current or former resident (or descendant) of Hadley Township keep reading!

???

WHAT'S THE STUDY ABOUT?

The purpose of this research study is to explore more fully the impact of the forces that have led to the disappearance of suburban historically Black communities in Hadley Township in Richmond Heights, MO

✓

WHAT'S THE STUDY CRITERIA?

Current and former residents (and descendants) of Hadley Township.
County historians, developers, reporters, academics, and policy leaders.

👍

WHAT'S THE BENEFIT?

You will contribute to the scholarly literature concerning gentrification and displacement of historically Black communities.

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT ME



Phone Number

██████████

Email Address

████████████████████

Daffney Moore
Doctoral Student
Walden University