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Racism vs. Social Capital: A Case Study of Two Majority Black Communities

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Abstract

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MASS, Florida A&M University, 2006

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Several researchers have identified social capital as a means to improve the social sustainability of communities. While there have been many studies investigating the benefits of social capital in homogeneous White communities, few have examined it in Black homogeneous communities. Also, there has been limited research on the influence of racism on social capital in African American communities. In this dissertation a comparative case study was used within a critical race theory framework. The purpose was to explore the role of racial oppression in shaping social capital in majority African American communities. Data were collected from 2 majority Black communities in Florida. The collected data included reviews of local news reports, voter turnout reports, and community health assessments, along with focus groups and semi structured interviews with a purposive sample of 20 of the communities' African American residents. Benet's polarities of democracy model was employed to analyze the relationship between racism and social capital. Analysis included inductive coding followed by pattern matching to identify overarching themes between the selected cases. One key theme was that perceived racial disparity inhibited bridging and linking social capital in the selected communities. Another key theme was that racism created social capital deficiencies and a dysfunctional community culture, which limited the capacity to address collective issues. Social change implications include specific policy recommendations to state and local leaders to increase the participation of Black community members in democratic processes. Additionally, this research has potential to improve understanding of the various ways that racism may affect Black Communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my wife Quashier S. Strouble and our children Jayvin, Amarrie, K'dyn, and Syrus. In addition, I must include my parents Bruce and Velta Strouble, my brother Deonte Strouble and my grandmothers Dorothy Strouble and Mattie Suggs. I must also include the many friends and community members who contributed to my development. Thank you all for making me the human that I am today.

Acknowledgments

I must admit that I would not have made it to this point in my career without the help and guidance of several individuals. My family has been instrumental in shaping my worldview and making me a better human being. There are no words, which can capture the gratitude that I have for the support offered by the members of my family. In addition, to my two mentors, Dr. Dana Dennard and Dr. David Jackson: Thank you for guiding my academic and intellectual development. To my research committee members, Dr. William Benet and Dr. Kristie Roberts: Thank you for your continued guidance and support. You have all been instrumental in this process, and I would not have made it this far without you.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Throughout the history of the United States, Americans have made valiant efforts to establish flourishing communities. The ability of human beings to live in dense proximity and utilize their social interactions to promote their common interest is integral to the survival of the species. In the 1980s, some researchers began to identify social capital as the facilitative force that allows for efficient collective action and enhanced community resilience (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993). Social capital refers to the resources, benefits, and networks created and shared by members of social entities that people utilize to solve individual and collective problems (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Hyyppa, 2010; Lin, 2008; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000). Some communities in the United States have successfully increased the efficiency of their collective actions, but other U.S. communities have continually struggled with this task (Lin, 2000). Researchers have attributed this disparity of social capital between American communities to several factors including socioeconomic status, community ethnic diversity, racial diversity, and even level of education (Hero, 2007; Lin, 2000; Moore, Daniel, Gauvin, & Dube, 2009; Putnam, 2007). However, a potential negative correlation between racism and social capital has not been investigated in detail.

The long history of racial stratification in the United States is argued by several researchers to contribute to several of the racially based disparities existing in the country (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Gee, Walsemann, & Brondolo, 2012; Jones, 2002). In addition, critical race theorists have presented racism as a normative function in American society

that hinders the progress of non-White individuals and communities (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Some studies on wealth and health have indicated that race is a stronger determinant of the existing disparities than socioeconomic status (Gee et al., 2012; Oliver & Shapiro, 2006). These disparities have resulted in an inequality of access to social resources that are vital to community development (Lin, 2000). However, much of the research on the inequality of social capital across American communities has failed to consider racism as a cause of social capital disparity (Hero, 2007). Therefore, I used critical race theory and the polarities of democracy model as theoretical lenses in this qualitative case study in order to examine the nature of social capital formation, utility, and accessibility in majority African American communities.

This research was designed in part to contribute to the literature on issues facing minority communities in the United States. By furthering the understanding of how various forms of racism impede social progress in African American communities, future administrators such as city managers, planers and councilpersons, as well as community organizers and activists may be empowered to develop strategies that ameliorate such issues. In addition, this research has the potential to introduce critical race theory to the sustainable community development research field.

In this chapter, I first present background information on the relationships between social capital, racism, and majority African American communities. Subsequently, I will present the problem that this research addresses, followed by an explanation of the purpose of this study. In the following sections, I will describe the research questions as well as introduce critical race theory, social capital, and the

polarities of democracy model. In the next section, I will provide operational definitions for the key concepts used throughout the research. In the last few sections, I will discuss the parameters of the study as well as acknowledge what assumptions I will be making as I conduct this research. Lastly, I will expound on the potential impact that this research might have on public policy, academia, and sustainable community development research.

Background

The concept of social capital has sparked an ongoing and intense discussion concerning its utilities and outputs in various social science arenas (Adam & Roncevic, 2003; DeFillippis, 2001). Social capital is catalyzing to sustainable community development (McKenzie, 2004; Newman, 2010). A higher level of social capital in communities has been associated with healthier, happier, safer, as well as more politically and economically equitable environments (Hero, 2007; Putnam, 2007). Currently, there is evidence to suggest disparities exist in regards to the accessibility, utility, and development of social capital amongst American communities (Lin, 2000; Orr, 1999).

Unfortunately, researchers have failed to analyze evidence of disparities because race remains an uncomfortable subject for many Americans. Hero (2007) suggested that much of the scholarship on social capital has overlooked the role of race and racial inequality in social capital development. Hero's suggestion reiterated the sentiment of Putnam's (2007) "hunker down thesis," which posited that social capital tends to be highest among White homogeneous communities and decreases as racial diversity increases (p. 149). Putnam's theory contended that as ethnic diversity increases, people

withdraw from collective life and become more distrustful of their neighbors. Sturgis, Brunton-Smith, and Allum (2011) challenged Putnam's findings and presented empirical evidence suggesting that Putnam's theory did not apply to communities in Britain.

Sturgis et al. (2011) also suggested that Putnams's theory might only apply to particular types of trust or specific regions of the United States. However, like other critiques of Putnam's thesis (Hero, 2007; Portes & Vikstrom, 2011), this failed to conceptualize racism as a factor contributing to the disparity in social capital for minority communities. This failure to identify racism as a potential causal factor of social capital disparities is likely a result of a collective apprehension to discuss racism and its consequences in the current politically correct academic culture of the United States.

Racism is one of many potential impediments to African American communities' ability to access, develop, and utilize social capital (Brondolo, Libretti, Riviera, & Walsemann, 2012; Orr, 1999). Critical race theorists have suggested that racism is both normative and perpetual in the United States (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013). For instance, Bonilla-Silva (2013) argued that racism is continually adapting to cultural standards, and in modern times, its perpetrators have taken a more subtle approach to accomplish the same traditional goal of marginalizing non-Whites. Bonilla-Silva further suggested that perpetrators of the new colorblind approach to racism use it along with covert symbols that prevent victims from easily identifying race as the cause of their plight.

In some cases, victims of racism may be oblivious to its effects on their day-to-day lives (Jones, 2002). Several studies have found that racism has detrimental effects on African American mental and physical health, as well as socioeconomic status and social

mobility (Brondolo, Love, Pencille, Shoenthaler, & Ogedegbe, 2011; Brown, 2003; Oliver & Shapiro, 2006; Paradies, 2006). Ultimately, racism whether real or imagined, induces negative outcomes on minority communities within the United States.

In additon, Brondolo et al. (2012) determined that various types of racism negatively impacted peer relations of minority groups. Wilson (2011) suggested that social isolation leaves poor African Americans trapped in perpetual resource poverty. Other researchers have identifed relationships between racist practices, such as residential segregation or mass incarceration and the limitation of access to social capital in African American communities (Greenbaum, 2008; Roberts, 2004). These authors' findings collectively suggest that deductive reasoning will cause concerned parties to question if racism in fact impedes the development, accessibility, and utility of social capital within African American communities.

Research Problem

Majority Black communities in the United States exhibit lower levels of social capital than their Majority White counterparts do (Pattilo, 2005). Much of the research into this problem has overlooked the potential of racism as a cause for the disparity of social capital levels. A few researchers have examined the relationship between racism and social capital inequality. There is some available evidence that indicates the possibility of a causal relationship between racism and key indicators of social capital such as peer relations (Brondolo et al., 2012).

Some researchers have also investigated the utility of social capital to serve as a mechanism for African American community development (Fitzpatrick, Piko, Wright, &

LaGory, 2005; Ginwright, 2007; Pyles & Cross, 2008). Nonetheless, the number of studies investigating the relationship between racism and social capital is miniscule. More problematic is the absence of research regarding social capital in low-diversity majority Black communities (LDMBC). Ultimately, the sparse amount of research leaves a gap in the literature concerning the role of racism on the lack of social capital in low-diversity majority Black communities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this case study was to understand and explain the relationship between racism and social capital in LDMBCs. In this study, I used a critical race theoretical framework along with the polarities of democracy model to analyze data collected from majority African American communities in Leon and Gadsden County Florida. The primary objective was to find existing patterns that further the understanding of the possible relationships between structural and internalized racism and bonding and bridging social capital. Furthermore, in this study I sought to identify potential methods for majority African American communities to overcome racism and enhance their social capital.

Research Questions

The main research question for this doctoral study was, “What are the ways that racism influences social capital in low diversity majority Black communities?”

Two secondary research questions were used to help answer the primary research question:

1. How do residents of low-diversity majority Black communities perceive the relationship between racism and their lack of social capital?
2. What are ways in which low-diversity Black community members can mitigate the impacts of racism in order to enhance their social capital?

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

In this dissertation, I used two theoretical frameworks and applied them separately. The first theoretical lens is critical race theory, which postulates that racism is a continuous occurrence and a social norm in American life (Essed, 2003; Price, 2010). Critical race theory originates from the research of Bell (1980; 1990). Further development of the theory came as an outgrowth of critical legal studies scholarship (Crenshaw, 2011).

As critical race theory continued to develop, a wide range of scholars from varying academic disciplines embraced the theory. Some critical race theorists suggest that racism is a permanent feature of U.S life and culture that will not subside due to the benefits racism offers to the dominant race (Bell, 2008; Ford & Airhihhenbua, 2010). Additionally, many critical race theorists share the viewpoint that people of color who experience racism are best fit to serve as expert witnesses on its impact on their lives and communities (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, & Thomas, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ford & Airhihhenbua, 2010). In much of the literature regarding critical race theory, various scholars from multiple disciplines have focused their attacks on liberal ideals such as colorblindness, legal rights, and merit. This critical race lens allows researchers to pay adequate attention to race while investigating social phenomena (Creswell, 2007).

The second theoretical framework that I employed in this research was the polarities of democracy model (Benet, 2013). This framework operates as a way to guide observation of democratic processes in various types of communities. The basic premise of the model is that there are various characteristics of democratic societies, for example, freedom, justice, due process, equality, diversity, etc., and they exist as interdependent poles. These poles are not to be confused with typical social problems because the poles, by definition, do not require solutions due to their necessity and interdependence (Benet, 2013).

Furthermore, each pole is associated with certain positive and negative consequences (Benet, 2013). Attempting to find a solution to only one of the poles will most likely result in experience of the negative consequences (Benet, 2013). However, proper management of the poles increases attainability of their positive aspects. Likewise, failure to manage the poles results in prolonged exposure to their negative aspects (Benet, 2013). Another key assumption of this model is that if a society has an imbalance of power, it can result in the prolonged experience of the worst aspects of both poles (Benet, 2006).

The polarities of democracy model has significant utility for this study because racism creates perpetual power imbalances between racial groups. Using the polarities of democracy model will allow for an in-depth analysis of two key polarities related to social capital and race. Those polarities are participation and representation as well as diversity and equality. This framework shaped the focus of the study by identifying the positive and negative aspects of diversity, equality, participation, and representation. I

also examined other polarities when necessary in order to inform the analysis of the democratic factors of social capital at play within the selected LDMBCs. Furthermore, I investigated the role racism plays in preventing attainment of these positive attributes as well as promotion of the negative attributes. Moreover, I explored the theoretical possibility of the polarities of democracy model to guide anti-racism efforts in African American communities.

In this dissertation study, I used two conceptual frameworks. The first conceptual framework applied in this study was social capital theory (Putnam, 2000). Putnam argued that social capital is a result of social cohesion, trust, and civic engagement. Additionally, Putnam posited that social capital improves upon a society's efficiency by facilitating coordinated activity across communities. Many researchers have identified social capital as a potential mechanism to mediate many of the aforementioned disparities found in some African American communities (Fitzpatrick et al., 2005; Ginwright, 2007; Woolley, et al., 2008). Other researchers have suggested that social capital levels may vary by race and remain primarily enjoyed by homogeneous White communities (Hero, 2007; Nan, 2000; Putnam, 2007). Social capital is a robust social force that facilitates societal change and enhances resiliency.

The second conceptual framework that I used was Johnson's (1996) polarity management concept because Benet (2006) used Johnson's polarity management as his conceptual framework. From Johnson's perspective, polarities exist as sets of opposite issues that are not solvable problems. Instead, the polarities are dilemmas, which are suited for management. Johnson provides a polarities map, which includes four boxes.

On the left hemisphere is one polar characteristic, and the other polar characteristic is on the opposite side. An example of a polarities map is displayed in Figure 1.The positive aspects associated with the two poles are on the top two quadrants, and the negative aspects are in the lower two quadrants. The primary aim of polarities management is to attain the best aspects of both opposites and avoid the negative aspects of each. Johnson stated that polarities management skills allow for development of the ability to distinguish between solvable problems and unsolvable dilemmas. When considering the enduring nature of several of the issues facing LDMBCs, it is likely that many of the problems concerning social capital development in these communities are unsolvable and therefore polarities.

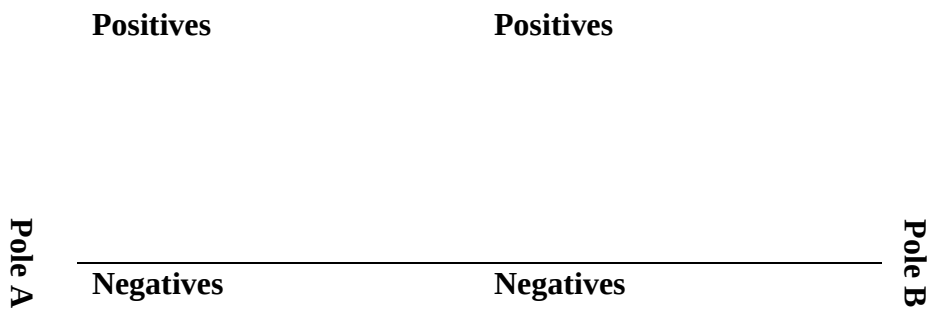

Figure 1. A diagram of a sample polarities management map.

Nature of the Study

This case study included qualitative focus groups along with open-ended interviews, which were utilized to inform the analysis of document, and community

record reviews. After the in-depth individual analysis of both case sites, I performed a cross case analysis which allowed for further investigation of the research questions. The case sites selected are clusters of African Americans census tracts that have at least 60% Black residents. I selected the case sites by using the typical case sampling method. Additionally, I used snowball-sampling techniques to select at least ten key informants from both case sites for open-ended interviews and to participate in focus groups discussions.

The use of a case study methodology allows a researcher to make logical generalizations that can be applied to critical race and social capital theory, as suggested by Yin (2009, p. 15). Yin (2009) argued that the case study allows for examination of "holistic real life events" (p. 4). This makes this methodology an excellent fit for this study of racism and social capital in majority African American communities.

Definitions

Throughout the paper, there are several terms utilized that require clarity of definition in order to ensure understanding.

African Americans: Citizens within the United States who are of African descent and identify as Black or African American on the U.S Census. Used synonymously with "Blacks."

Blacks: A term used synonymously in this study to refer to African Americans.

Low-diversity, Majority Black Community: Groups of African American/Black people who live in a cluster of census tracts that are 60% Black or greater (Pattilo, 2005; Wright, Ellis, Holloway, & Wong, 2013).

Racism: the procedures, social norms, structures, collective ideologies, along with the individual and group actions that maintain racial inequality and afford privilege to a dominant racial group based on their skin color (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Gee, Ro, Shariff-Marco, & Chae, 2009; Jones, 2002).

Social capital: The resources, benefits, and networks created and shared by members of social entities through utilization of their social cohesion, trust, and civic engagement in order to facilitate coordinated action that solves individual and collective problems (Lin, 2000; Putnam, 2000, 2007; Portes & Vikstrom, 2011).

Assumptions

I conducted this research under the assumption that all of the study's participants provided honest answers to the interview questions. Furthermore, I operated on the assumption that the sample size of 20 community members was significant enough to draw conclusions on the role of racism throughout the selected case sites. In addition, I conducted this study with the assumption that the demographic statistics regarding the selected case sites were accurate.

Limitations

Although I intended to provide sufficient detail in this doctoral study, it is important to note some of the limitations inherent with qualitative research. First, this case study methodology did not rely on statistical information as the evidence of causation between racism and social capital. Instead, I focused my efforts on identifying patterns in community members' experiences, as well as in the demographic data that supports the theoretical assumptions of critical race theory and the polarities of

democracy model. Another limitation is that the case sites selected are not intended to be representative of all majority African American communities. Therefore, this research only allows for logical generalizations of the findings.

Lastly, I considered the potential of my own biases to impact the study as another limitation. The fact that I have preconceived notions about the nature of racism based on my life experiences and education surely influenced my interpretations of the collected data. Chapter 3 of this dissertation contains the strict guidelines I utilized to ensure that I reduced the influence of my personal bias on the study.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study encompasses the exploration of perceptions of racism and social capital on the part of members of LDMBCs in North Florida. The investigation focused on two types of racism, structural and internalized, and their relationship with three types of social capital: bonding, bridging, and linking.

The key delimitation of this study was that there were only two case sites chosen. The use of multiple case sites would expand the scope of the study beyond the resources and time constraints of the researcher. Another delimitation of this research was the limited collection of quantitative data due to the exploratory nature of the research effort, which does not require quantitative evidence (Creswell, 2007).

Significance

With the goal of moving towards a society where race is not a factor in day-to-day life it is very important to grasp the impact that racism has on people's abilities to succeed. Scholars have argued for some time that racism is not simply going to disappear

and that it can only be eliminated with determined and focused activism (Fitzpatrick et al., 2005; Ford & Airhihhenbua, 2010; Pyke, 2010). Several researchers have posited that social capital is a mechanism that could mediate many of the social ills faced by African American communities (Hero, 2007; Lewin, Mitchell, Rasmussen, Sanders-Phillips, & Joseph, 2011; Pyles & Cross, 2008). Therefore, this research has the potential to affect positive social change by contributing to the literature and furthering understanding of complex phenomena that result in racial disparities in American society.

I intend for this research to provide community leaders and policy makers with a better understanding of the social forces at play within African American communities. Additionally, it is my intention to advance the understanding of the role social capital can play in the development of more sustainable communities. Lastly, I hope that this research can also be useful in paving the way for future research to examine the role of racism in various American minority communities. Once people have a better understanding of the impacts of racism, perhaps it will lead to the development of better strategies to reduce its effects.

Summary

The purpose of this doctoral dissertation is to explore the nature of the relationship between racism and social capital in LDMBCs. I used typical case sampling to select two case sites. From these case sites, I selected a total of twenty African American men and women for both personal interviews and participation in focus groups. I then analyzed the data retrieved from these interviews and focus groups using both a critical race theoretical lens as well as the polarities of democracy model. The goal was

to identify themes that expound on the nature of the relationship between racism and social capital in the selected communities. Furthermore, I used the polarities of democracy model to identify potential methods that can remedy the relationships between various democratic elements within the selected communities. Throughout this study, I sought to expand the understanding of the success factors and barriers for development within African American communities by exploring the intricate nature in which they progress and the impediments that hinder their success.

In Chapter 2 of this dissertation I provide a comprehensive review of the relevant literature in regards to racism, social capital, and the polarities of democracy model. Furthermore, I show evidence from the literature or lack thereof supporting the need for this research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

An increased level of social capital in a community has been associated with an enhanced quality of life for the community's residents (Hero, 2007; Putnam, 2007). However, there is evidence to suggest some disparity exists in regards to the utility and development of social capital amongst some American communities (e.g., Lin, 2000; Orr, 1999). Some researchers have found that social capital is highest in homogeneous White communities and tends to deteriorate as ethnic and racial diversity increases (e.g., Hero, 2007; Putnam, 2007). Some scholars have identified racism as a potential explanation of the disparity in social capital across American communities (e.g., Brondolo et al., 2012). However, the amount of research investigating the relationship between racism and social capital is miniscule. A more evident gap in the literature emerges when investigating the research, or lack thereof, on social capital in low diversity majority Black communities. Therefore, the purpose of this case study was to explore and further the understanding of the relationship between racism and social capital and its utility in LDMBCs.

Chapter Overview

In this literature review, I explored the pertinent literature on social capital, racism, and African American communities as well as the polarities of democracy model. First, I explained the strategy utilized to access the literature. Following this, I provided a comprehensive analysis of the key literature on critical race theory. Subsequently, I synthesized the literature regarding racism and its impacts on minority and specifically African American communities. In addition, I analyzed the relevant literature on social

capital. Throughout this review, I focused on the literature investigating the formation and utility of social capital in minority communities. Lastly, I reviewed the polarities of democracy model and expound on its utility in mediating issues faced in African American communities.

I employed several methods in order to ensure that I exhausted the available literature for the literature review process. First, I used several databases to locate peer-reviewed articles, conference proceedings, books, and dissertations relating to the subjects of the study published within the last 5 years (2008-2013). I used several databases located within the Walden University Library, including Info Track, Google Scholar, ProQuest, and ERIC. This use of various search terms allowed for the generation of an extensive list of research articles. These search terms included *racism, critical race theory, social capital, social capital and African American communities, social capital and the Black community, racism and social capital, racism and civic engagement, civic engagement and the Black community, social trust and the Black community,* and *polarities management*.

Although the majority of the works in this literature review fit into a 5 year publication range, there was a need to go beyond this limitation in order to identify some of the seminal works that would provide further insight on the theoretical constructs chosen for the study. Therefore, there are a several articles included in this literature review that date from 6 to 30 years old, in order to evidence the history and relevance of the chosen theoretical constructs.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) provides a lens for viewing social interaction in the United States from the perspective of oppressed minorities. Some credit the origin of CRT to the 1980s and 90s works of Bell (1985, 1992) and other scholars, which offered critiques of slow-paced racial reform and rollbacks of many gains from the 1960s civil rights movements (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013; Harris, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2011). Afterwards, several critical legal studies scholars joined the movement looking to find new approaches that would challenge what they perceived as perpetual and permeating racism in legal studies and American law (Crenshaw, 2011).

A central theme found in the writings of many early CRT authors asserted that there was inherent bias found within much of the American culture, and that the phenomena of racism adversely affected progression of non-Whites in American society (Bell, 1980; Crenshaw et al., 1995). As the CRT developed in the scholarly literature, increasingly diverse groups of scholars and researchers began to investigate the varying components of racism in other social sciences (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

Development of Critical Race Theory

After 20 years of research progression, several key themes developed within the CRT literature (Crenshaw, 2011; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). While there are several key concepts in CRT, some appear in the literature more consistently than others do. In this section, I reviewed seven identified themes that constitute the intellectual fabric of CRT.

The first overarching theme in much of the CRT literature is the permanence of racism concept (Bell, 2008; Harris, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2011). Many CRT scholars argued that racism is normative behavior, and therefore, a regular experience for people of color (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Their argument is the basis for the assumption that racism negatively influences majority Black communities.

Another important concept is interest convergence, also referred to as material determinism, which holds that because racism benefits both elite and working class Whites' social and political agendas, the majority of society is likely to have little incentive to eradicate or mediate racist practices (Bell, 1980; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Furthermore, when there is action to reduce the effects of racism, it usually occurs because there is a shared interest between the victims and the elite Whites (Bell, 1980; Bell, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012).

The social construction thesis is also very important to critical race theorists. This ideology suggests that race is a social construct that the dominant forces in society choose to disregard or promote depending on their own interest (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Within this understanding, biological racial differences receive undue attention to support the interest of the dominant racial group.

Differential racialization is another recurring theme in the CRT literature. This concept suggests that the dominant racial group racializes differing minority groups differently. Thus, based on the interest of the dominant group (i.e., economic or political needs), each group can gain favor over other racial groups or be subject to increased oppression (Abrams & Molo, 2009; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This understanding

guides my approach to examining social capital in majority Black communities as opposed to communities composed of a multi-racial non-White majority.

Another important aspect of the CRT literature is that many theorists hold the position that there is an intrinsic value in the stories told by people of color due to their unique experiences with racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Some critical race theorists have further asserted that this experience gives them additional qualification to serve as authorities on issues regarding racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This position will play a critical role in this research because of the focus on information provided by African American community members.

Intersectionality, another aspect of CRT, acknowledges the impact of social diversity on the experience of racism (Anderson & McCormack, 2010). Much of the CRT literature recognizes that some groups may be subject to multiple forms of oppression (Harris, 2012). Furthermore, a narrow focus on race can cause investigators to overlook alternative sources of oppression that stem from gender, class, and sexual preference (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). In order to capture this concept, the study will focus on mixed income communities.

In addition, many CRT scholars are dismissive of several liberal conceptions such as color blindness, objectivity, merit, formal equality, and post-racialism and instead accept the *racial realism* perspective (Bell, 1992; Bell, 2008; Crenshaw, 2011). In Bell's (1992) foundational article Racial Realism, he promoted the conceptualization that racial equality, as a goal of civil rights is unrealistic because the function of the law and the state is to serve the interest of the dominant race in the society. Failure of racial equality

is due to what many critical race theorists refer to as *structural determinism*, which implies that our social and political systems are not designed well enough to allow proper mediation of race issues (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Parks, 2008). Crenshaw (2011) goes on to suggest that, in fact, the social and political systems themselves restrict progress on race relations.

Uses of Critical Race Theory

Originally, CRT developed for use in legal studies; however, it has many features that make it well suited for use in various disciplines (Crenshaw, 2011). The tenets of CRT seem to provide much use to scholars in multiple disciplines. The wide focus of CRT makes it an excellent multi-disciplinary tool for the study of race and race related issues (Essed, 2003).

Also, CRT scholar Price (2010) gave evidence to the interdisciplinary nature of CRT by showing the similarities between CRT and the Critical Geographies of Race model. Price identified how several of the themes in CRT would be useful for advancing research in the field of geography. Another CRT Scholar, Brown (2003), suggested that CRT was very useful for enlightening sociology about mental health studies. With the CRT framework, Brown was able to display several potential mental health issues that may go overlooked due to the failure to consider the interest of minorities from a research perspective. In addition, Ford and Airhihhenbua (2010) argued that CRT was valid as a theoretical construct for their study on racism and HIV testing rates among African Americans. Ford and Airhihhenbua found that by introducing the CRT framework to

their public health study, they were able to use CRT characteristics such as race consciousness to frame their study.

CRT has also become very popular in the field of education (Abrams & Molo, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2011). Yosso, Smith, Ceja, and Solorzano (2009) used a CRT framework to study the experiences of Latino and Latina men and women on college campuses. Yosso et al. (2009) conducted a series of focus groups on multiple campuses to gain a better understanding of the Latino and Latina experiences. They discovered that the participants were victims of microaggressive racial incidents that once culminated had potentially damaging effects. This study was a continuation of an earlier study involving African American students that had garnered similar results (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000).

Researchers Abrams and Molo (2009) investigated the use of CRT to mitigate many of the complications with cultural sensitivity in social work education. Abrams and Molo concluded that CRT would be very useful in advancing an anti-racist pedagogy. Other researchers seeking to enhance understanding of multiculturalism, cultural sensitivity training, and diversity in various fields of education (Cappiccie, Chadha, Lin, & Snyder, 2012; Ortiz & Jayshree, 2010) have supported the findings of Abrams and Molo. For example, Cerezo, McWhirter, Diana, Valdez, and Bustos (2013) found CRT to be useful as a guiding framework for their development of a race consciousness program for Latina and Latino students at predominantly White universities.

CRT is, arguably, ideal for fostering an in-depth critical understanding of the relationships between African American communities and their external environments.

For example, a study of community development in Australia utilized CRT in a community verses external environment context (Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Sonn and Quayle (2013) found that racism, particularly White privilege, played a major role in the treatment of indigenous people's "exclusion from social and political organizations" (p. 443).

In addition, Limbert and Bullock (2005) used CRT, along with critical race feminism, to examine contemporary welfare policy in the United States. Drawing on the CRT concept of intersectionality, Limbert and Bullock went on to conclude that racism, sexism, and classism were present in the decision making process in order to promote regulation of the welfare system. Furthermore, they suggested that due to structural inequity, along with ethnocentrism of the political elites, the policies in place worked to maintain economic disparity.

Many CRT scholars have been very creative with their approach to studies on race. For example, Cook and Dixon (2013) used a CRT method known as composite counterstory telling to share the experiences of Black teachers in post Hurricane Katrina New Orleans. Counterstory telling works to present the view points of oppressed minorities as opposed to the dominant narrative, which is often potrayed by main stream media outlets (Cook & Dixon, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Critical race realism is another methodological approach utilized by many CRT scholars (Parks, 2008). According to Parks (2008), critical race realism is a combination of CRT and empirical social science inorder to identify and attack racism in the public policy arena.

Researchers have used the various concepts that have emerged from the CRT literature to analyze and address racism in other specialized areas as well. For example, the CRT concept of intersectionality proved useful in studies of Black and gay athletes in American sports (Anderson & McCormack, 2010). Hylton (2010) suggested that the use of CRT could play a potential role in reducing racist behavior in sports. CRT has also proven useful in investigations of human resources mangement (Bernier & Rocco, 2013), population health research (Graham, Brown-Jeffy, Aronson, & Stephens, 2011), adult education (Closson, 2010), and studies on modern family structures (Burton, Bonilla-Silva, & Freeman, 2010). Interestingly, I was unable to locate any studies where researchers used CRT to analyze social capital or low diversity majority Black communities. Nonetheless, despite the wide spread use of CRT and several of its elements, it has been subject to harsh criticism from several scholars.

Critique of Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory is a controversial subject. It has drawn the ire of many critics over the past twenty years (Crenshaw, 2011). One of the early critiques of CRT came from within the legal studies academic world and challenged the notion of the uniqueness of a minority voice in racial discussions (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Kennedy, 1989). Farber and Sherry (1997) in their work *Beyond All Reason: The Radical Assault on Truth in American Law* attacked the logic and objectiveness of CRT. Farber and Sherry accused many of the CRT scholars of being “radical multiculturalists” who disregard the use of truth and reason in order to support pro-racial and even anti-Semitic arguments. Internal critiques from within the CRT community have alluded that CRT has yet to

encompass new ideas about economic democracy. These critiques bring to light several issues that I will attempt to mediate as I use CRT to investigate racism and social capital formation in African American communities.

Utility in the Current Study

Many CRT scholars have posited that racism is a constant factor in American life, while some go a step further to suggest that it is so embedded within the culture of the United States that it will not dissipate without concerted action (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This assertion relates directly to the study of racism and social capital. Assuming that racism is a constant normative function in a society definitely brings into question its impact on the social networks and civic engagement of members of communities affected by racism.

Furthermore, the concept of interest convergence will play an important part in the investigation of the utility of African American communities' social capital. In addition, like CRT, many concepts from the polarities of democracy model call into question some of the same issues about racism and its impact on society (Benet, 2006, 2013). Using CRT in tandem with the other constructs allowed me to achieve triangulation, which increased the credibility of this research.

Racism

In order to frame this study properly, an in-depth understanding of racism and its effect on people of color is necessary. Jones (2002), in the article Confronting Institutionalized Racism, elaborated on the effects of racism on multiple aspects of life. Most importantly, Jones provided an effective operational definition of racism as a

"system that structures opportunity and assigns value based on phenotype" (p. 11). Furthermore, Jones argued that racism "unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities; unfairly advantages other individuals and communities; and undermines realization of the full potential of the whole society through the waste of human resources" (pp. 11-12). This definition is more useful for research purposes, as opposed to the traditional definitions of racism such as those provided in dictionaries, which only capture particular aspects of racism such as prejudice and discrimination (Gee et al., 2009). Traditional definitions of racism limit the perspective that is required in order to properly understand the complexity of racial issues faced by people of color (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). For the purposes of this study, I utilized components of definitions from Bonilla-Silva (2013), Gee, Ro, Shariff-Marco, & Chae (2009), and Jones (2002) in order to craft an operational definition of racism. For the purposes of this study racism refers to the procedures, social norms, structures, collective ideologies, along with the individual and group actions that maintain racial inequality and afford privilege to a dominant racial group based on their skin color (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Gee, Ro, Shariff-Marco, & Chae, 2009; Jones, 2002).

Types of Racism

Jones (2002) identified three distinct forms of racism: institutionalized, personally mediated, and internalized racism. These different types of racism all work, sometimes in harmony, to perpetuate inequality of non-White racial groups, while providing privileges for the White racial group (Green, 2008). Bonilla-Silva (2013) contended that racial ideologies and racial structures that perpetuate inequality are the basis of racism.

In turn, the victims of racism experience various forms of disparity and even internalize racial hostility towards members of their own and other non-dominant racial groups (Pyke, 2010). These factors would most likely have a detrimental influence on the ability of community members to produce and share resources.

Institutional and structural racism. Some researchers articulate institutionalized racism as the organizational structure, and the procedures by which they operate, as well as a societies normative practices or cultural standards, which result in racially based disparity of accessibility to social, political and human capital resources (Henkel, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2006; Jones, 2002). In the western world context, structural racism takes the form of perpetual bureaucratic processes that maintain White privilege and marginalize the role of non-Whites in society (Murji, 2007). This type of racism remains normalized in all aspects of social life and codified through the legal system (Murji, 2007). Structural racism manifests in two main forms: material wealth inequality, which includes education, housing, gainful employment, healthcare, and clean environment; and power inequality, which includes voting rights, access to information, representation in government, and control of media (Jones, 2002).

Cultural racism is a type of institutional racism defined as a use of power on the part of the dominant racial group, which diminishes the importance of another group's way of life (Sue, 2003). Griffith, Johnson, Ellis, and Schulz (2010) argued that culture is an integral medium used to define and give meaning to race. This revelation led these researchers to determine that cultural racism reflects the attitudes, values, and beliefs about the significance of race in a society. Furthermore, Griffith et al. (2010) asserted

that processes of racialization support the emergence of racial and ethnic hierarchies that then go on to become institutionalized through legislation and other institutional policies. Griffith et al. posited that normalization of these racially biased institutions perpetuates cultural racism.

Fortunately, various researchers have examined the many ways in which racism affects people of color and their communities. For example, Green (2008) argued that structural and unconscious racism has hampered the success of African American students in the American public education system. Vaught and Castagno (2008) asserted that racism assiduously structures institutions and relationships, which in turn negatively influence students of color. The researchers constructed a series of training interventions to raise awareness of structural racism within two urban districts and noted that cultural and structural racism impeded the effectiveness of the training program. Furthermore, Vaught and Castagno concluded that without structural transformation, racism would simply adapt and persist within the institution.

Other researchers have found that structural racism is often the reason for racial disparity in regards to environmental protection and exposure to environmental hazards (Bullard, 2002; Pulido, 2000). For instance, Henkel et al. (2006) explored the role that institutional racism played in the response to Hurricane Katrina. They concluded that while overt or conscious racist attitudes may not have influenced decision-making, historical discrimination and subtle institutional racist practices allowed the storm to disproportionately impact African American residents of New Orleans. Mohai and Saha (2007) argued that minority communities are often targeted for environmental “hazard

siting" (p.346), which is the placement of pollutants in a location because polluters view the area as having "paths of least resistance" (p. 345). This type of discriminatory hazard siting disproportionately exposes minority communities to harmful elements and further perpetuates health inequality (Bullard, 2002). Furthermore, Mohai and Saha suggested that other inequalities such as disparity in social and political capital, as well as employment and education, could limit the ability of minority communities to avoid placement of environmentally hazardous facilities. Also, Wakefield and Baxter (2010) posited that poor socio-demographic characteristics, coupled with race, might influence community members' likelihood to inhabit degraded physical environments, which would lead to poorer health outcomes. Evidently, in regards to community sustainably, environmental racism perpetuates inequality for non-Whites. Interestingly, some researchers have suggested that social capital provides a means to improve a community's social sustainability and ward off environmental degradation (McKenzie, 2004; Newman, 2010). However, if a community was lacking social capital, it would be more vulnerable, resulting in increased inequality of health outcomes.

To further this discussion, Gee and Ford (2011) suggested that structural racism might play an integral role in creating the health inequities that exist in minority communities. These health inequalities manifest in the form of infant mortality, heart disease, cancer, and other health outcomes (Sondik et al., 2010). Other researchers have found that persons who self-report experiences of racism have evidenced greater risk for several health issues (Brondolo et al., 2011; Gee et al., 2012; Griffith et al., 2010).

Impacting health outcomes is just one of many ways that structural racism works to maintain disparity.

Other authors have suggested that structural racism within the criminal justice system plays a major role in the overrepresentation of African American men and women incarcerated in the United States (Alexander, 2012; Haney-Lopez, 2010; Roberts, 2004). Lynch (2011) posited that, despite the racial diversity of drug users, federal law enforcement has disproportionately targeted African Americans in drug prosecutions, thus explaining their over-representation as persons who received mandatory minimum sentences. In a case study, Lynch assiduously documented the activities of a Cleveland, Ohio state attorney, along with a judicial system that consistently targeted African Americans with the most stringent punishments. Lynch pointed out that despite the legal challenges and direct confrontations to the unfair procedures, a lack of empathy on the part of the White controlled government allowed the structurally racist activities to continue.

Alexander (2012), in the critically acclaimed work *The New Jim Crow*, posited that the War on Drugs, operated by the U.S Justice Department, has actually been a mechanism to maintain a racialized caste system in the United States. Similar to the arguments presented by Lynch (2011), Alexander postulated that the war on drugs was part of a social control operation conducted by elements within the U.S government to marginalize African American communities. Alexander went on to provide meticulous details of the procession of racialized social control mechanisms starting with slavery, then Jim Crow, and followed by mass incarceration. Alexander noted that following the

declaration of the so-called War on Drugs, the U.S penal population expanded exponentially because of an enormous amount of drug convictions. Alexander then pointed out that the U.S in recent years incarcerates a greater percentage of its Black citizenry than South Africa's apartheid regime. Thus, Alexander asserted that one in three Africa American men would serve time in prison if the trends of mass incarceration continued. Interestingly, some researchers have found a correlation between mass incarceration and the destruction of social capital in African American communities (Greenbaum, 2008; Roberts, 2004; Rose & Clear, 2002).

Personally mediated racism. Personally mediated racism is another form of racism, and some researchers have defined this concept as prejudice and discrimination against persons of a particular racial group (Jones, 2002). In this context, prejudice is the differential assumptions made about a person's or groups' abilities based on their race (Jones, 2002). Specifically, Jones defined discrimination as differential actions towards others based on race. Jones noted that this type of racism includes the following:

- Lack of respect, such as refusal of customer "service, failure to communicate options";
- Suspicion, expressed as "shopkeeper vigilance, everyday avoidance, purse clutching";
- Devaluations, such as "surprise at competence, stifling of aspiration, scapegoating"; and
- Dehumanization, such as "police brutality, sterilization, abuse, hate-crimes" (pp. 10-11).

The dominative forms of personally mediated racism are far more visible than the aversive forms, which are subtle (Pearson, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2009). Based on trends in the literature, personally mediated racism generally falls into two different categories (Gawronski, Peters, & Brochu, 2008; Pearson et al., 2009; Son Hing, Hamilton, & Zanna, 2008). The first category is explicit prejudice or conscious and deliberate negative evaluation of a different racial group based on memory and past experiences. The second category is implicit prejudice, which manifests as automatic negative associations of a different racial group without deliberation or intent (Son Hing et al., 2008).

Racism has continually adapted and modified over time to meet the needs of its benefactors (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). Researchers described old-fashioned racism as the more overt and obscene form of racism that is based on notions of biological supremacy and desire for social distance between the races (e.g., Gawronski et al., 2008; Tesler, 2013). This type of racism can be associated with the explicit forms of discrimination. In particular, Tesler (2013) suggested that old-fashioned racism, while less prevalent, still might influence policy and political decisions made by some Whites. Tesler examined the role of old-fashioned racism in the 2008 presidential election and found that old-fashioned racist attitudes served as a primary determinant of White American's decision making regarding partisan affiliation, as well as their presidential candidate selections (Tesler, 2013). Tesler's findings support the findings of Huddy and Feldman (2009) who used experimental methods to substantiate their hypothesis that a correlation exists between elements of old-fashioned racism and political decisions on the part of White participants.

Son Hing et al. (2008) have also conducted research on race. They presented a two-dimensional model to identify three typologies of racists: the modern racist, the principled conservative, and the aversive racist. According to Son Hing et al., the modern racist exhibits high levels of explicit prejudice along with high levels of implicit prejudice. However, unlike the old fashioned racist, the modern racist does not accept outright discrimination or bigotry actions and instead ascribes to more subtle discriminatory beliefs such as racism no longer existing or that there is more racism against whites (Gawronski et al., 2008; Norton & Sommers, 2011). The principled conservative has high levels of explicit prejudice and low levels of implicit prejudice. For example, Renya, Korfmacher, and Tucker (2005) suggested that the principled conservative opposes affirmative action that benefits African Americans more so than affirmative action that benefits women. Lastly, there is the aversive racist who exhibits low levels of explicit prejudice and high levels of implicit prejudice (Son Hing et al., 2008; Pearson et al., 2009).

Aversive racism is a type of subtle racism that is considered to have replaced traditional overt or old fashioned racism on the part of liberals (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Pearson et al., 2009). Aversive racism, although often personally mediated, remains hidden behind the perpetrators' liberalist or egalitarian views (Pearson, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2009). In other words, while an aversive racist truly believes he or she is not practicing prejudice or discrimination, their actions discriminate in subtle ways and have varying consequences (Pearson et al., 2009). Pearson et al., using the aversive racism framework, reviewed several experiments, including some of their own that evidenced

discrimination on the part of Whites in employment or college admission applicant selection as well as legal decisions. The focal point of their argument was consistent with the aversive racism framework: in situations where Black applicants were clearly qualified, there was far less discrimination. However, in situations where qualifications were equal, White participants were more likely to select White applicants (Pearson et al., 2009). The aversive racism framework supports the findings of Pager (2003), who found that hiring practices included racially discriminatory behaviors on the part of employers even when considering criminal backgrounds of the applicants. This type of activity does indeed threaten the balance between equality and diversity that is fundamental to American democracy. Furthermore, it seemingly causes lowered self-esteem on the part of the victims of such hostile yet subtle discrimination.

Although there are different types of racists, as Bonilla-Silva (2013) postulated, the objectives of racism to maintain and enforce White supremacy remain the same; however, the tactics have changed with the times. Due to demographic, social, political, and economic changes, along with increased agitation of African Americans during the Cold War and Civil Rights era, changes to the old racial ideology were inevitable (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). This view is consistent with Alexander's (2012) findings, which asserted that social control mechanisms used against African Americans have life spans, deaths, and rebirths, so they fit the political and social requirements of the era. For example, as slavery was no longer socially acceptable, Jim Crow became the new form of social control to maintain racial inequality. Subsequently, when Jim Crow was no longer socially acceptable, mass incarceration, in a colorblind context, became the new method

of social control (Alexander, 2012). The CRT argument asserting that interest convergence is responsible for so-called improvements in United States race relations is consistent with Alexander's postulation.

Some scholars consider modern racism or the new racism as more subtle and sophisticated while just as effective and damaging as old-fashioned racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Sue et al., 2007). In the modern context, people of color are less likely to encounter overt forms of exclusion and instead they become targets of a litany of micro-aggressive racist behaviors (Yosso et al., 2009; Sue et al., 2007). Micro-aggressions are "brief everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color" (Sue et al., 2007, p. 273). Yosso et al. (2009), along with Sue et al. (2007), have provided detailed research on racial micro-aggressions. These micro aggressions fall into three categories: (a) Micro-assaults or explicit racial derogation; (b) Micro insults or communication or expressions, which are offensive, insensitive, and humiliating to an individual's or group's cultural and customs or their racial identity; and (c) Micro-invalidations, which are expressions that disregard, deny, or invalidate a person's experiences or feelings with regard to race related issues.

This new racism functions to keep minorities in their places through increasingly covert means and the complete avoidance of racial terminology (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). Perpetrators of the new and improved racism ideology even have found ways to defend the racial status quo with the coining of terms like "reverse racism" (Eibach & Keegan, 2006; Norton & Sommers, 2011). Many of the modern mechanisms that establish and perpetuate much of the social inequality in American society remain invisible to the

public (Bonilla-Silva, 2013). Thus, modern racist innuendos hide behind the auspice of color-blindness, a concept that critical race theorists argue against (Crenshaw, 2011).

Internalized racism.

Internalized racism is another form of racism that occurs when racially oppressed and stigmatized people develop negative attitudes about their own abilities and intrinsic worth as a result of racism (Jones, 2002). Pyke (2010) suggested that internalized racism is a consequence of White racial oppression. All forms of oppression maintained with brutality and coercion often involve the consent of the oppressed (Pyke, 2010). The internalization takes place when oppressed and marginalized people accept the negative perceptions and stereotypes of the dominant race (Pyke, 2010). This behavior results in a self-sustaining oppression and provides a justification for the facade of White superiority (Pyke, 2010). This activity is what Speight (2007) referred to as "cultural imperialism" (p.129). In this situation, marginalized people develop doubts of their own self-worth and abilities (Speight, 2007). They also accept the reality of the dominant race as the objective reality and question the credibility of their own experiences (Speight, 2007).

In the discussion of internalized racism, Pyke (2010) identified a theme of "intra-ethnic othering" in which members of Vietnamese and Korean ethnicities attempted to mediate their assimilation into American culture by socially distancing themselves from those perceived as stereotypical members of their ethnic group (p. 557). Family members play a crucial role in the socialization of youth towards their own supposed racial inferiority (Pyke, 2010). For example some Black mothers feel compelled to socialize children to accept some aspects of oppression to protect them and ensure their survival in

a racist culture (Pyke, 2010). Subsequently, Pyke (2010) went on to discuss how, in some cases, the imposition of White beauty standards resulted in marginalized groups feeling unattractive and desiring to acquire more "white like features" (p.560). These ideas support the CRT concept of intersectionality by showing the multiple types of oppression and discrimination Black women face. Furthermore, this type of internalized racism would seemingly hinder bonding social capital within majority Black communities.

Hipolito-Delgado (2010) defined internalized racism as "the acceptance of stereotypes or beliefs that paint one's racial group as subhuman, inferior, incapable, or a burden on society" (p. 319). Hipolito-Delgado went on to suggest that internalized racism has various deleterious impacts on people of color, specifically their physical and mental health. Hipolito-Delgado posited two hypotheses to explain the etiology of internalized racism. The first hypothesis asserted that exposure to both racist propaganda in media and experiences of structural and personally mediated racism leads to the acceptance of the racist status quo as normative and acceptable state of being. The second hypothesis suggested that acculturation into a racist society is the key cause of internalized racism. In this context, people shed their own cultural ideals in exchange for westernized European values and ideals and develop negative views of their own culture and ethnic background (Hipolito-Delgado, 2010). Hipolito-Delgado's investigation into the relationship between these hypotheses and internalized racism yielded inconclusive results. However, Hipolito-Delgado was sure to note that there was statistical correlation between U.S cultural identity and internalized racism among minority participants. This

idea presented by Hipolito-Delgado provides a basis for the theoretical assumption that internalized racism would diminish bonding social capital. If members of African American communities were to think lesser of other African Americans, it would most likely be reflected in the collective morale of the community.

The Effects of Racism

One of the primary effects of racism is that it creates a legacy and provides maintenance for a system of White privilege. For example, White males only compose 33% of the U.S population. Yet this group holds 80% or more of the tenured faculty positions in education and of the U.S House of Representatives and Senate (Sue, 2003). This over representation occurs in other areas: White males composed more than 90% of the Forbes 400 executive CEO-level positions, public school superintendents, athletic team owners, as well as elected U.S Presidents (Sue, 2003).

The privilege afforded to Whites results in gross inequality, especially in wealth distribution. For example, "In 2009, the median wealth of white households was 20 times as high as the wealth of black households and 18 times as high as the wealth of Hispanic households" (Kochar, Fry, & Taylor, 2011, p. 14). Of course, this statistic may overstate the wealth gap between average White households and average Black households. Because the figures include the extraordinary wealth accumulated by the richest 1/10th of 1% the actual gap between average white households and black households may still be very high, but perhaps nowhere near as high as these figures suggest. Oliver & Shapiro (2006) controlled for social class when examining differences between White and Black households and identified a significant, yet, much smaller

amount of disparity. Nonetheless, these gaps in wealth have increased since 2005 and as recently as 2010, were the highest they had been in the previous 25 years due to the extreme losses minorities experienced during the so called "great recession" of 2009 (Kochar, Fry, & Taylor, 2011, pp. 14-15). Again, while the housing crisis and economic setbacks affected all persons because of the historical disparities that accumulated due to unchecked institutional racism, African Americans and other minorities were especially vulnerable (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006; Bonilla-Silva, 2013). This reality is reminiscent of the descriptions of the impacts of aversive and institutionalized racism on African Americans affected by the Hurricane Katrina disaster as described by Henkel et al. (2006). Furthermore, Oliver and Shapiro noted that the great disparity in wealth between the races is in part due to accumulation of disadvantages put in place by institutionally racist practices.

Racism does not only cause social and economic disparity it also has an impact on the physical health of its victims. Multiple researchers have suggested that a correlation between racism and health inequity displayed by minorities exists (Gee et al., 2012; Gee & Ford, 2011). For instance, Brondolo et al. (2011) conducted an extensive literature review of empirical data that investigated three levels of racism and concluded that there was a likely correlation between institutional racism and risk for hypertension. Peters (2006) conducted an empirical study to test a theory linking chronic stress emotions to perceived racism. Peters concluded that racism was a commonly experienced stressor of African Americans participating in the study. Other research has linked racism to issues with pregnancy as well as to the disparate mortality rates suffered by African American

communities (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Collins & Williams, 1999; Mendez, Hogan, & Culhane, 2013).

Some researchers have claimed that the most significant impact of racism is that it affects the mental health of its victims (Brown, 2003; Carter, 2007; Pieterse, Todd, Neville, & Carter, 2012). Pieterse et al. (2012) conducted a meta-analytic review of sixty-six studies on the relationship between racism and mental health. The researchers (2012) concluded that perceived racism showed a strong correlation with "adverse psychological outcomes" (p. 7). Carter (2007) argued that many victims of racism might suffer from a type of post-traumatic stress disorder, which he called "race based traumatic stress injury" (p. 96).

Also, Goff, Di Leone, and Kahn (2012) conducted two studies to explore the relationship between race discrimination and masculinity threat. They hypothesized that Black males experience personally mediated racism as a challenge to their masculinity. The participants in their experiments exposed to discrimination displayed "greater endorsement of male gender norms" and became more aggressive towards "masculinity threat cues" when compared to the control group not exposed to discrimination. This finding led Goff et al. (2012) to conclude that aggressive masculine behavior could be an important consequence of discrimination.

Wilson (2011) also conducted research on race and provided one of the more interesting alternative explanations for racial inequality in the modern United States. Wilson contended that race has become less of a factor in determining inequality for African Americans in comparison with socio economic issues. According to Wilson, the

racial oppression once shared by all African Americans in the economic realm now narrowly focuses on the Black poor. Wilson asserted that this does not mean that racism against all Blacks has been eliminated but merely that race alone is "no longer the primary determinant of life chances for Blacks in the way it had been historically" (p. 57). Furthermore, social isolation of the Black poor prevents contact with middle-class persons thus hindering their social connections (Wilson, 2011). This postulation presented by Wilson offers a rival explanation for the disparity of social capital in African American communities. What Wilson referred to as an economic schism in the African American community could potentially threaten social capital formation and access within the community. Furthermore, Wilson's thesis may have described racialized economic segregation, which is a situation where economic situations caused by structural racism increase the effect of economic segregation. Economic segregation is most severe in the Tallahassee Metropolitan Area which includes both case sites investigated in this research study (Florida & Mellander, 2015). The understanding of racialized economic segregation is also consistent with the CRT concept of intersectionality.

Each of these distinct forms of racism played an important role in the development of the research questions and theoretical propositions for this proposed study. It will be important to investigate how each of these forms of racism manifest in community activity. Furthermore, key themes throughout the literature on racism support the theoretically deduced notion that each of these forms of racism will have a specific

impact on the ability of a majority Black community to produce, utilize, and access social capital resources.

Social Capital

I use social capital theory as the conceptual framework for this dissertation. The literary heritage of the concept of social capital has its origins in the writings of Tocqueville, Durkenhiem, and Marx, who were each looking to explain trends and patterns of group interactions and social class behaviors (Portes, 1998). Hyyppa (2010) indicated that the conteporary ideas of social capital are found in the writings of Aristotle. According to Krasny, Kalbacker, Stedman, and Russ (2013), Hanifan (1916) was the earliest writer to utilize the term in its contemporary context. According to Portes (1998), who sought to trace the origins and development of social capital, the modern use of the term merely captures several components of sociological studies that have been present since the inception of the discipline. Several other authors, including Putnam, Coleman, Lin, Portes, and Bordieu, have all worked to advance the concept into a viable operational measure.

Portes (1998) credited Bordieu (1983) with the modern conceptualization of social capital. Bordieu focused on the ubiquitous nature of various forms of capital and identified social capital as one among several. Loury (1977; 1981) embraced the term social capital in an attempt to examine racial income inequality and the need for more social network orientated policies to address the apparent disparity. Coleman (1988) also received consideration as one of the key developers of the concept that is responsible for sparking the interest of social capital studies within the United States (Adam & Roncevic,

2003; Portes, 1998). The most popular of the contemporary developers of social capital theory is Putnam. Many researchers credited Putnam's (2000) seminal work *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* with sparking much of the recent interest in the utility of social capital (Adam & Roncevic, 2003; Hero, 2007; Portes & Vikstrom, 2011). However, despite the fact that the contemporary developers of the concept have similar academic backgrounds, there remains much debate over the definition and proper use of the term social capital (Adam & Roncevic, 2003).

Definitions

There are several competing definitions of social capital and much debate in the literature about the proper use and correct definition of the term (Portes, 1998). Bourdieu (1986) identified social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (p. 248). Portes (1998) simplified Bourdieu's (1986) definition stating, "Social capital is the ability to secure benefits through membership in networks and other social structures" (p. 8). According to Adam and Roncevic (2003), the Portes (1998) and Bourdieu (1986) definitions encompass what developed into the "critical theory of social capital" (p. 158) as opposed to the normative and mainstream definition offered by Putnam (1993) and Coleman (1988).

Coleman's (1988) definition of social capital presented the concept as various entities related to social structures, which hold facilitative capabilities, making certain achievements attainable for members within the structure. Putnam (1993) advanced from Coleman's view and articulated social capital as the key features that compose the fabric

of organized social interactions. These features include integral social attributes such as trust, social norms, and complex networks. Additionally, these features are instrumental tools for enhancing societal efficiency. Another important definition of social capital stems from Lin (2000), who defined social capital as "investment and use of embedded resources in social relations for expected returns" (p.786). Grootaert and Bastelaer (2002) defined social capital as "the institutions, relationships, attitudes, and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development" (p. 2). Putnam (2007) advanced a more refined definition of social capital, which identified it as "social networks, and associated norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness" (p. 137). Nonetheless, contentions of the definition still make it difficult to operationalize the concept.

The crux of the debate of the definition of social capital centers on the difference between its consequences or products and its sources. Some view social capital as resources that must be retrieved from within social networks (Bordieu, 1986; Lin, 2000; Portes 1998). However, much of the literature supports the understanding that social forces such as trust, reciprocity, and shared norms are products of social capital as well as enhancers of social capital (Coleman, 1988; Hyyppa, 2010; Putnam, 1993).

For the purposes of this study, there was a need to utilize aspects of several of the aforementioned definitions in order to develop a new operational definition of social capital. Using the key values from various definitions provided in the literature, I drafted a comprehensive operational definition that will suit the purposes of this research while also remaining fair to original definitions offered throughout the literature. In this

research, I defined social capital as the resources, benefits, and networks created and shared by members of social entities through utilization of their social cohesion, trust, and civic engagement in order to facilitate coordinated action that solves individual and collective problems.

Types of Social Capital

In the development of the social capital conceptual framework, varying formations and types of social capital have emerged from the literature. There are two main forms of social capital. The first is structural social capital, which includes the evident and visible social structures, networks, along with their embodied features such as their regulatory practices and shared activities (Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2002). The second form is cognitive social capital, which is composed of subjective and nonmaterial elements such as shared values, attitudes, norms, behaviors, trust, and reciprocity (Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2002). It is important to note that these two forms, while mutually reinforcing, can exist independently when necessary. Furthermore, in this study, I distributed adequate focus to both cognitive and structural social capitals.

Social capital is observable from a micro, meso, or macro perspective (Grootaert & Bastelaer, 2002). At the macro level, social capital expressions involve the political environment that sets the tone for economic and social activity along with the effectiveness and quality of government. At the meso level, social capital contains the relations between individuals and society. Lastly, at the micro level the units of analysis include networks of individuals and family units along with the norms and value systems that guide these networks. Understanding the varying perspectives at which social capital

is observable was very important for this research project. Ultimately, looking at social capital at the community level is synonymous with examining the concept at the meso level.

In addition to the two forms of social capital, there are three main types of social capital: bonding, bridging, and linking (Putnam, 2000). Bonding social capital refers to networks linking family members, ethnic groups, social class, and other close social relationships (Putnam, 2000). Bridging social capital is the ability of groups to form coalitions with other groups (Blair & Carroll, 2008). The concepts of bridging and bonding social capital predate the use of the terminology. For example, Orr (1999) discussed the use of "interpersonal" social capital, which is similar to the bonding concept and "inter-group" social capital, which is similar to the bridging conceptualization (p. 8). Linking social capital refers to individuals abilities to build and maintain relationships with various institutions and persons who wield relative political and social power and influence, people such as elected officials, job providers, and resource distributors (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Poortinga, 2011). Within the confines of the CRT construct, each of these types of social capitals must negatively correlate with racism. Internalized racism seemingly would hamper bonding social capital. However, when considering Wilson's (2011) social isolation theory, bridging social capital would seemingly be worse among members of poor majority Black communities than in those middle-class communities.

Sources of Social Capital

Another intriguing debate that has erupted over the past decades in regards to social capital research is the varying ideas of its sources. This debate, like the contention over the definition, centers around the disagreement on how to separate the causes of social capital from its consequences. Coleman (1988) focused primarily on social relations as the key source of social capital. Another source identified by Coleman was appropriable social organization in which the resources made available through one social relationship are available for use in others.

Portes (1998) was critical of Coleman's identified social capital sources and claimed that they were tautological because there was no clarity on what an actual source was and what a result of social capital was. Portes went on to provide four sources of social capital. He identified the first two sources as the "consummatory sources", which were value introjection and bounded solidarity (Portes, 1998, p.8). Portes identified the second two sources as "instrumental sources," which consisted of reciprocity exchanges and enforceable trust (Portes, 1998, p. 9).

Networks relate as both a source and a form of social capital (Putnam, 2003). In this conceptualization, social capital has a circular approach since the sources also serve as the by-product. However, Portes (1998) is fiercely critical of this analysis. Portes (1998) and Portes and Vikstrom (2011) asserted that Putnam's (1993) conceptualization is short sighted and faulty because it starts from the results and works backwards to identify the causation without properly eliminating spurious and mediating variables.

This debate within the social capital literature is critical to a proficient understanding of how to measure and observe social capital. Ultimately, Putnam (2007) and Portes and Vikstrom (2011) may both be right. Therefore, the conceptualization of social capital utilized in this research approached social capital as a self-enhancing mechanism: the same factors that create social capital also reinforce or enhance the ability to create and sustain higher levels of social capital. Therefore, while civic engagement, trust, shared norms, and reciprocity are benefits of social capital, they also increase social capital as a result of their prolonged existence (Putnam, 2007).

There are also several non-conventional sources of social capital. For example, public libraries have an integral role in forging social capital by acting as a conduit for community and individual network formation (Johnson, 2011). Community foundations also play an instrumental role with increasing social trust, therefore, influencing the level of social capital (Graddy & Wang, 2009). Also, there has been some research suggesting that the social media based networks may play a significant role in fostering social capital (Ellison & Steinfield, 2010; Steinfield, DiMicco, Ellison, & Lampe, 2009).

Alaimo, Reischl, and Allen (2010) performed research on social capital by investigating the role that neighborhood meetings and involvement in community gardening projects had on social capital and found that participation in these types of activities was strongly associated with the residents' perception of social capital. Specifically, Alaimo et al. (2010) reported that having family members participate in community garden, and or beautification projects, as well as attending neighborhood meetings was correlated with enhanced linking and bonding social capital.

There was much interest focused throughout this research on varying types of social capital inducing activities in majority African American communities. Much of the research on sources of social capital hints that there may be diversity of sources dependent upon cultural background and socio-economic status. Furthermore, much consideration concerns the ability of structural or internalized racism to inhibit these activities from taking place as well as impeding the benefits produced by these non-conventional sources.

Effects of Social Capital

Some scholars have argued that social capital has both positive and negative benefits. However, both Putnam (2007) and Portes and Vikstrom (2011) noted that much of the research has focused on the positive outcomes of social capital. Putnam stated "where levels of social capital are higher children grow up healthier, safer, and better educated, people live longer, happier lives, and democracy and the economy work better" (p. 138). Putnam also noted that street gangs, terrorist organizations, and hate groups also exhibit social capital. Blair and Carroll (2008) suggested that social capital has the potential to improve local economies by "reducing cost of market transactions, replacing monetary exchanges, and mitigating the negative effects of non-market transactions" (p. 43). Blair and Carroll's findings were consistent with the research of Johnson, Suarez, and Lundy (2003), who studied contributions of social capital to the performance of 50 agro-businesses in Columbia. However, the failure to apply a CRT framework to social capital research leaves several questions unanswered. For example, there appears to be no research that considers the consequences of some groups of powerful individuals

utilizing their social capital to facilitate collective action to the detriment of marginalized and oppressed people.

Throughout the literature, there are suggestions that there is a link between the benefits of social capital and multiple social indicators. Some researchers suggested that social capital was a mitigating factor in the impact of the recent financial crisis (Douglass & Browne, 2011). Members of different socioeconomic groups were able to access different levels of social capital, which then shielded them from the impact of the economic crash (Douglass & Browne, 2011). Also, Brown and Ferris (2007) utilized the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (SCCBS) to examine the relationship between two aspects of social capital (associational networks and trust) and philanthropy. Brown and Ferris found that social capital was instrumental in both secular and religious giving as well as willingness to volunteer.

It is important to note that not all the outcomes associated with social capital are positive in their nature (Moore et al., 2009; Portes, 1998). Portes (1998) advanced the idea that social capital had both positive and negative influences. For example, a terrorist organization such as Boko Haram could effectively utilize its network to conduct its terror operation in Nigeria. A criminal organization or street gang might also utilize its network connections, social resources, and shared norms to facilitate criminal activities.

Some researchers have concluded that social capital among lower educated persons may result in lower levels of mastery or individual sense of control of personal life outcomes, which is associated with mental well-being (Moore et al., 2009). Moore et al. (2009) investigated social capital among persons with varying levels of educational

attainment and found that sense of mastery was lower among those with high levels of social capital and less educational attainment when compared with those who exhibited high levels of social capital and increased educational attainment. Interestingly Moore et al., found that educational attainment correlated with network diversity as well as accessibility of social capital. This understanding may provide an alternative explanation for the utility of social capital in African American communities. Despite having access to networks and their embedded resources, the absence of experts or diverse members from the networks could render some forms of social capital as detrimental to its users (Moore et al., 2009). In this context, it could be inferred that social capital in poor socioeconomic settings could reinforce a culture of poverty. This understanding is consistent with Wilson's (2011) social isolation theory. However, other researchers have challenged this assertion stating that impoverished communities can and do produce good social capital (Greenbaum, 2008).

While there are indeed negative outcomes of social capital there is much reason to believe it can serve as a force for positive social change. There is ample evidence to support the empirical relationship between social capital and health outcomes (Abbott, 2009; Hutchinson, Putt, Dean, Long, & Montagnet, 2009; Hyyppa, 2010; Nieminen et al., 2010). Folland (2007) investigated Putnam's (2000) assertion that higher levels of social capital would lead to increased health. However, Folland wanted to improve the level of analysis by employing various statistical measures that would either support or rebuke the hypothesis. Folland found that, in some cases, the hypothesis held, but in others, it showed a weak correlation to positive health indicators. For example, heart disease

mortality did not respond to social capital measures. However, Folland noted that in general, when reviewing aggregate data, social capital "distinguishes a clear effect independent of economic variables" (p. 2352). This research contrasts with results from Mohnen, Groenewegen, Volker, and Flap's (2011) investigation, which found social capital to be positively associated with health when controlling for economic indicators. Also, Poortinga (2011) conducted similar investigations in England; however, the researcher looked into the role that bonding, bridging, and linking social capital independently played on social outcomes. Poortinga's findings suggest a correlation between the various types of social capital and self-reported health, even when controlling for neighborhood deprivation. Verhaeghe, Pattyn, Bracke, Verhaeghe, and Van De Putte (2011) also investigated the relationship between social capital and self-reported health. Interestingly, the researchers focused on networking social capital and found evidence to support its correlation with positive health outcomes.

Hero (2007) has also conducted research on social capital; specifically, he asserted his racial diversity thesis into the social capital arena and posited that the positive effects of social capital, found in much of the research, primarily reflect the conditions of homogeneous White regions. Furthermore, Hero suggested that the investigation of disaggregated racial groups would reveal the ineffectiveness of social capital to explain social outcomes. Hero also pointed out that even White social capital was weaker in regions with larger minority populations. Hero's determinations are consistent with those of Putnam's (2007) and better understood in relationship to the critical race theoretical lens. The CRT postulation of the permanence of racism

potentially explains the disappearance of social capital among increasingly diverse communities. Additionally, the polarities of democracy model (Benet, 2013) may present a way to resolve for the diversity issues inherent in social capital research.

Social Capital and Racial/Ethnic Diversity

Another area of contention in social capital research is the relationship between racial diversity and social capital. Individuals and social groups develop unequal levels of social capital based on their socioeconomic conditions (Lin, 2000). Lin attributed this finding to the tendency for groups to cluster and associate with those of similar socioeconomic conditions. However, idealistically, this tendency would only influence a group's bonding or inter-group social capital (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Orr, 1999). Nonetheless, institutional and structural processes have indeed provided unequal opportunities to members of different social groups (Lin, 2000).

Putnam (2007) offered an alternative theory as to why social capital may vary from one racial group to another. Putnam sought to investigate the feasibility of two competing theories. The first was contact theory, which argued that social relations improve as people of different ethnicities have increased contact with one another. Second was conflict theory, which argues that increasing people's contact will intensify divides and lead to more contestation for scarce resources. Ultimately, Putnam's findings led him to the proposition of the "hunkering down thesis", which refuted both the contact and conflict theses (p. 144). Putnam's research utilized the results from the 2000 *SCCBS* to analyze the influence of diversity on some key social capital indicators.

After controlling for a multitude of spurious and mediating variables, Putnam's findings suggested that diversity has a negative relationship with several of the key indicators of social capital. The key indicators impacted were interpersonal and intergroup trust (bridging and bonding), confidence in government, voter registration, philanthropy, volunteerism, quality of life, and happiness (Putnam, 2007, pp. 148-151). These negative relationships led Putnam (2007) to assert the "hunkering down thesis," which suggested that American discomfort with increased diversity causes persons to retreat from social life and isolate themselves (pp. 159-60). In this analysis, Putnam failed to consider the role that racism, particularly aversive and internalized racism could have on his findings.

Letki (2008) also performed research on the relationship between social capital and race. The researcher offered one of the first empirical evaluations of racial context on various components of social capital in British neighborhoods. Letki operated from the premise that proper assessment of the influence of racial diversity on social capital required consideration of the neighborhood's socioeconomic status as a mediating characteristic that could be just as significant as diversity. Letki's findings suggest that low neighborhood socioeconomic status was the key element in eroding social capital, while the impact of diversity was limited to indicators such as trust and neighborhood satisfaction.

Unlike Letki (2008), Laurance (2009) asserted that while diversity may have an impact on some aspects of social capital, each indicator needed to receive separate investigation due to the multifaceted nature of the concept. Laurance posited that social

cohesion (bonding social capital) evidenced no relationship with diversity. Laurance also concluded that socio-economic disadvantage has the most strenuous effect on social capital, particularly social cohesion.

Gesthuizen, Meer, and Scheepers (2009) investigated Putnam's (2007) hunkering down thesis in a cross-national study of 28 European countries. Their findings did not support Putnam's (2007) hypothesis. Instead, the authors suggested that "economic inequality and the national history of continuous democracy in European societies [would] be more important [in] explaining national differences in social capital" (p.121).

Feildhouse and Cutts (2010) also investigated Putnam's (2007) hunkering down thesis. However, the authors wanted to avoid some of the similar methodological setbacks that called the validity of Putnam's research into question. The authors noted that because much of the research on the relationship between diversity and social capital took place in the United States, they needed to conduct a comparative analysis with the United Kingdom. Thus they asserted the multicultural neighborhoods thesis, which postulated that the effect of diversity on social capital would be negative for whites, however, it would create more bonding social capital in minority communities. Feildhouse and Cutts (2010) concluded that at one level, in both the United States and United Kingdom, diversity is negatively associated with social capital. However, they noted that this finding was more so specific to the White majority populations. Interestingly, Feildhouse and Cutts also found that the level of inequality and poverty had a mediating role on the bridging social capital level in minority communities. Lastly, they found that ethnic minorities are far more comfortable with diversity than the

majority White population. This research would suggest that bonding social capital should be high in low diversity majority African American communities.

Portes and Vikstrom (2011) cited several studies providing statistical contentions to Putnam's (2007) assertion of the hunkering down thesis. Portes and Vikstrom placed an acute focus on the failure of Putnam to offer a consistent and credible definition of social capital as part of the problem with his conceptualization. Portes and Vikstrom asserted:

> Putnam and his followers have been raising alarm of governments about the threat posed by migration-driven diversity. However, as seen above a substantial number of studies suggest that it is not diversity per se but unequal diversity that makes a difference. (p. 472)

In addition, Portes and Vikstrom suggested that there is a need for a more in-depth understanding of social cohesion as it relates to social capital. Portes and Vikstrom argue that *organic solidarity* and not *communitarianism* is the significant factor of cohesion (p. 472). They suggested that Putnam's view of a community where everyone knows each other's names is unrealistic and detracts from the credibility of his social capital research. This debate in the literature further elucidates the requisite for a critical race theory lens to review much of the social capital research.

Social Capital and Minority Communities

In *Black Social Capital: The Politics of School Reform in Baltimore 1986-1998,* Orr (1999) examined the inner workings and limitations of social capital in an African

American community. Orr asserted that African Americans in Baltimore had successfully developed interpersonal (bonding) social capital. As Orr put it:

> Black social capital in Baltimore as represented by the benevolent societies, fraternities, voluntary associations, church congregations, and tightly knit neighborhoods formed in the late nineteenth century and by the Black newspapers, historically African American colleges and civil rights organizations established in the early decades of the twentieth century—must be understood against a political culture and history of White domination and Black exclusion. African Americans formed large reserves of social capital in response to a history of racial exclusion and segregation and to a political culture of white supremacy. (p. 9)

Orr (1999) makes an important denotation by highlighting the concerns regarding African American communities' possession of intergroup social capital. Orr suggested that African American communities might be lacking in bridging and linking social capital, which prevents access to resources from White communities that could help those in African American communities. Orr and Putnam (2007) seemingly share the view that bonding social capital among ethnic groups may serve to restrict network extensions into differing ethnic communities.

Contrary to Orr's (1999) position, McKenzie (2008) suggested that bonding social capital might not have the limiting effects argued by both Putnam (2007) and Orr. Thus, McKenzie examined Black religious and political organizations to determine the merit of the notion that bonding social capital would have negative consequences for minority

communities. McKenzie concluded that Black organizations tend to exert a bridging influence on their participants. Therefore, it is likely that these organizations would connect citizens to mainstream society.

The notion that different types of social capital play varying roles in the lives of minorities has much support. For example, the survival and re-adjustment of families affected by Hurricane Katrina varied based on their level of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital (Hawkins and Maurer, 2010). Hawkins and Maurer noted in their study that many of their African American participants claimed socioeconomic and racial barriers restricted their bridging and linking social capital. On the other hand, Pyles and Cross (2008) examined African American community revitalization in the post Hurricane Katrina context, which they claimed was related to high levels of civic engagement but not necessarily to social trust. Ultimately, the high levels of racial distrust present in the post Katrina African American community negatively affected the utility of bridging social capital (Pyles & Cross, 2008). The conclusions of Pyles and Cross echo the analysis that Orr (1999) provided concerning bridging social capital.

It is important to understand the racial issues inherent in social capital development. Hampton and Duncan (2011) utilized an ethnographic approach to investigate racial identity and its role among diverse groups of youths in the formation of social capital. Hampton and Duncan found that White youths were most likely of all to stay within their own racial group while Blacks and Latinos were more likely to build interracial networks. These findings arguably relate well to Putnam's (2007) "hunkering down" thesis (p.144).

Researchers Hobson-Prater and Leech (2012) examined racial differences in levels of social cohesion in varying middle-class neighborhoods. They specifically investigated the perceived difficulty of collective action in majority Black, middle-class neighborhoods. Hobson-Prater and Leech utilized data collected from a larger study of public safety and collective efficacy in African American Midwestern communities. The data collected concerned social cohesion, neighborhood socioeconomic factors, along with collective efficacy and pessimism. From the analysis of this data, the researchers concluded that majority Black middle-class neighborhoods have lower levels of social cohesion (therefore, social capital) than found in other similarly economically situated communities. Interestingly, Hobson-Prater and Leech found that this lower level of social cohesion did not correlate with pessimism but more so a concern that structural barriers would increase the difficulty of achieving success through collective action. This research is instrumental in supporting the assertion that African American communities display lower levels of social capital than the levels found in similar communities with different racial compositions.

In addition, Liu, Austin, and Orey (2009) analyzed the relationship between voter turnout and social capital for African American communities. They noted that, in the African American community, the "politicized black church" might be a more significant source of social capital than a church in a White community (p. 578). The researchers also determined that African American members of churches with high levels of political activity are more likely to participate in civic engagement than other African Americans. Liu et al. (2009) concluded that African Americans facilitate bonding social capital

through church membership and fellowship. However, because American churches are largely segregated, the issue of bridging social capital remains elusive.

Overall, researchers have identified a multitude of consequences of social capital or the lack thereof in minority communities. For example, Hutchinson et al. (2009) found a correlation between social capital levels and all-cause mortality in Philadelphia. Also, Lewin et al. (2011), using a sample of 230 urban African Americans, found that among African American mothers of school aged children, social capital was a factor in preventing them from depression despite their exposure to depressing activities, such as ethnic discrimination and violence.

Another social capital research involved Fitzpatrick et al. (2005) who investigated the role social capital played on African Americans' ability to stave off symptoms of depression. The researchers used a sample of 1,538 African American middle and high school students from a single impoverished majority Black school district in Alabama. Fitzpatrick et al. developed a multidimensional index to measure social capital in their sample and then utilized it to compare the results of this measure with another instrument used to measure depression. Ultimately, the research team found that youth reporting higher levels of social capital had lower accounts of depression.

In addition, Woolley et al. (2008) used a multilevel analytic strategy of census data, a community survey, along with citywide school achievement data to investigate the relationship between social capital, physical school conditions, and student academic achievement. Their study focused primarily on urban Midwestern African American children in first to eight grades. Through their investigation, the researchers found that

bonding social capital and school conditions correlated positively with scores on math and reading test.

Also, Palmer and Gasman (2008) conducted a study of eleven African American graduates who had attended Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs). The students were all Black males and identified as under-prepared in regards to higher education. The researchers found that these graduates were successful, despite their poor preparation because of the level of social capital they received from the HBCUs. Orr (1999) also identified HBCUs as a key source of social capital in the African American community. HBCUs may be such a significant source of social capital in African American communities because they provide access to expertise.

In addition, Cornwell and Cornwell (2008) suggested that although social capital provides key resources to members of social networks, access to an expert (lawyers, physicians, accountants, mental health workers) within the network may improve its utility. One of the key hypotheses in the research was Whites in aggregate had more access to experts than minorities. The findings confirmed their hypothesis and alluded to the possibility that Whites have more access to experts because they tend to have larger networks than members of other races, especially African Americans. Interestingly, Cornwell and Cornwell found that their minority participants evidenced a decline in their amount of expert contacts over the past 20 years. Cornwell and Cornwell contended that their result was suggestive of an increasing racial disparity in socioeconomic resources.

Social capital is believed to have economic consequences for African American communities. For instance, evidence supports a possible relationship between social

capital and the success of African American entrepreneurship (Cochrane 2010). Douglass and Browne (2011) hypothesized that social capital mitigates the impact of the financial crisis on African Americans in particular. Douglass and Browne found that their studies' participants of color with fewer economic resources were more likely to depend on friends and family for support. Poor and working class minorities struggle to establish networks, which include powerful individuals (Hardaway & McLoyd, 2009). Furthermore, the most valued networks suit the needs of those socialized in a White middle-class context (Hardaway & McLoyd, 2009). Thus, class, culture, and language barriers (structural racism) are naturally in place and may impede the development of bridging social capital.

Racism and Social Capital

A key undertaking in this research project is the investigation of the relationship between the two key concepts: racism and social capital. Researchers Brondolo et al. (2012) explored how various forms of racism, albeit cultural, institutional, personally mediated, or internalized can influence peer relations. Brondolo et al. concluded that the different types and levels of racism act both individually or combined to create barriers to the development of social networks. Specifically, Brondolo et al. suggested that cultural racism promotes stereotypes that bar many minority people from social networks. Meanwhile, institutional racism in the form of residential segregation limits opportunities for bridging social capital as well as lowers the utility of linking social capital (Brondolo et al., 2012). Interpersonal racism creates an environment that limits the possibilities of bridging social capital (Brondolo et al., 2012). Whereas internalized racism undermines

the quality of interactions and local peer relations, thus hampering the production of bonding social capital (Brondolo et al., 2012). This article remains as the only research that directly explores a relationship between racism and social capital. However, the authors only looked at the theoretical implications of the relationship and stopped short of providing any empirical evidence to support their claim. Furthermore, this research focused only on peer relationships, which is only one aspect of social capital. Additionally, Brondolo et al.'s study did not focus on any particular community settings.

Roberts (2004) investigated the impact of mass incarceration of African Americans using several social factors including several of the indicators of social capital. Mass incarceration is a product of racism and it works to destroy social norms, social networks, and civic engagement (Roberts, 2004). Rose and Clear (2002) also investigated the relationship between incarceration and social capital. However, in this instance, the authors looked at the impact of the reentry process on the social capital of varying communities. The authors argued that higher incarceration rates increase crime, and therefore, affects trust in neighborhoods subject to high incarcerations. These articles strengthened the theoretical based assumption of a negative relationship between mass incarceration and social capital, which according to Alexander (2012) exists as a manifestation of institutional racism.

It is also important to consider that poverty is not always a causal factor of disparities in social capital (Greenbaum, 2008). Greenbaum (2008) conducted an ethnographic study of African American communities, seeking to prove that housing policies enacted by state and local governments hindered social progression for those

community members. Greenbaum wanted to attack the popular assertion that relocating masses of impoverished African Americans who resided in public housing units would improve their social capital. Greenbaum claimed that many social capital theorists held ethnocentric views about the utility of social capital among people in impoverished neighborhoods. Thus, Greenbaum disputed the claims that impoverished neighborhoods produced what others called "bad social capital" (p. 43).

Measuring Social Capital

Because there is such a lack of consensus of the definition of social capital, there is also confusion about the best way to measure the phenomena (Adam & Roncevic, 2003). However, Hudson and Chapman (2002) provide a detailed analysis of the many approaches used to measure social capital in the United States. They first review Putnam's Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey (SCCBS). Some researchers consider this measure to be one of the most prominent due to its continued use in many studies (Adam & Roncevic, 2003; Feildhouse & Cutts, 2010; Folland, 2007; Gesthuizen et al., 2009). The SCCBS evaluates eleven key dimensions of the conceptual definition of social capital in five domains: trust, informal networks, formal networks, political involvement, and equality of civic engagement (Hudson & Chapman, 2002).

Several government agencies interested in measuring social capital adopted the SCCBS. For example, Putnam worked with the United States Census Bureau to reduce the number of items of the SCCBS from 100 to 20 in order to supplement the Current Population Survey (Hudson & Chapman, 2002). This tool is sufficient and meets the recommendations of other social capital theorists such as Krishna and Shrader (2002),

who suggested that the minimum requirement for a social capital measure is that it encompasses a common conceptual framework that could unify the varying dimensions of social capital. However, the authors warn that the tool must be culturally flexible.

While Putnam's (2000) approach to measure social capital is perhaps the most prevalent, there have been several critiques, most notably, from Portes and Vikstrom (2011). Portes and Vikstrom argued that Putnam (2007) poorly defined social capital, so, therefore, the analysis was flawed. Portes and Vikstrom also contended that Putnam's identified sources of social capital are identical to his identified results of social capital, which makes a circular argument.

Also, some authors have begun adapting measures to fit specific types of social capital. For example, Krasny et al. (2013) developed a social capital measure based on Putnam's conceptualization to assess social capital levels within environmental education programs. The researchers adapted The National Social Capital Benchmark Survey to the younger subjects of their study. Ravanera and Rajulton (2010) utilized key indicators from the General Social Survey to measure social capital at the family level. Ravanera and Rajulton argued that this method captured the original purpose of the term as conceptualized by Coleman (1988).

Kitchen and Williams-Allison (2012) used a telephone survey to measure social capital in Hamilton, Ontario. They used a "social capital measurement tool," which they contended would allow for differentiation between social capital perceptions and actions among residents in the region (pp. 219-220). On the other hand, Chen, Stanton, Gong, Fang, and Li (2009) developed an instrument to measure personal social capital. They

suggesed that their tool would allow for cross-cultural analysis of “personally owned social capital” (p. 313). Another researcher, Teilmann (2012), suggested that an index is an efficient measure for assessing social capital in local action groups. The index works best when based on the aggregated number of networks, bridging social capital, recognition, and diversity. Teilmann suggested that this is a step forward in measuring social capital because it allows for a multifaceted approach that accounts for the effectiveness of policy interventions.

In addition, Abbott (2009) asserted that social capital assessments based on surveys and strict social network analysis may be faulty and misleading. According to Abbott, the failure of surveys to capture the complexity of social networks and other social relations renders them inferior to well planed qualitative designs. Abbott’s findings echo Grootaert and Bastelaer’s (2002) requirement for more flexibility in social capital studies. Furthermore, Abbott’s findings highlight the usefulness of qualitative research in social capital studies. Ultimately, there are various approaches to measuring social capital; however, there may be a need for adaptations for specific communities.

Residential and Demographic Trends in African American Communities

Forty-two million African Americans make up approximately 13.6% of the United States’ population (Rastogi, Johnson, Hoeffel, & Drewery Jr., 2011). This study will focus on low diversity majority Black communities (LDMBC), Communities that have higher than 60% non-Hispanic Blacks or African Americans as residents (Wright et al., 2013).

The key to determining the population for this research was the operational definition of African American community: neighborhoods in the United States identified by a census tract number in which the majority (51%) of residents are African Americans (Kruger, 2008; Owens & Wright, 1998). However, Kruger (2008) suggested that census tracts can often include several distinct neighborhoods and is not representative of neighborhood boundaries. Therefore, for the purposes of this proposed research, I will focus on clusters of census tracts, which are LDMBCs.

There are an estimated 64,709 census tracts in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau). As of 2010, there were roughly 7,258 census tracts classified as majority Black (Wright et al., 2013). Of these tracts, approximately 3,178 (4.9%) were low diversity tracts, and another 4,080 were considered moderate diversity tracts (Wright et al., 2013). This provided evidence of a trend of increasing diversity in LDMBCs, which constituted 5.3% of all census tracts in 1990. While the number of LDMBC tracts declined moderately, diverse tracts increased substantially (Wright et al., 2013).

In 2000, 50% of the nation's African Americans lived in metropolitan areas (Owens & Wright, 1998). Furthermore, majority Black neighborhoods were 10.7% of all metropolitan neighborhoods in the U.S. in 2000 (Pattilo, 2005). More telling is the fact that 50.4% of all African Americans lived in majority Black neighborhoods as recently as 2000. This figure is down from 56.2% in 1990 and 70.3% in 1960, which some attribute to a substantial decrease of residential segregation (Pattilo, 2005). Furthermore, in 2000, roughly "30% of African Americans lived in communities that were 80% Black or

higher" (p. 311). More interesting was the fact that 87% of the African Americans living in these majority Black communities resided in non-poor neighborhoods (Pattilo, 2005).

Residential segregation and poverty remain large problems for African American communities. Segregation is very important to discussions about social capital because segregation restricts access to place based resources (Logan, 2013). While segregation has seen considerable declines over the past decades, racial inequality persists (Glaeser & Vigdor, 2012). However, relaxation in discriminatory policies, along with increased access to credit, has put huge dents in residential segregation (Glaeser & Vigdor, 2012).

Logan (2013) reviewed the same data as Glaeser and Vigdor (2012) yet came to a slightly different conclusion. Logan suggested that rather than showing evidence of an end to segregation, the data instead showed examples of "mixed progress in reducing racial barriers" (p. 161). Logan (2013) went on to point out "hyper segregation" still exists in many metropolitan areas (p. 161). Furthermore, Logan asserted, "blacks and Hispanics have made little progress toward living in neighborhoods with resources equal to those enjoyed by whites or Asians with similar socioeconomic status" (p. 161). For example, in every year of the study, Whites were exposed to impoverished communities considerably less than African Americans and Latinos. The evidence presented by Logan suggested that Whites despite income levels, have a substantial advantage in securing entrance into non-impoverished communities when compared with African Americans and Latinos, who despite affluence, live in areas with significantly higher poverty rates. This determination suggests that while spatial relations have improved modestly, there has been continued socio-economic isolation for African Americans.

An interesting trend for the Black population has been their recent migration back to the southern region of the United States (Sullivan, 2011). Sullivan (2011) suggested that African Americans, driven by several institutional and market forces, have been moving to the southern states and suburban areas in very large numbers. Nearly 60% of the Black population resides in 10 states; six of those are in the South.

Polarities Management

Polarities management is the second conceptual framework applied in this study. Johnson (1996) presented this concept of polarities management as a means of mediating the conflict between opposing dilemmas with maximum benefits. A polarity exists when an individual has an unsolvable problem or dilemma that requires management as opposed to a problem that demands a solution (Johnson, 1996). There are two criteria, which allowed for the determination of a credible polarity (Johnson, 1996). The first is that there needs to be an ongoing difficulty, and the second requires that there are two interdependent poles (Johnson, 1996).

The two interdependent poles create four quadrants on a polarities map: the upper two contain the benefits of each pole, and the lower two contain the negative consequences of each pole (Johnson, 1996). The purpose of polarity management, according to Johnson (1996), is to stay in the upper two quadrants and maximize the amount of time a society or organization benefits from the poles positive aspects. However, Johnson warned that failure to manage a polarity properly would result in more time spent with the two lower quadrants and their negative consequences.

Unmanaged polarities generally shift from pole to pole because of the push from two groups (Johnson, 1996). Johnson (1996) identified these two groups as crusaders and tradition bearers. The crusaders are those experiencing the down side of one pole, and thus they push for another pole (Johnson, 1996). The tradition bearers, fearing the downsides of the opposite pole and enjoying the positive aspects of their current pole, fight to maintain the status quo (Johnson, 1996). In the absence of a power imbalance, like the situation caused by institutional racism, the poles will continue to shift back and forth naturally, with most of the results coming from the lower, two negative quadrants.

Polarities of Democracy Model

Benet (2006) suggested that improving the execution and understanding of democracy might be the remedy for many of the major issues humanity faces. Benet (2013) identified three key threats to the human population: environmental degradation, militaristic extremism, and extremes of wealth and poverty. Each of these issues appears in much of the literature on racism and social capital as significant problems facing African American communities. Benet, using a critical theory foundation, asserted that while democracy may be a tool for overcoming these problems, structural forces have worked consistently to thwart the development of a true democratic society. One of the identified manifestations of these forces is racism. Therefore, Benet (2006) proposed the polarities of democracy model as a means to evaluate and analyze social change movements.

The polarities of democracy model spawned from the conceptual framework of polarities management (Benet 2006; 2013). The second theoretical framework utilized in

this study is the polarities of democracy model. The polarities of democracy model is intended to allow societies and communities to focus on the positive aspects of the identified polarities that exist within a democracy (Benet, 2006). There are five pairs of democratic polarities: freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation (Benet, 2013).

Benet (2006) defines freedom in the democratic sense of personal liberty, self-government. The "upsides" or positive attributes of freedom include human dignity, security, self-fulfillment, and the promotion of justice and equality for others (Benet, 2006). The downsides or negative aspects of freedom include unbridled consumerism, poor cooperation, irresponsibility, and loss of security (Benet, 2006). Thus fearing the down sides of freedom, many concede to a powerful authority figure that maintains order (Benet, 2006).

Authority is opposite of the freedom polarity (Benet, 2006). Benet (2006) defined authority as the power or right to control the actions of others, and argued that the positive aspects of authority are improved health, increased productivity, enhancement of humanitarian endeavors, along with the promotion of true freedom and sustainability(Benet, 2006). The negative aspects of authority are abuse of power, oppression, lowered productivity, reduced efficiency, secrecy, domination of personal interest, and corruption (Benet, 2006).

While justice and due process are not opposites they still exist as polarities (Benet, 2006). However, Benet asserted that these concepts exist as "polarities of

function rather than polarities of meaning" (p. 177). This interpretation is consistent with one of Johnson's (1996) generic forms of polarities: doing and being. Due process functions as the means by which organizations distribute justice. Thus, the upsides of both justice and due process are nearly identical as are the downsides (Benet, 2006). Benet defined justice as the principle of fairness or an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens as well as the principle that punishment should be proportionate to the magnitude of the crime. Benet defines due process as the administration of justice in accordance with established rules and principles. It is also important to note, that justice is a necessary element of conceptual democracy (Benet, 2006).

The upsides of justice and due process include mediation of oppression, limits on power, promotion of equality, maintenance of fairness, protection of rights, increased security, efficient conflict resolution, flexibility to embrace new rights, and the generation of self-respect (Benet, 2006). The downsides of justice and due process include the legitimization of inequality, violations of the common good, embracing of dogmatic positions, complacency, loss of human agency, and the failures to achieve absolute justice (Benet, 2006). The failure to effectively manage these polarities could result in increased experience of the downsides (Benet, 2006). Considering the findings of Alexander (2012) allows for increased understanding of how the justice and due process polarity relates to the mass incarceration problems present in several African American communities. Furthermore, improving democratic processes in those African American communities would, theoretically, allow for mediation of this particular issue.

Diversity and equality are both important to discussions of racism and social capital. Equality in Benet's (2006) conception involves the state of being equal. The upsides of equality are societal cohesion, elimination of privilege (White privilege), the elimination of rigid hierarchical power relations, elimination of poverty, and increased self-esteem among community members (Benet, 2006). The downsides of equality are the loss of individual rights, stifling of motivation, and loss of creative impulses, deterioration of hard work and lack of commitment to excellence (Benet, 2006).

Diversity, or the state of being different and or varied, has both beneficial and harmful consequences (Benet, 2006). The benefits of diversity are motivation of creativity, hard work, diligence, competitiveness, and commitment to excellence, along with protection of individual rights and personal beliefs (Benet, 2006). The harmful consequences of diversity are economic disparity, hierarchical power relations (racism), disparate impacts of stress, and loss of self-esteem (Benet, 2006). Using the polarities model has the potential to further the understanding of why diversity seems to have negative consequences in terms of social capital. It is not so much diversity of race but socio-economic diversity that perpetuates inequality of social capital (Portes & Vikstrom, 2011). However, structural racism has worked to create this socioeconomic inequality along racial lines.

Human rights and communal obligations are both fundamental aspects of democracy, exist as polarities, and require management as opposed to solutions. The author defined human rights as inalienable rights that foster the ability for human self-actualization and self-government. Therefore, the upsides of human rights are the actual

rights themselves, and the downsides are the consequences of violating these rights (Benet, 2006).

In order to avoid human rights violations, societies must make certain obligations between its communities, organizations, and individuals (Benet, 2006). These communal obligations exist as reciprocal relationships between community members, the community, and organizations (Benet, 2006). The upsides of communal obligations come in the form of a contribution to the protection of human rights, and increased commitment to the organization, and the downsides come in the form of shareholder primacy and privatization of essential public services (Benet, 2006).

Participation and representation serve as another functional polarity within the model (Benet, 2012b). Representation is a function that ensures participation in a democratic system (Benet, 2012b). In the democratic context, participation refers to involvement in the decision-making activity (Benet, 2012b). The upsides of participation are increased acceptance of group decisions, enhanced productivity, increased social interaction, and improved democratic process (Benet, 2012b). The downsides of participation include over-participation, mob behavior, and compulsory activity (Benet, 2012b).

The positive aspects of representation serve as a means to mediate the negative aspects of participation (Benet, 2012b). Representation in this democratic context refers to the process of reflecting the interest of many through one person or entity (Benet, 2012b). Therefore, while over-participation is a problem, representation provides an opportunity for regeneration. Other upsides of representation are improved human

interaction, effective participation, and improved democratic process (Benet 2012b). The downsides of representation are the development of weak relationships, alienation of representatives, exclusion of marginalized groups, and the delegitimization of democratic systems (Benet 2012b).

The purpose of the polarities of democracy model is to manage the relationship between democratic characteristics with polar relationships so that a community or organization could reap the positive consequences of each pole (Benet, 2013). In regards to African American communities and social capital, it will be important to understand if the polarities of democracy model provides a lens for understanding how improving democratic processes mediates racism as a structural barrier to the access of social resources.

Summary

In this literature review, I analyzed the varying theoretical constructs utilized in my research. I also analyzed CRT to explain the context in which I will examine the relationship between racism and social capital in African American communities. Racism and social capital were both operationally defined and then assessed in order to show the philosophical relationship between the two concepts. These operational definitions will allow for the generation of strong research questions that focus on providing a solution to my problem statement.

Furthermore, I showed evidence of lapses in the available literature that validate my investigation into the relationship between racism and social capital in majority Black communities. While various studies have proposed or at least insinuated a theoretical

relationship between racism and social capital, there has not yet been any detailed investigation of the nature of social capital in a majority African American community context (Brondolo et al., 2012; Greenbaum, 2008; Roberts, 2004; Rose & Clear, 2002). In addition, the search for studies on majority Black communities helped to identify the dearth of research available. Additionally, many arguments presented in the literature posed diversity as a potential impediment to social capital. However, the absence of studies of social capital in low diversity minority communities allows for the potential of spurious explanations. Furthermore, there are no studies exploring the impact that racism has on the development and utility of social capital within such a community. In this research paper, I attempted to address this evident gap in the literature.

Lastly, I analyzed the polarities of democracy model literature and explained its utility as the theoretical lens to view the relationship between racism and social capital. This construct captures the relationship between various elements of democracy that I analyzed throughout the case study. The next chapter details the research design used in this case study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to continue the exploration and further the understanding of the relationship between racism and social capital in low diversity majority Black communities (LDMBC). In the review of the literature, located in the second chapter, I unveiled the theoretical implications that support the need for an inquiry into the potential of a hazardous relationship between racism and social capital. Furthermore, in the literature review, I highlighted a failure of much of the previous research on social capital in considering the role of racism or in focusing on majority African American communities. Therefore, in this exploratory multisite case study, I used a critical race theoretical framework to analyze data that reflected the levels of social capital in two LDMBCs. Additionally, the use of the polarities of democracy model will provide a secondary analysis of the selected communities to further the understanding of the relationship between racism and social capital.

In this chapter, I provide a detailed explanation of the research methodology of the proposed study. In the first section, I explain the case study design process as well as the rationale in the choice of this method. In the following section, I expound on the role that I intend to hold as the researcher throughout the procession of the study. Subsequently, I elaborate on the methods of participant selection, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. Next, I explain any threats to the credibility and trustworthiness of the research methodology and findings. Lastly, I explain the potential

ethical issues associated with the proposed research project and the measures taken to avoid such setbacks.

Research Questions

The purpose of this multi-site case study is to explore the relationship between social capital and racism in LDMBCs. The intent of this study is to answer the following research question: What are the ways that racism influences social capital in low diversity majority Black communities?

Two secondary research questions were used to help answer the primary research question.

1. How do residents of low-diversity majority Black communities perceive the relationship between racism and their lack of social capital?
2. What are ways in which low-diversity Black community members can mitigate the impacts of racism in order to enhance their social capital?

Key Concepts

The three key concepts in this study are racism, social capital, and low diversity African American communities. For this study, I used the following terms and definitions:

Racism: the procedures, social norms, structures, collective ideologies, along with the individual and group actions that maintain racial inequality and afford privilege to a dominant racial group based on their skin color (Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Gee et al., 2009; Jones, 2002).

Social capital: the resources, benefits, and networks created and shared by members of social entities through the utilization of their social cohesion, trust, and civic engagement in order to facilitate coordinated action that solves individual and collective problems (Lin, 2000; Putnam, 2000; Putnam, 2007; Portes & Vikstrom, 2011).

Low Diversity Majority Black community: groups of African American people who live in a cluster of census tracts that are 60% Black or greater (Pattilo, 2005; Wright et al., 2013).

Theoretical Propositions

An essential component of the case study process is the formation of theoretical propositions (Yin, 2009). CRT guides the theoretical proposition in this case study. Therefore, the proposition holds that varying forms of racism will impede the utility and accessibility of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital in majority African American communities. More specifically, this proposition is based on the assumption that internalized and personally mediated racism will hamper the expectations of bonding social capital, and institutionalized and or cultural racism will reduce access to bridging and linking social capitals.

Research Design and Rationale

In this study, I used a qualitative research strategy. I made this decision based on the ontological assumption that reality is subjective and, therefore, best described through the experiences of multiple people. The analysis of multiple perspectives allows for the identification of patterned behaviors that serve as evidence of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). The value of multiple perspectives encouraged by Creswell (2007) is consistent

with the CRT voices of color ideology (Creswell, 2007; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The patterned experiences of multiple people living within the same community may serve as evidence of racism's impact on their access and utility of social capital. Creswell noted that CRT's focus on presenting stories about discrimination from the perspectives of non-White people is well suited for qualitative case studies.

Qualitative research involves concentrated fieldwork to discover the necessary information to address particular research questions. After determining the population and sample size, researchers often spend a considerable amount of time in the field performing interviews, observing research sites, investigating documents, as well as reviewing audio-visual records (Creswell, 2007). Patton (2002) suggested that fieldwork is a method of performing multiple, multidimensional, yet intersecting case studies.

In this study, I used the case study research tradition. Case study research in general allows for empirical investigations of contemporary phenomena in real life holistic settings (Yin, 2009). The use of comparative case methodology also allows for in-depth examination of multiple cases (Yin, 2009). Comparative case studies are essentially analytical approaches that utilize a set of case studies for cross-unit comparison. The objective in these types of studies is to examine how or in what way the case units are similar or dissimilar to each other. This approach allows for what Yin (2009) referred to as *replication logic*, which allows for demonstration of theoretical predictability in other cases. Several researchers noted that this approach increases the case study's transferability (e.g., Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Initially, I considered performing an actual experiment to conduct this research. However, there had not yet been enough exploration into the relationship between the key concepts of racism and social capital to identify spurious variables. While several social capital researchers have relied on surveys, those studies have been unsuccessful at capturing the way that racism contributes to the disparity between social capital levels across communities (Hero, 2007). Furthermore, the survey method does not allow for the inclusion of multiple perspectives, which become more tenable when using the qualitative approach (Creswell, 2007).

Considerations of several similar qualitative approaches led to the choice to utilize the case study design. I rejected using the grounded theory approach because there was no research identified in the literature for a theory explaining the relationship. Also, the phenomenological approach seemed inappropriate because the research problem and questions compelled use of a design that allowed for multiple sources of evidence. Ultimately, the case study methodology was the best fit for the purpose of this research and the theoretical constructs that I used.

Role of the Researcher

I took on the role of the outside observer throughout this research process. My primary role was to collect and analyze data in order to answer the research questions. Additionally I worked closely with my research committee to ensure that this dissertation attains optimal levels of quality.

As an African American male, I have developed preconceptions about the nature of racism and its impact on the communities in which I have lived. I have been a victim

of racial profiling by local police, as well as the victim of hurtful racial slurs on multiple occasions. Furthermore, I am a primary witness to the disparity caused by racism and its impact on the social and economic status of those living in majority Black communities. This presents the potential for my own experiences to bias my perspective in regards to the proposed study.

Yin (2009) suggested that case study researchers should be sure to have an in-depth understanding of the case. In this study, the actual case is the social capital formation and utility in LDMBC, a field where I have an adequate level of expertise. However, Yin also suggested that case study researchers be unbiased by their perspectives, including those emerging from the theoretical framework utilized. Yin's admonishment presents a challenge because I am very sensitive to racial issues, and CRT has presented the assumption that racism is a normative function of American life. With these considerations, I was sure to develop a stringent case study protocol that mediates the potential for my own bias to invalidate the findings of this study

While I am not native to either community that was a subject to this case study; I have resided in a community near the selected communities of study for the past 10 years. Furthermore, I have worked in and around those communities for the past 10 years. This should not present any ethical issues because I did not select participants with whom I have any personal or professional relationships.

Methodology

Defining the Cases

In this research, I used a comparative case study design. Case study research, in general, a researcher to conduct empirical investigations of contemporary phenomena in real life holistic settings (Yin, 2009). The use of the comparative case methodology also allows for the in-depth examination of multiple cases. Comparative case study is essentially an analytical approach that uses a set of case studies for cross-unit comparison. The objective in these types of studies is to examine how or in what ways the case units are similar or dissimilar to each other. In this study, I also looked to see if both cases followed the theoretical assumption that racism impedes social capital development. This reasoning allows for what Yin (2009) refers to as "replication logic," which allows for demonstration of theoretically predictability in other cases (p.55). Several researchers note that this approach increases the case study's transferability (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Case Selection

Case studies generally allow for meticulous investigation of bounded systems in order to observe a particular phenomenon (Yin, 2009). In this research, the cases were LDMBC. The targeted population for this research was African Americans who lived in majority Black communities. LDMBC are clusters of census tracts where Blacks and or African Americans make up at least 60% of the population (Pattilo, 2005; Kruger, 2008).

In 2010, there were 64,709 census tracts in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Roughly, 11 % (7,258) of these census tracts were majority African

American (Pattilo, 2005). Of these majority Black tracts, approximately 44% (3,178) were low diversity tracts, and 56% (4,080) were moderate diversity (50-60% African American) tracts (Wright et al., 2013). Furthermore, 57% of African Americans currently reside in the southern region of the United States (Sullivan, 2011). These statistics informed the selection of two case sites in Florida. The first site consists of a cluster of majority Black communities situated in Leon County, Florida and the second, a cluster of census tracts situated in Gadsden County, Florida. I chose these sites because they represent homogeneous African American communities however; they present slight differences because the Leon County tracts are urban, and Gadsden County tracts are rural. The use of homogenous samples is effective because it allows for in-depth investigation of a phenomenon within a particular subgroup (Patton, 2002).

Sampling Procedure

In this research, I used purposive sampling because it is the most effective process for a case study (Patton, 2002; Yin 2009). After gaining access to the case sites, I employed snowball-sampling procedures to identity participants of the study. In each case site, I selected no less than 5 and no more than 10 individuals to participate in both structured interviews as well as focus group discussions. In order to recruit participants, I posted recruitment signs within local community centers, health clinics, and supermarkets. In addition, I posted recruitment materials on social media outlets. I also used gift cards in order to incentivize participation. The goal was to contact roughly 15 persons from each site and schedule an interview with them via telephone or email.

Patton (2002) argued that adequacy of the sample size for qualitative inquiries depend on what the researcher is trying to determine. In my research, a sample size of *N* = 20, or 10 persons per case site provided a sufficient amount of data for analysis and comparison. Redundancy in the data collected from the participants serves as a means of identifying saturation (Patton, 2002). Therefore, at the point that the data collected from the participants became redundant, I identified that redundancy as a signal that I had properly sampled my population.

The participants selected for interviews in the study had to meet a set of standards that ensure the validity and reliability of the study. First, they had to be older than the age of 18. Secondly, they had to have held residence in the cluster of LDMBC for a minimum of five years. Lastly, the participants must be African American.

Data Collection

Creswell (2007) asserted that case study data collection involves wide ranges of procedures that allow researchers to develop detailed descriptions of the case. Patton (2002) suggested that using combinations of observations, interviews, and document analysis allow for triangulation of data thus increasing its validity. Therefore, it would be important to employ data collection methods that allow multiple paths of analysis of the selected cases.

Document reviews. Patton (2002) suggested that an important aspect of data collection was using some "unobtrusive observation" tactics (p. 291). This procedure allows for investigation of documents that may contain valuable information regarding the case sites. Documents I reviewed included newspaper reports of recent and past

events, and local organization reports. These types of documents are very instrumental for gaining a deeper understanding of the social atmosphere in the selected communities. Patton (2002) also suggested that comparing official documents, such as board minutes and brochures with reports from the community on what types of activities actually take place would provide detailed contrast of the phenomenon under investigation. Additionally, I searched for evidence of civic engagement through voter registration and turnout records. This information helped to strengthen the case reports of each case site as well as the cross case analysis. In addition, I used this data to inform the analysis of data collected from the individual and focus group interviews. I also used information retrieved from the documents to form prompts for the focus group interviews.

Individual interviews. After conducting the necessary observations and document reviews, the next step included interviews of key informants within the respective case sites (Patton, 2002). Yin (2009) stated that interviews are essential components of case studies. I used both in-depth interviews and focus groups to collect data during this study.

Individual interview protocol. During the in-depth individual interviews, the goal was to engage members of the case community in an open-ended interview. The first step was to collect demographic information on the participant, which included names, addresses, ages, marital statuses, occupations, length of residence, and contact information. The interviews then proceeded along specific protocol guidelines presented in Appendix A. The questions that I used reflected the sources of social capital identified throughout the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of this project. The structure of the

interview questions allowed me to solicit participants' to answer in a way that delivered information about the central research question and subquestions.

Open-ended questions that allowed participants to discuss their experiences of racism proved very important. In addition, questions about the ability to address issues plaguing the community helped me to identify the social capital in the selected community. With these questions, I retrieved answers evidencing the utility and accessibility of social capital in racially hostile environments. I was sure to ask for consent from the participants to record their interview sessions. When there were portions of an interview that was confusing, follow up phone interviews were scheduled to increase clarity. Very important to this process was the verification tactic. Following each interview, I provided a summary of the participants' responses via email for verification.

Focus group interviews. In addition to the individual interviews, this study also included focus group interviews in order to identify collective perspectives of members in the community. Patton (2002) suggested that focus groups allow the researcher to determine if views are generally shared or diverse. Furthermore, the interactions among the participants have the ability to improve the quality of the data collected. During the focus group in order to protect the participants, I identified them by using their initials and a number. I also, attempted to select participants who were similar but did not know one another intimately.

Focus group interviews protocol. The focus group interviews followed a similar protocol to the individual interviews. I scheduled the focus group interviews at a time

that was most convenient for each of the participants. For each focus group, I invited five to seven persons who participated in the individual interviews to a safe and comfortable location. I first shared with the groups some unique problems concerning racial inequalities facing the African Americans nationally as well as in their specific county. Then I proceeded with the guiding questions, as identified in Appendix B. Again, to deal with unclear or confusing answers, I scheduled follow up phone interviews as needed. I also employed the same verification procedures used in the individual interviews.

Data Management Plan

Patton (2002) asserted that field notes are of absolute importance in regards to qualitative research. I employed multiple forms of technology to record my observations as well as field notes. For example, I audio recorded the individual and focus group interviews. In regards to the document review process, I attempted to make copies of all documents utilized. Most importantly, I took the time to properly organize and codify the data retrieved during the interviews in order to improve the analysis process. Additionally, multiple backup copies of all data were stored on an external hard drive as well as an online storage system. The use of NVIVO10 software improved the protection of data as well as preparation for its analysis. The program has many features that make storing, coding, and retrieving data less difficult (Patton, 2002).

When conducting multiple case site studies, the first step is to conduct a single case analysis, followed by a cross case analysis (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) recommended the creation of two separate case study databases. Therefore, I kept the data collected from each case in separate files. Each case database included transcriptions of individual

and focus group interviews, as well as document summaries along with any other pertinent information.

Data Analysis Plan

Because I used interviews, and document reviews as sources for data collection, it was extremely important to have a well-organized coding process. Merriam (1998) suggested using data retrieved from document reviews in the same fashion as data collected from interviews. My intention was to find data that showed evidence of certain themes in these communities. I based these themes on the theoretical constructs of social capital and racism. For example in many of the quantitative studies on social capital, the instruments used try to identify evidence of key factors existing in the community's networks, factors such as trust, reciprocity, formal networks, informal networks, and civic engagement (Hudson & Chapman, 2002).

With this theoretical construct, I shaped my analysis of the interview questions, responses, and observation notes and developed categorical aggregation of the collected data. Also, I utilized codes to identify different examples of each of these categories. Furthermore, I identified examples of unforeseen instances that could arguably represent a different form of social capital, perhaps rarely discussed in the literature or limited to African American neighborhoods. I was sure to look for patterns within each of the categories that translate into themes, which I then used to make naturalistic generalizations (Creswell, 2007). Some examples of the types of themes I expected to find are listed below:

- Internalized racism prevents formation of bonding social capital

- Structural racism prevents access to social resources
- Structural racism prevents access to linking social capital
- Existence of a polarity
- Power imbalances causes community to experience downsides of polarity
- Unique source of social capital
- Social capital source adapted to racism
- Non-racial cause of social capital deficiency

With this intense level of coding required, I found it best to utilize NVIVO10. The software allowed data to be stored in one location and easily coded. The ability to run searches for words with similar definitions proved ideal for this research. With this software, I perused the collected data and attached every interview response, field note, photo, or video segment to a different node corresponding to a particular theme reflecting expressions of social capital (Creswell, 2007).

Validity, Reliability and Credibility

Construct Validity

Yin (2009) suggested that construct validity is a concern to those utilizing case study methodologies. According to Yin, the main critiques of case studies are the failure of the researcher to develop adequate "operational measures" and the use of subjective measurements. This brings the strategies of case study under much scrutiny. To mediate this issue, I first provided operational definitions of the key concepts based in the relevant literature on social capital and racism. Secondly, I utilized a strict case study protocol that included a chain of evidence. Lastly, this entire process was subject to the review of

my committee, particularly, my methodology expert. These measures ensured that the strategies used were trustworthy and credible (Yin 2009).

Internal Validity

The internal validity of this study is based on the ability of the research to identify causal relationships between two variables (Creswell, 2007). This study deals with the ability to determine the consequences of racism in the case communities. Yin (2009) suggested that internal validity becomes a problem when researchers make inferences of causality between two concepts. In order to improve the internal validity of this study, I employed pattern matching as suggested by Yin (2009). For example, the theoretical propositions predict expected circumstances and behavior within the case sites. In the analysis, I looked for themes that serve as evidence of the expected behavior. Also, Patton (2002) suggested that reporting on negative cases such as those that do not support the theoretical propositions would increase the credibility of the study.

External Validity

In qualitative research, external validity concerns the generalizability of the findings (Yin 2009). To mediate this issue, first, I decided to use a multi-site case study, as opposed to a single case study. Yin (2009) suggested that using multiple cases increases the transferability of the findings. Additionally, the inclusion of rich and thick descriptions at each stage of the analysis assisted in improving the external validity of this research.

Reliability

For qualitative research reliability concerns, methods have to produce the same results when repeated (Yin, 2009). Yin (2009) stated, "The goal of reliability is to minimize error and biases in a study" (p.45). Yin and Creswell (2007) both recommend the development and following of a case study protocol. The protocol utilized in this study required routine detailed documentation of steps taken. Additionally, the use of a case study database improved the reliability of the study. I also utilized verification procedures to ensure the accuracy of interview procedures. Additionally, I used member checking and sharing of interview transcripts as suggested by Creswell (2009).

There are always validity issues that need consideration when preparing research on racial matters. Creswell (2007) also noted that, in several cases, researchers might feel overwhelmed by the amount of time required to collect adequate amounts of data. I was aware that I had biases related to my experiences with racism that could potentially damage the reliability of this research. Therefore, keeping my own biases out of the study, particularly during interviews and observations, was critical to the validity of this research. Another issue that was a cause for much concern was the effect of the presence of the researcher on the behavior of the participants.

To mitigate these threats, I employed multiple strategies throughout the research process. For example, I spent a prolonged time of two months in the field in order to garner a more detailed understanding of how social capital operates within the specific context of the selected communities. To deal with the threat of researcher bias I specifically searched for and reported negative cases or any situations that fell outside of

the theoretical prepositions. Patton (2002) suggested that researchers could reduce the impact of personal bias on their research by reporting those cases that do not fit into the researchers preconceived notions. In addition, I utilized member checking techniques such as follow up interviews, in which I confirmed accuracy of my analysis of participant statements. This process involved sharing the themes associated to participant's responses. Member checking also served as a means to minimize the effect of any bias positions during the analysis of the data. Furthermore, I also utilized a peer debriefing process to regulate any potential bias that I might include in the analysis. Routine peer debriefing helped me understand perspectives of the phenomenon beyond my own experience as well as to help me identify any biases that I was unaware of (Creswell, 2007).

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, I gave strong adherence to several ethical issues that generally arise when conducting research on human beings. The first step in ensuring high standards of ethical practices was to work closely with the rules and guidelines provided by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The experts within the IRB reviewed each stage of this research design. Furthermore, I did not begin any research involving the participants until the IRB approved of the proposal of this doctoral research.

After obtaining IRB approval, I began the research process. One of the key ways I avoided ethical issues in interviews and focus groups was to provide informed consent to all participants. My goal was to make sure that all participants were aware of their

rights while involved in the study. Most importantly, I wanted to make sure they were aware of their right to withdraw their participation at any time without any retaliation. Lastly, I took multiple steps to protect the identities of the participants throughout the study. During the focus group interviews, I assigned code names to the participants. All information was stored in a password-protected database. Final reporting of the findings does not include participant names nor does it include the names of their specific communities; instead, it only provides loose geographic descriptions.

Summary

The purpose of this multi sited case study was to explore the relationship between racism and social capital in majority Black communities. CRT is the theoretical construct that sets the context for the study. I chose the case study design because it presents the best opportunity to view multiple sources of data of a bounded system in a real life context. Additionally, the case study methodology allowed this research to meet the CRT goal of capturing the stories of people of color. The data collection in this study involved individual interviews, focus group interviews, and document reviews. I first coded the data and then put it through multiple forms of analysis. The analysis included a descriptive case report, pattern matching, and cross case analysis. Throughout the process, I utilized various procedures to ensure trustworthiness of findings as well as strict adherence to the IRB's high ethical standards.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation was to identify the ways in which the various forms of racism influence social capital in low diversity majority Black communities (LDMBC). In addition to employing the CRT as well as the polarities of democracy model as theoretical frameworks, this research ascertained data from LDMBCs in North Florida in order to conduct a two-site case study. Ultimately, the goal of this research was to increase the understanding of the relationship between social capital and racism.

In this chapter, I provide a detailed explanation of the process I used to generate and analyze the data along with the results of the data collection. It also contains a case report for each of the respective research sites. First, I provide a brief overview of the data collection procedures. I start with the Leon County LDMBC report and provide historical context and demographic background information for the research site. The next section displays the emergent themes and a detailed analysis of the data collected. Following is a summary of the first case report and the historical context of the second case site. The subsequent section provides a detailed analysis of the collected data along with an analysis of the emergent themes. Next is the presentation of the second case report, followed by the conclusion of both case reports, an in-depth cross-case analysis. The final section of this chapter is a summary of all the issues discussed.

Data Collection

This study used the collected data to address the following research question: What are the ways that racism influences social capital in low diversity majority Black communities?

Two additional research questions were used to help answer the primary research question.

1. How do residents of low-diversity majority Black communities perceive the relationship between racism and their lack of social capital?

2. What are ways in which low-diversity Black community members can mitigate the impacts of racism in order to enhance their social capital? I made theoretical propositions after a meticulous review of the literature concerning social capital, critical race theory, and the polarities of democracy model. The two theoretical propositions for the study are as follows:

1. Varying forms of racism will impede the utility and accessibility of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital in majority African American communities.
    a. Internalized and personally mediated racism hinder the effectiveness of bonding social capital;
    b. Institutionalized and or cultural racism will reduce access to bridging and linking social capitals.

2. Members of LDMBCs will experience the down sides of the representation vs. participation polarity as well as the diversity and equality polarity.

In order to address the research questions and determine the credibility of the theoretical propositions, I retrieved data from interview subjects who resided in low-diversity majority Black communities (LDMBC) in Gadsden and Leon County Florida. I conducted the interviews in a private study area of each county's public library.

I selected 20 African Americans, ten from Gadsden County and ten from Leon County to participate in this study. The requirements for inclusions were at least five years residency in the county as well as residency in a low-diversity majority Black census tract. This study also required that participants be above the age of 18. Additionally, I used census data, election reports, archived newspaper articles, and local government agency reports to gather pertinent information concerning each case location, while also allowing for triangulation. Also, I provided each participant a detailed description of the study and afforded them the option to decline participation in the study with a detailed consent form.

For a period of 2 months, I met with the participants at the local library in their region. The individual interviews lasted between 25-50 minutes, and I used a recording device to capture the audio and took detailed notes during the interview process. I took the interview question items from the individual interview protocol. However, after a few interviews, I began to slightly modify the wording of questions and use more probes based on information received from previous interviews.

A good portion of data originated from two focus group interviews. I conducted one focus group for each of the case sites. The Leon County focus group interview took place at the Leon County Public Library in a conference room. I sent invitations to all ten of the Leon County participants. However, only five were able or willing to attend. In Gadsden County, four community members participated in the focus group interview including one who had not participated in an individual interview due to a timing conflict. The focus group interviews lasted a little over an hour. First, I introduced the participants to the focus group and then told them the purpose. Next, I provided a prompt that detailed the various racial disparities prevalent in the community as well as many of the problems discussed in the individual interviews and identified in the document reviews. From this point, I questioned the participants on their willingness and ability to address the issues. An audio recording device was used to record the focus group interviews. In addition, I took detailed notes throughout the interviews.

Data Organization

I stored the data collected from the interviews and focus groups in multiple computer files. I then stored the collected data in two folders: one titled “Leon County Interviews” and the other “Gadsden County Interviews.” The interview notes and transcripts were stored separately in two subfolders. Also, the unobtrusive data I collected from news reports, the Census Bureau, and the supervisor of elections came from websites and was stored in electronic files on the computer. From these dossiers, I imported all the data into NVIVO 10 for further analysis.

Data Analysis System

Following the transcription and review of each interview, I imported the data into the NVIVO10 software. Using NVIVO 10, I perused each response to each question in all 21 interviews. I reviewed each line for significance and then assigned those that appeared to either support or refute any of the theoretical propositions to a node. The NVIVO 10 software allowed for each group of nodes to be stored separately. After a second line-by-line review of each response, I then began to examine the nodes for consistency and similarity. NVIVO 10 was also used for the second examination of the data, which allowed for the combination of nodes into larger categories. I then repeated the same process for the second case site. Once I established all the sets, I reviewed each for consistency and similarity and then organized them into three overlapping themes. Using NVIVO 10, I was able to identify emerging themes that were consistent in both case sites

Evidence of Trustworthiness

I ensured the credibility, reliability, and transferability of the data collected through the use of multiple procedures. In order to verify the credibility or internal validity of the data, I utilized a routine member checking process that allowed each participant to review the transcript of their interviews. In order to maintain the dependability or reliability of the study, I made sure to use a strict case study protocol. Furthermore, the use of two different case sites allowed for the replication of the first case study, which I conducted in Leon County and then repeated in Gadsden County Florida. The sampling of a diverse population of residents within the LDMBCs, as well

as the use of rich, thick descriptions during the analysis process, helped to ensure transferability of the study. Lastly, I maintained the conformability of the evidence through a continuous committee review process as well as peer debriefing. This peer debriefing process allowed me to ensure that I was not allowing my personal biases to intrude into the study unchecked.

Case Report 1 Leon County Florida

Historical Context

Leon County is in northwest Florida and is home to the capital city of Tallahassee (U.S Census Bureau, 2015a). Tallahassee is the principle city of the county and holds 66% of the county's residents (U.S Census Bureau, 2015a). The current landscape of Leon County includes 667 square miles of land and 35 square miles of water (U.S Census Bureau, 2015a). It is Florida's 22nd most populous county and holds 1.4% of Florida's total population (U.S Census Bureau, 2015a). Many Florida residents refer to this region of North West Florida as the Big Bend or the Panhandle.

Prior to becoming an official United States territory following the Transcontinental Treaty of 1819, Florida had been a beacon of freedom in the South (Rivers, 1981). Throughout the early years of the 19th century, many enslaved Africans from nearby American states sought refuge in the Spanish controlled Florida (Rivers, 1981). Several chose to reside in isolated maroon communities or among the local Native American groups in the area (Rivers, 1981).

After Florida became a territory of the United States in 1821, the acting governor ordered two commissioners to identify areas central to the populated areas of North

Florida that would serve as a temporary capital (Ellis & Rodgers, 1986). Ultimately, the commissioners chose Gadsden County, which included much of the current Leon County, to serve as the capital region of the Florida Territory (Ellis & Rodgers, 1986). However, following the restructuring of the territory in December of 1829, Leon County separated from Gadsden. After the separation, Tallahassee became the social and political center of Florida (Ellis & Rodgers, 1986). Starting in the 1930s, settlers from Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia moved to the area eager to develop cotton plantations (Rivers, 1981). Many of the settlers brought large amounts of enslaved Africans (Rivers, 1981). During this so called antebellum period (1812-1859) in North Florida, slavery and racism were the prominent political, economic, and social systems in place until the American Civil War (Rivers, 1981).

Following the Civil War, the Reconstruction government introduced African Americans into the political process and offered modest ability for social advancement (Ortiz, 2005). African Americans throughout the state pooled resources, organized themselves politically, and aligned themselves with White Republicans to restructure the state and local governments to their advantage (Ortiz, 2005). This progress was short lived. By the 1880s, Florida's conservative Democratic Party had dismantled and reclaimed power from the Republican Reconstruction administration (Ortiz, 2005). Soon thereafter, they began instituting new policies to strip power from the African Americans who had just started their social advancement (Ortiz, 2005). Vigilante justice was also instrumental in stifling the progress of Florida's African Americans (Ortiz, 2005). Then

in 1885, a new state legislature allowed for the disenfranchisement of African Americans and legalized racial segregation (Ortiz, 2005).

In the Post-Reconstruction Era, 1880-1920s, also referred to as the Redemption Era, the primary economic system in the region remained deeply entrenched in cotton and tobacco, with most of the production coming from the labor of Black tenant farmers (Ellis & Rodgers, 1986). In this same period, the Historically Black College that would develop to become Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) emerged as a center of social and economic development for African Americans (Ellis & Rodgers, 1986).

Throughout this time, African Americans suffered immense economic, political, and social setbacks that created a litany of perpetual inequalities. African Americans were frequently subject to mob violence and lynching culture (Rabby, 1999). Racial segregation was normative in Florida's culture and was even supported by the Supreme Court following the 1896 Plessy vs Ferguson decision (Salvatore, Garcia, Hornsby, Lawson, & Mah, 2009). Disparity in education funding was also prevalent. During the 1945–1946 school year, expenses for all public schools in Florida per pupil enrolled were $91.80 for White students and $52.61 for Black students (Borman et al., 2004). In the 1954–1955 school years, per pupil expenditures totaled $193.04 per White student and $179.07 per Black student (Borman et al., 2004).

Following the landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954, over the next 15 years Leon County desegregated its public school systems (Borman et al., 2004). White parents overwhelming began to remove their children from the public education

system and enroll them in private schools (Rabby, 1999). Jim Crow policies continued to reduce political, social, and economic progress for Florida's African Americans throughout this period (Shofner, 1977). The national struggle for Civil Rights found its way into the region in the 1960s. Following the famous Montgomery Bus Boycott, students from Florida A&M University led a similar boycott of the city's bus services (Rabby, 1999). However, despite the legislative changes resulting from the Civil Rights Movement and the end of formal segregation, the African American communities and White communities in the region remained somewhat separated (Shofner, 1977).

Contemporary Context

Currently, various economic, social, and health inequalities exist between the two communities. Through a review of census data, I identified several disparities in Leon County. For example, there is a median household income of $54,698 for White households compared to $29,289 for Black households (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). The census data revealed that 23.2 % of the county residents are below the federal poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). However, only 17.4% of the White population in the county is below the federal poverty line compared to 31.7% of the Black population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). More troubling is the finding that 67% of the persons receiving service for homelessness in the county are African Americans (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014).

In regards to employment, there is a 6% unemployment rate for White workers compared to the 13.5% unemployment rate for African American workers (U.S Census Bureau, 2015b). For the Leon County group, 93.8% of the White population who are 25

years of age and older had at least graduated from high school with 46% earning a bachelor's degree (U.S Census Bureau, 2015b). For the African American population who are 25 years of age and older, 82.3% had at least completed high school with 26.6% earning at least a bachelor's degree (U.S Census Bureau, 2015b).

In regards to education, disparities are less visible; however, they still exist. For example, in 2013, 48% of Leon County's students were White while 38% were African American (U.S Census Bureau, 2015b). Leon County spent roughly $7,626 per pupil compared to the state average, which was $7,640 (Florida Department of Education, 2011). While national studies have suggested there is significant disparity in per pupil expenditures between Whites and Students of Color (Spatlig-Amerikaner, 2012), I did not find evidence to suggest that such a problem exists in Leon County. However, while White Students made up a majority of school aged children in the county they were underrepresented in the public school system (U.S Census Bureau, 2015b). Interestingly White Students made up 62% of the counties private school students (Leon County Private Schools, 2015).

Leon County's health outcomes, although ranked Number 7 among Florida's 67 counties, showed evidence of multiple race related health disparities. Cancer, the leading cause of death in the county, was significantly higher among African Americans than their White counterparts (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). From 2008 to 2010, the African American age adjusted death rate from cancer in both the county and the state was noticeably higher than the rate for Whites as well as the rate of all races combined (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014).

Breast and prostate cancer were two of the most virulent forms of the disease impacting Leon County (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). African American men had a significantly higher prostate cancer death rate, while African American women had a significantly higher breast cancer death rate when compared to their white counterparts (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). Heart disease was also significantly higher among African Americans than their white counterparts in the county (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). In addition, African Americans in Leon County had a significantly higher hypertension rate, putting them at much higher risk for heart disease (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014).

Some scholars argue that the use of tobacco products influence several of these ailments, African Americans reportedly had a significantly lower rate of smoking cigarettes than Whites in the county (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). However, African Americans did have a higher incidence of obesity (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). There were similar levels of adults with asthma among different racial groups throughout the state; however, Leon County showed a considerable racial disparity; African Americans had the highest rate of asthma (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). In addition, African Americans in Leon County had higher death rates from diabetes (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014).

The largest disparity existed in the HIV/AIDS death rate: nearly seven times higher for African Americans than for Whites (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast

Florida, 2014). Death rates from influenza and pneumonia were also significantly higher for African Americans (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). In addition, although African Americans had the highest birthrate in Leon County, the infant mortality rate for African Americans was more than two times the rate for the county's White population (Health Planning Counicl of Northeast Florida, 2014). These statistics provide a snapshot of the racial disparities prevalent in the region. Many of the health disparities may be compounded by the disparity in food security. Roughly, 21% of Leon County residents reside in food deserts which are census tracts with low income and vehicle access and that are a significant distance from grocery stores (United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2015). Of that 21%, an estimated 34% are Black residents and 16% are White residents (U.S Census Bureau, 2015b; United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2015).

Contemporary Issues

Recently, several issues have affected social relations in Leon County. In October 2014, during an arrest, a member of the Tallahassee police shot a 61 year old woman in the back with a Taser (Rossman & Burlew, 2014). The officers suggested that the woman was illegally walking the street and refused an order to walk on the sidewalk (Rossman & Burlew, 2014). However, other witnesses noted that there were no sidewalks in the area and that the officer gave no previous commands before engaging the woman (Rossman & Burlew, 2014).

Another important occurrence was the findings of Florida and Mellander's research (2015). Using an index system, they determined that the Tallahassee

metropolitan area, which includes much of Leon and Gadsden County, was the most economically segregated city in the United States (Florida & Mellander, 2015). They noted that the city had significant levels of economic segregation that were mediated by race as well as income inequality (Florida & Mellander, 2015). Further analysis on these findings is provided in Chapter 5.

Voter turnout in Leon County was significantly lower for African Americans than for Whites in the last election cycle (Leon County Supervisor Of Elections Office, 2014). In the November 2014 election, African American voters had a 49% turnout compared to a 62% turnout for White voters (Leon County Supervisor Of Elections Office, 2014). These statistics reflect only registered voters and fail to capture felons the State of Florida prohibited from voting. Also, the state's move to eliminate early voting may have impacted the Black voter turnout (Herron & Smith, 2012). In May 2011, Florida's state legislature established a new election law that makes it increasingly difficult to register and to vote (Herron & Smith, 2012). The new law allows severe restrictions and penalties on nonpartisan groups that register voters (Herron & Smith, 2012).

In addition, the law reduces the number of days allowed for early voting and eliminated voting on the Sunday before Election Day (Herron & Smith, 2012). Research on early in-person voting suggests that African Americans increasingly utilize this method, and the law may impact them disproportionately (Herron & Smith, 2012). The elimination of voting on the Sunday before Election Day impacted African Americans and other minority voters the most significantly (Herron & Smith, 2012). Florida leads all states in terms of voter disenfranchisement due to its restrictions on voting rights for

some criminals (Uggen, Shannon, & Manza, 2012). The State of Florida currently disenfranchises 10.4% of its general population and 23.3% of its African American population (Uggen, et al., 2012). Explanation of these findings will be discussed throughout this chapter as well as in Chapter 5.

Demographics

Leon County is considered an urban area with a population density of 417 persons per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015a). In 2013, the U.S. Census estimated Leon County's population at approximately 278,624 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015a). The data estimated that the population consists of 60% Whites, 30% African Americans, 6% Latinos, and 3% Asians (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015a). In Leon County, there were 15 majority Black census tracts out of 68 tracts. Of the 15 majority Black census tracts, 10 met the low diversity threshold of at least 60% African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). Approximately 38.6% of the African American population resided in majority Black census tracts with 34% of the county's African American population residing in LDMBCs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015b). Four of these census tracts were concentrated on the so called *Southside*. Of the 10 LDMBCs, agricultural research identified five of them as food deserts (United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2015).

Participants

The participants for this study were residents of the LDMBCs in Leon County Florida. Of the 10 participants, seven were female, and three were male. All participants self-identified as Black or African American. The average time in the community for the

participants was 19.7 years. The median time participants had lived in the community was 17 years, and the average participant age was 35 years. Table 1 displays the demographics of the selected participants.

Table 1

Leon County Participant Demographics

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Employment	Years in community
T01–KG	Female	38	Higher education administration	5
T02–MW	Female	67	Retired	38
T03–TH	Male	33	Cook	15
T04–BG	Female	27	Cashier	27
T05–TW	Female	55	Admin assistant	23
T06–AB	Female	33	Massage therapist	13
T07–VC	Female	50	Staff assistant	16
T08–GB	Male	37	Warehouse supervisor	37
T09–JB	Female	30	Unemployed	18
T10–CW	Male	33	Elementary school teacher	5

Analysis

The first set of codes emerged from free coding the interviews and focus group interviews. The review of the literature informed the process that I utilized to identify themes. I used the theoretical propositions, as well as the research questions, to evaluate the data in order to help identify the significance of each statement. In addition, I utilized each question in the interview process to draw out detailed responses from each participant. Therefore, I found information relating to multiple research questions in each answer. Table 2 shows the themes and patterns that emerged during the coding process.

Table 2

Leon County Emergent Themes

Theme	Subtheme	Indicators	# of participant references	# of participant statements
Black social capital	Bonding social capital-structural	Membership or access to churches, organizations, networks, associations, universities, etc.	8/10	24
	Bonding social capital-cognitive	Sense of belonging, pride in community, social trust, shared values, and commitment to community Improvement.	6/10	9
	Bridging social capital	Connections with dissimilar people- age groups, racial groups, and income diversity.	3/10	5
	Linking social capital	Connections to elected officials, law making institutions, and job providers.	5/10	7
Social capital deficiencies	Lack of bridging social capital	Limited connections with dissimilar people.	5/10	6
	Lack of linking social capital	Limited connections with people in power.	10/10	14
	Lack of social trust	Lack of trust for fellow community members, lack of trust for Government, and Lack of Trust for Public Institutions.	10/10	31
	Lack of social cohesion	Withdrawn from community, apathy, social isolation, closed networks, and brain drain.	10/10	87
Barriers to social capital	Economic	Economic stagnation and economic strain inhibits prioritizing community.	9/10	50
	Socio cultural	Cultural dysfunction.	10/10	50
	Perceived racial	White social capital overrides Black social capital, race based inequality, and racial separation.	10/10	81
Desire for change	Desire for increased political involvement	Participants want to get more involved in the political process.	7/10	8
	Desire for increased social cohesion	Participants want to bring community together; help others.	8/10	16

Results

Black social capital. I assigned the label Black social capital to all data that showed evidence of a type of cognitive or structural social capital that existed in the LDMBC. Subgroups within this theme included bonding social capital, bridging social capital, community involvement, active networks, linking social capital, and social trust. All 10 participants noted at least one example of social capital at some point in the interview or focus group.

Bonding social capital. The participants each spoke about various institutions and organizations that were prevalent in their respective communities. These statements were representative of the ability of community members to form networks and relationships with individuals similar to and located near them. Much of the expressions of bonding social capital fell into two categories: structural or cognitive. Many of the participants gave examples of structural social capital with statements about their religious institutions. For example Participant T07 explained:

> A lot of churches I visit are doing something. I went to Jacobs Chapel; they have a book give away once a month… They have Saturday women's empowerment groups and teen girl's groups. They have clothing drives, and they give away boxes of food; they do that twice a month.

Participant T05 shared a similar sentiment: "The churches are really instrumental in making sure that people watch out for each other. Bethel A.M.E Church is a big resource." Participant T09 stated: "The churches are actually trying. I know Bethel A.M.E; they do clothing and shoes drives." Participant T03 discussed another church,

"The church I was telling you about earlier, A.L.A.R.M., basically, they try to help people with business ideas and help people with entrepreneurship and getting started." Participant T04 also spoke on the social capital of churches: "Well the churches are the only ones trying to do something. They have outreach programs and tutoring programs for kids after school, and they are always doing something for the kids." Participants T01 discussed another notable form of structural social capital:

> If FAMU was not here, I think a lot of people would not be employed. A lot of black people I should say. I think that is one of the beauties of living in a town with an HBCU (Historically Black College or University). You can see Black people being successful.

Participant T07 highlighted another form of structural social capital with the statement "We do have neighborhood watch."

In addition to the structural forms of bonding social capital, the participants expressed several examples of cognitive bonding social capital. These statements reflected the sentiments of social trust, shared values, and social cohesion in the community. Several of the participants expressed this type of social capital in the statements about their sense of the community being like a family. For example, Participant T04 expressed:

> Yes, a lot of the people in the community are family. When I was growing up, Grandma lived right across the street, and my next door neighbor had her family right up the street. It was like you had a bunch of little mini families.

Participant T07 stated:

> I live in close proximity to my family. I am close to the neighbors on either side of my home. We are a tight knit community because most of us are homeowners. We all know each other; we have a very close community.

Participant T06 explained:

> Tallahassee is my first community; I was born here. My dad is from here; my grandparents live here, so I always felt like I was a child of Tallahassee.
>
> A lot of kids in the neighborhood know my children, so I have a lot of adopted children, and they look at me as a mother. So I just do what I can and try to help them stay out of trouble…I have very good relationships with the youth in the work I do with rites of passage, and in my work, I have very strong relationships with elderly people and with my grandparents who lived here for years.

Other participants discussed their sense of trust and pride in the community. For example, Participant T05 stated:

> We do take good care of our neighborhood, and we are proud of our neighborhood. We have an association that people participate in and do different activities…We do speak and talk, and there is a genuine warm feeling amongst us. We have gotten things done by working together. For example, we were able to work together to get sidewalks put in, so kids could catch the bus safely.

Participant T04 expressed trust in her community: “I fell asleep with the door unlocked. I woke up and realized I didn't lock it, and it wasn't a big deal. I didn't feel like I needed to go lock it.” Participant T08 shared: “We all look out for each other,” and Participant T10 stated, “Yes, I do trust the people in my community.”

Bridging and linking social capital. While each of the participants provided multiple expressions of both structural and cognitive bonding social capital, the same was not true for bridging and linking social capital. Only one participant expressed having connections with people who were dissimilar. Participant T06 expressed that people of different religions had recently begun to put religious differences aside and focus on supporting community wide initiatives:

> However, in more recent years, I've been seeing people disregarding, that it's like I don't really care if you get down with the Nation of Islam. I'm going to support what you're doing. I don't care if you are Moorish science or whatever, or if you're the sister from around the way that is Baptist. If you got something good going on in the community, we will come out and support it.

Two participants provided responses that conceptually reflected linking social capital or the relationships built with the individuals and to the institutions that govern the community. Participant TO5 spoke about two local officials whom she supported: "One of my favorites is Bill Proctor. It seems like whatever he says will grab attention. Another is Alan Williams even though they are not in my districts." Participant T03 shared a similar sentiment concerning Bill Proctor:

> Southside, we have Bill Proctor. The past mayor and current mayor are not biased to the communities; they represent the city as a whole, but the one who stands out in my mind is Bill Proctor, I know he has done a lot for the Southside Black community.

While there were several examples of bonding social capital expressed by all ten participants, only two participants expressed any inter-community social capital. This could speak to the possibility that this is an area where a social capital deficiency exists.

Social capital deficiencies. Many of the participants expressed frustrations with the lack of social capital within their respective communities. I identified and labeled this type of communication as social capital deficiencies. This theme had several sub groups that included lack of bridging social capital, lack of linking social capital, lack of social trust, and lack of social cohesion. The node identified as lack of social trust had multiple subgroups: lack of community trust, lack of trust in public institutions, and lack of trust in government and the political processes. Additionally, lack of social cohesion had two subgroupings, social isolation and social apathy.

Lack of bridging social capital. Several of the participants expressed an inability to identify resources available to them in neighborhoods of dissimilar people. These remarks served as evidence of a potential dearth of bridging social capital. In addition, some participants expressed complete ignorance about activities and resources in White communities in the county. Also, participants described closed networks that required higher education and increased socioeconomic status for unofficial membership.

During the interviews, I routinely asked participants what elected officials or community organizations could they reach out to in order to address community issues. Several participants found this question difficult to answer. For example, Participant T03 said: “Nothing beyond church groups. That’s about all I can think of.”

Many participants attempted to explain the situation in the community that separated people. Participant T01 stated:

> We kind of have this segregation with educated people in one area and others left to their own…My personal thought is that Tallahassee among Blacks and Whites has a 'good old boy' network in place where the educated only hang with the educated. There is no outreach to the community. They don't tell people about programs that would help them…I think Tallahassee has two extremes. Tallahassee has a very educated Black population, and then it also has like "locals' for lack of a better word.

During the focus group, Participant T10 suggested: "With these businesses, they will always say why Black people don't do this type of business. Why don't Black people do that type of business? It is because those people do not want to do business with Black people."

When participants were asked about resources available in neighboring White communities, they frequently expressed ignorance of those areas. Four participants made expressions that reflected a lack of connection and communication with members of outside communities. Many of the participants insinuated that race was a factor in the disconnection. For example, Participant T01 stated: "We kind of have this segregation with educated people in one area and others left to their own." Participant T03 shared, "I do not spend a lot of time in the White communities." Participant T05 gave a similar response: "I do not know what goes on in the White communities." So too did participant T08: "I don't really know how the White community is doing."

Lack of linking social capital. All 10 participants expressed either frustration with the local government or ignorance of political officials and their dealings in the community. In addition, participants consistently expressed the sentiment that they had no ability to hold their public officials, elected or non-elected, accountable for their actions. Interestingly, several of the participants made statements that contradicted other participants and even themselves when discussing their relationships with local government officials. These contradictions will be further examined in Chapter 5.

These statements reflected the deficiency of linking social capital in the community. This deficiency was represented in statements reflecting uneasiness and uncertainty about elected officials. Participant T01 stated, "I do not know anybody who is currently an elected official that I could say can effect change." Participant T07 shared, "None of our Black politicians speak up about this. The people we elect to represent us [to] deal with it are silent." Participant T04 stated: "I don't really know any politicians; I don't know any." Participant T09 commented: "I'm not quite sure about political officials." Participant T08 stated: They keep electing [the] same superintendent and school board, and nothing changes."

Many of the participants suggested that the elected officials were not representative of their interests. The following statements are examples of their beliefs. Participant TO2 stated:

> They (local officials) are doing stuff to improve places that are not in my neighborhood. The problem with voting is in order to get on the ballot you would need a certain amount of money and influence. So the candidates are not really

> our own to begin with…Even with all of Proctor's talk, nothing changed. He has been in office 18 years, and nothing changed, and he is just still talking.

Participant T07 stated:

> I do hear Bill Proctor but do not hear Andrew Gillium talk about the Southside Neighborhood. Does he even know there is a Southside Neighborhood?
>
> I didn't listen to his campaign; I didn't vote for him; I do not like him.

Participant T10 also expressed disappointment; "The politics thing is just out of the question as a solution for our community. I do not see any politicians helping."

Lack of social trust. Another significant social capital deficiency was in the area of trust. Each of the 10 participants expressed some trust issues with one or more sources in their community. Participants expressed a lack of trust in three areas: the political process and government, including local law enforcement and components of the criminal justice system; social institutions within the community; and fellow community members.

Lack of trust for fellow community members. A few of the participants expressed a general distrust towards other members of their communities. They mostly described this as a fear of community members committing crimes against them or acting in a way that would bring trouble to the community. The following statements indicate a concern for criminal behavior influencing trust. Participant T08 explicated:

> Many things can go wrong with me being a female and a Black female at that. We tend to be a little worried and not like to go places alone…I wouldn't leave my

> door open or window open. Not even to go up the street because it's too many burglaries.

Participant T09 made a similar statement: "I stay to myself. I do not go to any clubs because people get into crazy stuff, and it's all about the environment you put yourself in."

Other examples of deficient social capital came from statements which suggested that social differences as well as the lack of confidence in African American people influences trust. Participant T04 suggested, "As a whole, people do not trust each other; they are kind of mistrusting." Participant T03 stated, "Distrust (results) from people being led astray for so long by so many of their own kind." Participant T09 also shared: A lot of times, my people, they need to see a Caucasian person in charge because we do not trust one another to do what's good for us."

Participant T07 suggested:

> It's a lot of mistrust between African American people. You go to college, so I don't trust you because I stopped at high school, and I had to work, so you don't understand where I'm coming from because you never had to get food stamps and you never had to live on housing, and your family is fortunate enough to buy a home, and we are renting.

Distrust of public institutions. In addition to the lack of trust of community members, several participants expressed distrust for public institutions. Participants made several statements evidencing a deep distrust for healthcare providers in the region. Participant T01 stated, "I do not trust any of the healthcare (providers) in this area.

I do not know what they are putting in the stuff they provide at the local clinics and health care centers." Participant T06, who is healthcare professional, explained why she believed there was so much distrust:

> A lot of people distrust the health care system and medical industries. Up until the Affordable Care Act, a lot of people did not have insurance, so when people received treatment, they wouldn't get it by being admitted to a hospital; they would get it from a substandard care provider. There are a lot of reasons people do not trust that system.

Participants also expressed strong discontent and lack of trust for other public institutions such as the Department of Education, local banks, and credit agencies. Participant T01 asserted, "The availability of Black people to get business loans in Tallahassee is ridiculously low when compared to the ability of others to get business loans." Participant T02 explained:

> I have dealt with this problem for 30 years while employed at the Department of Education…I knew I was better qualified, had more experience, and did more work, but there were White folks who were brought in at a higher salary than me who were given promotions and increased salaries.

Participant T07 also discussed difficulties in the workforce:

> That's why a lot of times when I fill out applications, I do not check race. Why does it matter what color I am? Either you're going to let me have something or you're not. This credit rating system is a bunch of hogwash. Needs to be done away with…It's already hard enough for us to get loans from banks because we

> do not have collateral because we rent the house that we live in. And if you can get a loan for a car or a home, the interest rates are ridiculous, and I believe it's because of the color of our skin.

During the focus group interview, Participant T10 suggested: "Public school integration, allowing others to teach us whatever is to be taught, did way more damage than racism actually did."

Distrust of government. Another consistent trust issue that emerged in the collected data involved participants' distrust of their elected officials, government leaders, law enforcement, and criminal justice system. Each participant expressed multiple examples of distrust of these institutions. Several participants had significant distrust for the local government system and its officials. Participant T01 stated, "I do not trust the government, especially not the local government." Participant T09 shared, "They (policymakers) will do what they want to do. I do go and vote and stuff, but I feel that they are going to sway it like they want it done anyways." Participant T07 stated, "Their agenda does not include the small person who makes under $100,000 income … They do not care about us."

Participant T02 also commented on government officials:

> I do not think the people who could effect change would run for political office because that would limit their ability to effect change. If you're in a political office, you have to in a lot always go by the company policy…People who are not of the status quo mentality are not the ones who will run for office. The ones who run for office are in effect buying into the status quo.

Participant T05 expressed a similar sentiment: “I don't think the people with the Southside interest at heart [get] done what needs to be done because of all the political mumbo jumbo: bullcrap.” Participant T06 stated:

> I vote as often as there is an opportunity because of tradition and heritage. But I feel that I’m always forced to pick the lesser of two evils in many elections. People who I would be excited to vote for wouldn’t even run for office.

Participant T07 shared, “I’m cautious about new Mayor Andrew Gillium. I fear he might be a bit of a good boy.” Participant T04 also stated: We do not have any public officers that we can look up to. Not the mayor; he has his own agenda. Actually, I wouldn’t say any specific politicians; they all have their own agenda.” Participant T09 shared, “They do not have our best interest in mind, and it’s sad.”

Several participants also expressed contempt for local law enforcement and even the larger criminal justice system. There was much concern about the interest of the law enforcement agencies and the disparity of protection offered to African American communities. Many of the participants alluded to the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown at the hands of police officers as well as the local incident where an officer was accused of unjustly attacking an elderly African American woman. Participant T08 suggested: “The Tallahassee Police Department, it seems like they just target our African Americans.” Participant T10 stated:

> The police are not patrolling the neighborhood to stop drugs in the neighborhood. They are patrolling the neighborhood to put people in jail to meet a quota. This does not stop drugs or drug use or reduce crime or anything.

Participant T04 shared:

> The majority of us in my community are African American, and these days you will get shot just being African American. We tend not to call the police;
>
> It takes a while for the cops to get there, and then you're not sure if they have your best interest.

Participant T08 added, "The cops have a shoot first question later mentality. You're guilty until proven innocent. They [Courts] do not listen to your side of the story." Participant T02 stated,

> Police presence is different because in one area, they see themselves as protectors of the people. And in other areas, they seem to be acting more as controllers of the people, so their patrols are done from a different vantage point.

Participant T07 shared, "In our neighborhood, it's rare that you will see a person engaging with an officer for information." Participant T01 stated, "I do not trust the police."

One primary example that exposed how deep the mistrust may run came from participant T06 as she attempted to describe her fears about the government's interest in African American people. She stated:

> It may sound real conspiracy theorists, but any Black person that we as a nation would take seriously politically would be killed…They would be assassinated by the powers that be because, ultimately, I feel there is a conspiracy to keep Black people from prospering and doing well. So any Black person in politics that is not dead makes my spider senses go off.

Lack of social cohesion. All ten of the participants expressed a degree of apprehension or uneasiness when discussing the ability of community members to come together to address local issues. While several understood the significance of such action, the participants offered several explanations as to why this was not taking place. The key indicators that emerged were brain drain, social isolation or community withdrawal, and collective or individual apathy.

Community withdrawal. One major reason many participants claimed it was difficult to work collectively and maintain unity was because of their or others withdrawal or disconnect from the community. Participant T02 explained:

> There is a certain amount of disconnect that happened after the advent of social media with interactions amongst people because those who engage in social media have a much broader community because they consider community people away from themselves more than even those in the same household sometimes. So it's hard to get [the] same kind of community feel that I had. [In addition], I think that when integration came, most of the people who had good education were able to get better jobs, and they moved away from the community, which left a void.

Participant T03 shared, "I see some disunity amongst people. We are divided. I see neighbors that do not get along. There is a giant wedge between the people." To get further answers, I asked, "What do you think the people you know think about your community?" Participant T03 responded, "They feel that it's every man for himself. Get

things for yourself, and make a way for yourself because nobody is going to try to help you no matter what they say.

Individual and collective apathy. Many of the participants felt that social pressure had caused their fellow community members to accept the status quo and abandon investing in community as a means of positive change. Based on the experience of many of the participants, for their fellow community members and for even themselves, the state of the community was not a primary concern. For example, Participant 10 stated: "I think…one of my main problems with Tallahassee is that people do not value the resources in Tallahassee." I asked Participant T04, "Speaking on just the Black community, do you think they care about the community as a whole? Do they want to improve it and make things better?" Participant T04 responded, "I think there are some out there that want to do this, but then again, you have those who could care less, but generally, there is some concern." I asked again: "Why do you think they do not care?" Participant T04 stated, "It can be a number of issues: they may just feel like this doesn't pertain to them. Or they may be good in their settings; they are doing okay." When I asked, "Do you think the majority of the people in the Black community care?" Participant T04 responded, "In my experience, they probably do not care." Participant T05 stated: "I think the people are complacent with this situation." Participant T06 shared, "We are not really doing anything to improve the community, not on a group basis but maybe individually." When I asked, "So if there was a problem in the community, for example, if someone in the area was not doing well or having a problem, would you feel the need to be aware of it or would you think it was not something for you

to deal with?" Participant T08 expressed the following, "Me, I would like to stay to myself and hear about it from somebody else."

Lack of confidence in collective efficacy. Another area where participants showed consistent concern in regards to social cohesion was in their own ability to address community relations. Many participants complained that their communities had been conditioned to believe that there was no value in building up Black communities. Many participants argued that a lack of confidence was the source of much of the community's social divide as well as the individual and collective apathy.

Participant T03 stated:

> I have been withdrawn into myself only trying to do what I can and put in my effort and not worry about the rest. I know that is not how it should be, but that's just how I've been pushed.

Participant T07 shared:

> One of the main reasons is that we are busy trying to get for ourselves. It's not that we do not want to help anybody; it just comes with conditions, and it's a type of I got mines and you get yours, and I got mines, but I'm not sharing with anybody.

During the focus group interview, Participant T02 stated: "We have been groomed into thinking that leaving our community is a measure of success. So giving back to the community that we had to leave in order to be successful does not make much sense."

Linking social capital and social cohesion. While the inductive analysis process was taking place, one of the potential relationships to emerge in the data was the

correlation between the lack of linking social capital and the lack of social cohesion. Multiple participants made several statements, indicating that their lack of community involvement was due to a lack of either access to experts or leadership within the community. I asked Participant T08, "I would like to know a reason why you and even other people in your situation who have been victimized and brutalized by law enforcement, why hasn't anybody organized or done anything about it?" Participant T08 responded, "Because they know ain't nothing going to happen. It would be a waste of time." I asked Participant T09 a similar question, "Why do people not go talk to people who they think can do something about it?" Participant T09 responded,

> "Maybe because we feel like it would be a waste of time. They are going to look at us and say, 'yeah okay' and keep it moving…I mean I do not think that I could just go into a courthouse and say, 'Hey look, I want something to be done about this. It needs to stop. What can we do?' I do not think I could petition or get something started by me just being a regular citizen.

I asked Participant T01, "Knowing that your community has these issues of food insecurity and outside interference, how does it impact your political decision making?" Participant T01 stated, "It impacts it greatly. I do not get involved in politics."

Barriers to social capital. All ten of the participants gave multiple examples of the various barriers that were preventing the development of or access to social capital within their community. These barriers seemingly served as deterrents that hindered the ability of the participants and or their community members to engage in community affairs or invest in social resources. Therefore, these barriers may serve as key indicators

of the ways in which racism influences social capital in Leon County's LDMBCs. I classified the different types of barriers found in the data into three sub themes: economic barriers, socio-cultural barriers, and, lastly, racial barriers.

Economic barriers. One set of issues I consistently observed throughout the data collected from the participants was the existence of perceived economic barriers that prevented the use or access to social capital. In several examples, participants expressed concerns about the economic disparities they faced as a community. In addition, participants were very concerned about economic separation and how it influenced their ability to prioritize community issues.

Economic stagnation. Participants noted on several occasions that the economic outlook in their respective community was dismal. The disparity in employment rates as well as the income level for African Americans in Leon County could support this claim. Participant T01 stated:

> There are no jobs here in Tallahassee. Well, no jobs that will pay you what you're worth in Tallahassee…It is hard to find jobs in Tallahassee; it caters to a student population because they know students can be taken advantage of because they work for peanuts. You don't have to offer them benefits.

Participant T03 shared the following:

> Economically, the ones who work are keeping their heads above water, but the ones who do not work out here, when I talk to them, they are teetering on the line. They are thinking about doing things they probably shouldn't do to get their

> heads above water where everybody else is at. They do not feel that there is anything out there for them.

Participant T04 stated, "There are hardly any jobs, so unemployment is high. Black people are struggling right now." Participant T07 shared a similar sentiment:

> There are still a lot of budget cuts to education, and they [African Americans] cannot accomplish anything if you keep taking funding away from education. That's another problem; they need to bring some type of industry here where people can do hands on work. Not just computer technology and aerodynamics but jobs for a person with a high school diploma who has been [in] a factory for 20 years. Give them some type of means to support themselves at a job they can do, so they can feel better about themselves. They would spend and put money in the economy if they had a job to make money.

Economic isolation. Several of the participants alluded to the notion that members of their communities are marginalized and separated due to their economic status. The participants reported that local businesses are not near their communities, and there were transportation issues in the city. For example, Participant T01 explained, "There are no stores close by, and people do not have working vehicles, so that leads to crime. And then businesses that do provide services, they are closed early…There is not even a Walmart on the Southside."

Participant T03 added, "Certain people treat you different depending on what area you are in." Participant T04 stated:

> Winn Dixie and Publix and they are both pretty far away. In order to address that, we need to fix public transportation. The bus system is a little crazy because it doesn't go all the way through the Southside. Many of the people may be disabled and cannot make it on their own.

Participant T05 shared:

> I worked for an agency that provided childcare for people, so I can say it's fair. It is about where you want to send your child and how much you're willing to pay. The other centers that offer more services are not usually in our community, and you have to have transportation to get there, and they charge a little bit more. But it's up to what you want to do for your child and what you can afford. They do not stay on our side of town. They are not in our area, so it doesn't affect them like it affects us …It's too exhausting, and people just give up and do what they have to do.

Participant T06 stated, "People who live on the Southside, if someone doesn't have a car, it's a long way to go to be able to get good quality produce." Participant T08 shared, "Yes, I think there are better parks on certain side of town." Participant T02 added:

> The segregation we are experiencing now has more to do with economic segregation than racial segregation…When I worked at financial aid, I ran into children who lived in neighborhoods where nobody had a job. These kids were in college and had never seen anybody go to work. That's a tremendous mind set to overcome.

Economic strain limits social capital. Throughout the interview process, the participants consistently raised the problem of limited economic means in defense of

limited investments into social activity of the community. Several of the participants decreed that they and the members of their communities were so financially overwhelmed that they did not have the time or energy to prioritize community issues. Participant T01 explained: “Salaries in Tallahassee are poor; they are still starting people of at eight to 10 dollars. That’s only 20,000 a year, and you cannot do much with that.” I asked Participant T02, “Why is the Black community not funding their organizations?” Participant T02 responded, “They can hardly fund and support their own homes.” When I asked, “What do you think the people you know think about your community?” Participant T03 answered with, “They feel that it’s every man for himself. Get things for yourself and make a way for yourself because nobody is going to try to help you no matter what they say…The people do not have proper employment.” Participant T04 explained:

> People cannot provide for their families like they used to, so they are resorting to illegal crimes to make ends meet. Not just limited to drugs, people are writing bad checks and using identity theft to get money…Because [I am] a Black African American woman, I want to be able to provide for my family, and I feel that that is what comes first…I'm just trying to survive. I can do that, but I have to be able to maintain my own living situation first.

Participant T05 explained:

> When I am home on the weekends…I’m just too busy to concern myself with it. The community as a whole is mostly comprised of elders, and their prime concern right now is probably healthcare and just maintaining their everyday households

> because most of them are on a fixed incomes…As a single mother, that's how it is; we do what we have to do, and then do what we can do, and the other stuff, we just don't worry about it…We also do not have the time really. We work 8 to 5, and you would have to take a day off from work to get something done.

Participant T06 explained:

> People have a lot of good ideas, but they just do not have the capital. I probably should know, but I'm just so focused on getting my own life in order I just really have not had the time to sit down and think about the political candidates on the local level.

I responded with the following question: "Because you are so bogged down with your own experiences that community issues become less important?" Participant T06 answered: "Well maybe, yes it's less important. What I am trying to do and what I'm dealing with at this point in time is taking precedence over everything else."

Cultural barriers. The majority of the participants expressed cultural issues that seemingly disrupted the social capital development in their communities. Some participants identified changing cultural trends from generation to generation as key factors in limiting social capital. Other participants identified self-imposed limiting activities and dysfunctional behaviors as hindrances to social activity and the cause of bankrupted social capital throughout their community.

Generational culture change. Some of the older participants suggested on multiple occasions that severe changes in African Americans as well as American culture resulted in a dramatic disconnect from community relations. Even some of the younger

participants noted the difference between how people relate to each other in the community currently and how things were in the days of their parents and grandparents. For example, Participant T02 stated:

> Communities are quite different than they were when I grew up…I feel that I am an elder, but I don't know that eldership brings the same respect from the time when I was younger…I think it goes back to the kind of disconnect that results from people having the ability to identify with people outside where they live as their own community. Either through social media, it results in more interaction outside of the place where they live.

Participant T06 shared:

> But when I step outside of my immediate community and step into my grandparents' community, they are a little bit disappointed because their classic neighborhoods are deteriorating, and the vibrancy… of Black doctors' offices and pharmacies and dry cleaning services and different things like that have seen… decline over a decade, and [African Americans] are more disenfranchised.

During the focus group, Participant T01 shared:

> When we went to school, we all walked to school together with [other] children, and if I did something at school, even though I grew up in the 80s and 90s, one of my parents' friends [could see] me. So, I didn't do anything because I knew all eyes were watching…One of my friends lived directly behind the school, and her father would go to work, and her mother would stay home, and her mother was always looking out the window at the school. She could see what we were doing,

> and if she came out of her house and stood at that gate, then she saw something. She was going to tell your parents. I think having that kind of community makes a successful person.

Participant T07 added, “Nowadays, you are scared to say something to someone else’s child.”

Cultural dysfunctions. Nine of the ten participants reported witnessing or taking part in some troubling activities or belief patterns that were seemingly antithetical to the development of social capital. Furthermore, participants discussed learned behaviors, shared norms, and community-wide practices that they understood to be common survival tactics that were not beneficial to the sustainability of the community. Participant T01 shared, “This is the Southside. Lots of people are poor; many have dropped out or only have a high school education.” Participant T04 suggested, “Education is another problem. A lot of Black men are dropping out of school very [early] and getting arrested very young. It could be because of broken homes and fathers not being around. I asked Participant T06, “You said that people like to suffer through pain in silence? Why did you say this?” Participant T06 responded with,

> You know, that’s a great question. I do not know why. I have had conversations where I will be speaking to a Black patient about their condition, and they will go on and on and on about their leg pain and fatigue and how they get dizzy and faint, and then when the doctor comes in and asks them how are they doing, they say they are okay, and I am like what about all the stuff you just told me? I think there is a little bit of doctor intimidation, and also Black people do not like to look

> weak. So, I know that a lot of Black people are carrying a lot of responsibility, and they do not feel like they have the time to slow down and take care of themselves. All those things kind of play a role…Black people, like all people, are creatures of habit. We do what feels good although it may not be the best for us.

Participant T07 stated: Psychologically, I think we as a people feel inferior in my neighborhood. Like I said, about half of my neighborhood is retired people, and, as you know, retired people can be very stubborn. A lot of them have been sick so maybe 51%. For example, the lady next door had a heart attack.

Participant T09 explained, "In my experience, a lot of people using the first of the month check to get drugs and stuff." Participant T10 added, "I think some of it is us not valuing our community, so we accept substandard service because that is what we expect to happen in our community.

Perceived racial barriers. Another consistent theme that was prevalent throughout the data analysis process was the role of race and racism in restricting the availability as well as the development of social capital. Many of the participants expressed fear of racial backlash, negative media coverage, disparity in quality of government service, race based inequalities, and White social capital overruling Black social capital. ParticipantT01 stated:

> Any time something happens on the Southside, White folks who do not live on the Southside got to come stick their nose in it and keep the people oppressed,

> scared of repercussions; we all have to go to work every day. People who work for state government do not want it to be known that they agree with Bill Proctor. People can do crazy things; they can harass you at work, make it hard for you to continue there.

Participant T02 shared,

> The schools on the other side of town have more parental involvement, more money from outside the schools, and more ability to raise money from local businesses. It is not an equitable result…There was a lot of money in Tallahassee spent on a one way street. In this same time, there were areas in the African American community that didn't have sidewalks, that didn't have other basic necessities, even protections around ditches to prevent kids from falling in and drowning or protections around areas that were prone to accidents, vehicle accidents.

Participant T03 stated, "Black people get a raw end of the deal; I don't think it's any better." Participant T04 added, "The rec areas in the White area are a little better equipped when compared to the ones on the Southside." Participant T05 explained, "The schools outside of my area have superior facilities in regards to resources, and accessibility." Participant T06 stated:

> I have friends who teach at the Black elementary and middle schools here. I have a close friend who is a principal at one of the elementary schools and just the type of issues she has to face, she didn't have to face when she was an assistant principal at a local White elementary school.

Participant T07 stated:

> It's too many people with kids who need help getting to doctors. But everything is far away from where we live. We need clinics in every neighborhood. Lots of people do not have cars to get to the other side of town…I think a lot of it also comes from television and social media. It's just bombarded with stuff that makes you want to not embrace who you are: the hair styles, the clothes.

Desire for social change. All ten of the participants expressed a strong desire for positive social change in their communities. Some of the participants wanted to see increased political involvement and improved ability to hold public officials accountable. Other desires for change included a stronger commitment to community improvement, more personal involvement, as well as improved social cohesion.

Desire for increased political involvement. Several of the comments made by the participants in the study acknowledged a desire for improved relations with the local government. Participants routinely expressed notions of a desire to get involved and make changes in their community. For example, Participant T01 stated, "Only if there is someone who serves my purpose will I vote for them." Participant T03 shared:

> My choices will have to involve research beyond campaign ads. I will try to research…about each person, and the person I [relate]…most closely with or agree with their ideas the most, that's how I pick. It doesn't matter what a person says about [themselves] on TV; I will rely on my own understanding.

Participant T04 stated:

> I will be looking for someone who is generally dedicated to trying to improve the community and not just win an election. I do know that you cannot fix things in one term; it takes months and years to make a change and for people to see the change, but when you are electing a politician, you feel like they are supposed to represent the community as a whole. I don't think it's a good quality.

Participant T06 shared, "I will make a more conscious effort to really learn the candidates, so I can be better informed and take that to the polls." Participant T07 added:

> The people that vote, we gotta start holding the people we elect accountable, and we can only do this as a group. We gotta learn what the laws are, learn what our rights are, and know what's on the books.

Participant T08 explained, "My political policies go hand in hand with the principle that if the candidate is not doing anything to benefit the minority people and the low income people, then they cannot get my vote."

Desire for increased social cohesion. The participants expressed a strong desire to unite with other members of their community who had similar goals and values. Several participants shared the understanding that community relations had to improve before there could be any meaningful progress. Participant T01 explained, "I love Black people, and I want [to] see us evolve and do our best and stand up for each other and fight for our rights." Participant T02 stated, "There are detrimental effects of racism that continue to plague the community. However, by that same token, once you recognize racism is here and will always be here, then we have to take charge and do for ourselves. Participant T03 added:

> Now that I'm older…, I understand that it does affect me and everybody else because I'm part of the community. I just can't…isolate myself like these are not my problems: these are my problems. As I've gotten older, I've realized that I have to do something about this. Instead of just saying I want it to change, I have to get out there and be a part of the effort.

Participant T04 stated, "I've seen things that show me it could be a lot better as far as how we interact with one another, as far as bettering the community."

Participant T06 contributed with the following:

> I think the increasing publicity of a lot of the police brutality issues [is] I think people are starting to see that we kind of need each other, and we need to find out a way to connect. I can see that it's still in its infancy stages, but I see people reaching out for something to connect to and hold on to.

Participant T07 stated:

> We have to start being proactive and working together. No matter what your station in life is, the police and the pastors can work with a person who used to sell drugs and is now reformed. We have to encourage the kids to get an education; they are checking out on education, and that is sad.

Leon County Case Report Summary

The Leon County case showed evidence of various forms of social capital within the LDMBCs. However, while there seemed to be adequate sources of bonding social capital, there was a lack of bridging and linking social capital. In addition, the participants expressed frustrations about their limited social and economic resources.

There was also consensus among participants that individuals and institutions distribute economic resources and political power with racial bias.

One assumption I am making based on the data is that the LDMBCs may be deficient in various categories of social capital, and these deficiencies appear to be the result of racial and economic separation, poor leadership, deteriorating social trust, and cultural dysfunction. The data also suggest that there is potential for correlation between the lack of linking social capital and the lack of social cohesion within the community. In other words, members of African American communities may have little faith in their ability to effect positive social change because they have poor relationships with local officials. The lack of trust for each other as well as the lack of trust for government and public institutions seems to reinforce both the limits of social capital and the result from the limit of social resources from outside the community.

Lastly, it is highly plausible that due to the lack of economic resources and unequitable political distribution of power, communities go into a survival mode in which they develop multiple cultural dysfunctions or behaviors that allow for immediate survival at the expense of sustainable social development. Racism is a consistent and present factor in the minds and lives of African American people. The participants seemed paranoid and distrustful of each other as well as their elected and non-elected public officials. This extreme lack of social trust seemingly results from institutional, personally mediated, and internalized racism. The data collected suggest that the theoretical proposition stating that varying types of racism influence different aspects of

social capital is true. I applied this logical generalization to the second case location in Gadsden County, Florida.

Case Report II Gadsden County

Historical Context

The United States government recognized the incorporation of Gadsden County in 1823 (Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, 2015). The name of the county came from the American public official James Gadsden (Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, 2015). Slave owners had been migrating to the area for some time before the incorporation of the county (Rivers, 1991). Originally, Gadsden included the area known as Leon County; however, the area was later restructured, and the two counties were separated (Ellis & Rodgers, 1986). Gadsden's first major industry centered on Shade Tobacco, a variant of the tobacco crop generally used to wrap cigars. This unique strand of tobacco was only prevalent in two locations in the country. This crop proved very lucrative, and its production depended on African slave labor. Unlike Leon and other neighboring counties, Gadsden County had a higher population of Blacks than Whites as early as 1830 (Rivers, 1991). In 1860, nearly 67% of all tobacco and 7% of all cotton grown in the state of Florida originated from plantations in Gadsden County (Rivers, 1991). In 1861, on the eve of the United States Civil War, Gadsden County was among the wealthiest counties in the state of Florida, and tobacco and cotton were the two most successful commodities.

Following the Civil War, African Americans in Gadsden County attempted to utilize their new liberties in order to advance themselves socially, politically, and

economically (Ortiz, P., 2005). Political progress was met with stringent resistance from the White population in Gadsden County. For example, in 1870, six White Gadsden county residents were indicted for voter intimidation and interference (Peek, 1965). Over the next six years, violence ensued throughout the southern states as White vigilante organizations used their social capital to resist social, economic, and political advancement of African Americans (Ortiz, P., 2005; Peek, 1965).

Following the conclusion of the Reconstruction period, in 1876, African Americans throughout the South, Gadsden County included, found themselves subject to the emboldened White racists who controlled the southern faction of the Democratic Party (Ortiz, P., 2005). Tobacco farming still dominated the county's economic interest and fueled the regions post-war recovery (Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, 2015). Thus cheap labor was still a necessity for White land owners (White, 2006). The public school system, which was controlled by the minority White population, coerced Black students into attending school for 150 days a year compared to the 180 days White students attended school in order to ensure that Black children could spend time working in the tobacco fields (White, 2006).

Another important commodity that originated from Gadsden County was Fullers Earth a sedimentary clay that is used in skin care cosmetics as well as cleaning agents (Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, 2015). However, the county's most significant economic development resulted from the establishment of a Coca Cola plant. The purchase of Coca Cola stock in the 1950s led to tremendous economic growth for select members of the Gadsden county community (Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce,

2015). During this time, Jim Crow policies severely limited Black economic advancement, which socially and economically isolated Blacks into impoverished communities and hampered their progress (Salvatore, et al., 2009). These trends, arguably, set the path for what would ultimately develop into a majority Black region with much of the wealth concentrated in the segregated White communities.

In 1960, Gadsden County had 12,261 eligible African American voters; however, only seven were able to register (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1961). A cloud of racial control haunted the southeastern region of the United States and was prevalent in northwest Florida until the 1960s (United States Commission on Civil Rights, 1961). These forces would ultimately give way to the national Civil Rights Movement. In Gadsden County, the City of Quincy also hosted a large civil rights march to show support and solidarity to the larger movement (White, 2006). Although desegregation and racial discrimination were outlawed, much of the damage had already been done to African American communities (Salvatore, et al., 2009). Thus the disparity between African American and White American communities still persists today (Annual Report: Florida council on the social status of Black men and boys, 2013).

Contemporary Context

Current research estimates the median income for White households in Gadsden County at $49,942 compared to a median income of $26,522 for African Americans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c). In Gadsden, 13.3% of White families had income below the poverty level compared to 34.9% of the African American population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c). Ultimately, Gadsden County is a severely impoverished region. From

2008-2010, 31.1% of Gadsden's total population was earning below 150% of the federal poverty level compared to 15% for the entire state and 14.1% in the country (Brantley, 2012). Gadsden had a 6.9% unemployment rate for its White workers compared to 14.4% for its African American workers (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c). In Gadsden County, 83.1% of the White population, 25 years of age or older, had at least completed high school with 19.3% earning at least a college degree compared to 71.6% of African American residents who completed at least high school and 6.7% who earned at least a bachelor's degree (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c).

The State of America's Children report (2014) ranks Florida 39th among states in per pupil spending with an average of $7,812 each year. In 2013-2014, Gadsden County's per pupil expenditures totaled around $7,990 (Expenditures for Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Students, 2015). These numbers contrast with recent studies that have suggested that there has been much disparity between White students and students of color in terms of per pupil expenditures across the country (Spatlig-Amerikaner, 2012). Researchers argue that disparity exists within the districts and between different districts (Spatlig-Amerikaner, 2012). Gadsden County public school's students are 77% African American, 18% Hispanic American, and 4% White. The majority of White students attend private institutions. For example, the Robert F Munroe Day School was established in 1968 and currently serves 90% White students (School Profile: Robert F Munroe Day School, 2015). The Gadsden County School District is among the worst in the state ranking 64th out of the 67 counties in Florida (Florida Department of Health,

2013). In addition, the average teacher's salary of $35,721 is the lowest in the state (Florida Department of Education, 2011).

Gadsden County also suffers from many health disparities. Of Florida's 67 counties, research showed that Gadsden County was ranked number 64 in terms of health outcomes (Florida Department of Health, 2013). The age-adjusted death rate for African Americans is 21.3% higher than Whites in the region (Florida Department of Health, 2013). Additionally, the age-adjusted death rate for diseases such as cancer, diabetes, stroke, and heart disease is higher among African Americans than Whites in the county (Florida Department of Health, 2013). Also, fewer Black women receive prenatal care than White women. For example, in 2011, 65.6% of Gadsden County's African American women received pre-natal care during their first trimester compared to 76.3% of White women (Florida Department of Health, 2013).

In the 2014 election, Florida had only a 50.5% voter turnout rate (Data and Statistics: Florida Division of Elections, 2015). However, Gadsden County had one of the better voter turnout rates in the state with 61.8% of the registered voters casting their ballots (Data and Statistics: Florida Division of Elections, 2015). 60.9% of African Americans in Gadsden County turned out to vote compared to a White voter turnout of 64.4%. Roughly, 57% of the voters in Gadsden County are African American. The region is overwhelmingly supportive of the Democratic Party: 78% of the voters belong to that political party.

Contemporary Issues

Recently, the residents of Gadsden County have been dealing with controversy in their local government structure. One troubling event involved the Gadsden County Sheriff Morris Young (Walton, Bennett, & Gros, 2015). Young, the County's first African American sheriff, who was elected in 2004, allegedly, without official court orders, devised a furlough program that allowed inmates in the Gadsden County Jail to visit family members (Walton, Bennett, & Gros, 2015). The State Attorney William Meggs petitioned a court to hold Young in contempt (Walton, Bennett, & Gros, 2015). Young defended himself with claims that the state attorney's attacks were racially motivated (Walton, Bennett, & Gros, 2015). Another controversial issue dealing with law enforcement emerged in 2013 when Gadsden County Sheriff's Officer Jim Corders was fired and then charged with several infractions including obstruction of justice and making false statements (Montanaro, 2015). The charges emerged after investigators accused Corders of taking $1,700 from an arrestee and failing to report it as evidence (Montanaro, 2015). The former officer was recently convicted and sentenced to 30 months in prison (Montanaro, 2015).

Another troubling event for some of the residents in Gadsden County surrounded a lawsuit that Robert Presell, the former director of county public works, filed against the Gadsden Board of County Commissioners (Walton, Bennett, & Gros, 2015). The plaintiff charged that the commissioners wrongfully terminated him after he filed a complaint with the sheriff's office accusing members of the commission with election

fraud. The board of commissioners has reportedly decided to settle out of court and offered the plaintiff another job with Gadsden County (Walton, Bennett, & Gros, 2015).

Demographics

Today, Gadsden County is a rare find since it is the only majority Black county in the state of Florida (Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, 2015). Gadsden County consists of 528 square miles of land (U.S Census Bureau, 2015d). With a population density of 89 persons per square mile, Gadsden is considered a rural area (U.S Census Bureau, 2015d). The most recent census survey estimate indicates that Gadsden County has 46,389 residents (U.S Census Bureau, 2015d). Of these residents, 56.0% identified as Black or African American, and 35.9% identified as White (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c). Gadsden County is composed of six municipalities including Quincy, Havana, Chattahoochee, Midway, Greensboro, and Gretna (Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, 2015). Gadsden County also consists of nine census tracts, with six of them qualifying as majority African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c). However, of the six majority Black census tracts, only four meet the low diversity threshold of 60% African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015c).

Participants

The participants I chose for this study were residents of the LDMBCs in Gadsden County Florida. Of the ten participants, seven were female and three were male. All participants identified as Black or African American. The average time in the community for the participants was 23 years, and the median time participants have lived in the

community was 20.5 years. Also, the average age of a participant was 30 years. Table 3 displays the demographics of the selected participants.

Table 3

Gadsden County Participant Demographics

Participant ID	Gender	Age	Employment	Years in community
Q01-PB	Female	21	Student	21
Q02-BM	Male	40	Entrepreneur	20
Q03-AP	Female	21	Student	18
Q04-MB	Male	20	Food prep	20
Q05-SW	Female	21	Sales associate	19
Q06-GG	Male	20	Publix-deli rep	20
Q07-MN	Male	31	LPN	8
Q08-LH	Female	38	Customer service rep	37
Q09-TN	Female	39	RN	35
Q10-VH	Female	37	Unemployed	30

Analysis

The analysis process for Gadsden County was similar to the Leon County analysis process. I utilized the codes assigned to the emergent themes derived from the coding process of the Leon County data. Additionally, I evaluated the data in search of new themes. One significant pattern to emerge that was not represented in the Leon County data was a strong sense of political barriers to social capital development. While the Leon County group did express some concerns about the political system, there were marked differences with the Gadsden county participants. The Leon County group seemed unsatisfied with performance of their representatives whereas the Gadsden County group expressed that excessive corruption prevented political progress in the region. Again, like the Leon County data, the information collected from the Gadsden

County participants related to the main research questions. Thus each interview question provided data pertaining to multiple research questions. Table 4 shows the themes and patterns that emerged during the Gadsden County coding process

Results

Black social capital. Following the same analysis pattern utilized in the examination of the Leon county results, I was able to identify similar patterns in Gadsden County. The participants, similar to the Leon County group, gave multiple examples of cognitive and structural forms of bonding social capital. Another similarity was the lack of expressions reflecting adequate bridging social capital. It should be noted that the Gadsden county group did express more optimism in regards to linking social capital than the Leon County group.

Cognitive bonding social capital. Several of the participants expressed a sense of belonging to their community as well as shared values and mutual trust between community members. The responses indicated an adequate source of cognitive bonding social capital within the respective communities. For example, Participant Q01 stated:

I think I fit in pretty well because it is a whole lot easier to fit in because it is a predominantly African American community in Gadsden County…There is Shock Quarters that is a poverty-stricken community as well, but they have a strong community. A lot of people there know each other. So if you have some people saying hey let's all work together to keep these areas clean, they will work together and pass the word on. So it depends on the community.

Table 4

Gadsden County Emergent Themes

Theme	Sub Themes	Indicators	# of Participant References	# of Participant Statements
Black social capital	Bonding social capital-structural	Membership or access to churches, organizations, networks, associations, universities, etc.	4/10	6
	Bonding social capital-cognitive	Sense of belonging, pride in community, social trust, shared values, and commitment to community improvement.	8/10	20
	Bridging social capital	Connections with dissimilar people-age groups, racial groups, and income diversity.	1/10	1
	Linking social capital	Connections to elected officials, law making institutions, and job providers.	6/10	8
Social capital deficiencies	Lack of bridging social capital	Limited connections with dissimilar people.	4/10	6
	Lack of linking social capital	Limited connections with people in power.	5/10	11
	Lack of social trust	Lack of trust for fellow community members, lack of trust for government, and lack of trust for public institutions.	10/10	38
	Lack of social cohesion	Withdrawn from community, apathy, social isolation; closed networks; and brain drain.	9/10	43
Barriers to social capital	Economic	Economic stagnation and economic strain inhibits prioritizing community.	9/10	24
	Socio cultural	Cultural dysfunction.	10/10	71
	Perceived racial	White social capital overrides Black social capital, race based inequality, and racial separation.	10/10	23
	Political barriers	Corruption, dysfunctional government, and poor government service.	6/10	20
Desire for change	Desire for increased political involvement	Participants want to get more involved in the political process.	5/10	9
	Desire for increased social cohesion	Participants want to bring community together and help others.	3/10	5

Participant Q04 shared,

> I feel comfortable in my community. I do not feel out of place anywhere that I go…probably because most of the people in the community that I know I went to school with. Everybody knows me. Well not everybody, but a lot of people know me, and a lot of people know my parents.

Participant Q07 added:

> They are kind of from the old school mentality. They watch your house while you are away; that's without even being asked. If they happen to notice that your car is not there at usual times, they go ahead and keep an eye out and let you know if they see anything serious.

Structural bonding social capital. As expected, the participants expressed structural social capital resources centered on their churches and church organizations. Aside from this, they did not mention many other forms of structural bonding social capital within the data. Participant Q03 shared the following: "At Shiloh, they have community events for back to school and whatever is needed, and we sing there. Our church is always going different places singing and stuff like that, and none of our pastors are paid." Participant Q05 stated:

> My church Saint Hebron is a really great support system. I get scholarships. We do back to school drives and thanksgiving drives. And anytime it's an event going on, my church reaches out to people because Saint Hebron is not that big, but we bring in more than enough stuff to share with everybody.

Participant Q07 said:

> I know several churches are linked with the S.H.I.P program, which helps those of a lower financial background. It teaches them things about building their credit and the advantages of being a first time homebuyer. So that program helps to do those things. A lot of churches, also, they produce workshops where you can learn about your body, HIV, things that have to do with youth going through puberty and things of that nature.

Bridging and linking social capital. The ability to form networks and relationships with dissimilar peoples and groups was not well represented in the Gadsden County sample. However, the Gadsden county community did express a moderate ability of network building with the persons and institutions that exercised control over the community. For example, Participant Q02 stated:

> Gadsden County has a Black sheriff who has done a lot of great work for turning things around. He is the first Black sheriff in the history of the county, and he is the longest lasting Black sheriff in the State of Florida.

Participant Q03 shared:

> I truly trust…Mrs. Sherry Taylor, and that is because we have had a relationship since I was four years old. I know that she has been a public official for years now. She is one that many people can go to. She has had programs for kids and particularly for the kids in the projects, so I know she is really trying to help.

Participant Q07 added:

> Reginald James, he is one [of] the superintendents of schools. He pretty much tries to oversee anything that goes on with the school system, and if there is an

> issue that cannot be resolved, he is the one that would be able to finagle or get things done…The sheriff definitely, Morris Young, because he is a product of the area, a lot of people know him. He has been here so long and been the sheriff for so long that a lot of people have accessibility to him, especially the Black community, which is another thing that is different when it comes to law enforcement. You know, it's good to see someone high on the chain of command that looks like you. You may feel that you will get a bit of more fair treatment when it comes to things of that nature.

Participant Q08 stated:

> We have a few good county commissioners who really push for us. As far as the schools are concerned, the superintendent; that's really all I know. Most of those commissioners, because they handle a lot of things, a lot of pushing comes from them as far as funding and availability of resources and service. They try to push for it in Gadsden County as a whole.

Social capital deficiencies. Many of the participants expressed various problems in their respective community that indicated a lack of access or utility of social resources. Many of these difficulties stemmed from the lack of linking social capital, which was heavily influenced by a lack of trust in their respective community members as well as elected officials. This is likely related to the social cohesion issues that the participants discussed during the interview process.

Lack of linking and bridging social capital. Several of the participants expressed a lack of confidence in their accessibility to social resources or even access to resources

shared by dissimilar persons. Additionally, the participants' statements suggested some limits in the ability to build relationships with persons who exercised control over their respective communities. For example, when I asked Participant Q-02: "What political officials could you reach out to who would stand up against these forces that are trying to keep the disparities that exist in place?" Participant Q-02 responded with, "None that I know of. Not saying they do not exist but I just do not know them." I also asked, "Why do you think you do not know them?" The participant stated, "They are not outspoken enough; it's probably that." I asked Participant Q03, "What political officials could you reach out to in order to address this situation?" Participant Q03 answered, "As always, Mrs. Sherry Taylor." When I asked, "Okay but is there anyone else?" The participant responded with, "Not for me." I also asked, "Do you know of anyone else that other people could go to?" The participant said, "Nope." When I asked Participant Q04, "Is there anyone you could go and talk to about this issue, and they could get something done?" Participant Q04 stated, "None come to mind at the moment."

Lack of social trust. All ten participants expressed a lack of trust for various entities within their communities. There was strong consensus that several members of the community did not have the community's best interest in mind. Others suggested that the local government was subject to defending the interest of a small powerful group which was not representative of the entire community. These types of issues made it hard for members of the community to be trusting of each other and, perhaps, limited social capital development in the respective LDMBCs.

Lack of trust in community members. All ten participants expressed a degree of mistrust for their fellow community members. There were concerns that members of the community were just looking to take advantage and wanted things without working for them. For example, I asked Participant Q02, "Do you trust the people in your community? The participant responded with,

> That depends. To a degree, I do not walk by them and fear for my life, but at the same time, if I drop my phone around them, it's a 50/50 chance that I will not get it. If I drop a 20 dollar bill, it's a chance that I will not get it all. It just depends on the circumstances…I will tell you a very prominent rumor that is old and continuous about this city. The reason why there is no economic influx and development is because the rich white people, the ones who own all the Coca Cola stock, make a lot of money from the city, so they need to keep it a certain way, so they buy off a lot of the officials. I have heard this ever since I was a little boy, and that's why you have the city the way it is.

I asked Participant Q03, "Do you trust the people in Gadsden County? Participant Q03 answered, "Not so much." I responded with, "Why is that?" Participant Q03 stated, "Well I just do not feel that they have everyone's interest as a priority. It's only certain people who they look out for their best interest." I asked Participant Q05, "What do you feel are some of the main issues facing the Quincy community; what are some of the key problems?" Participant Q05 stated, "Key problem to me is the people who do not care to do anything and are just living off of the government."

Participant Q09 stated:

> I think people have been more afraid than anything. I am even a little apprehensive when it comes to people being like that because these people nowadays will kill you, shoot you, and curse you out. So I do not think people really want to run the risk of getting into things with other people. To stay out of trouble, you just keep your mouth closed. That's not the best way to handle things, but it's what happens.

During the focus group interview, the participants seemed to agree on the issues of trust in the community. When I stated, "So tell me this: is it beneficial to you all to trust the other people in your community. Do you see this as something that will help you, trusting people?" Participant Q01 replied, "What do you mean trusting people?" I responded,

> Expecting reciprocity, the understanding that because you do things for the community and you do things for the people they will do things for you. If you are a good person, people will treat you as a good person. If you keep the neighborhood clean, other people will do the same.

Participant Q10 answered, "No…It depends. That's a yes and no." Participant Q03 stated, "No." Participant Q10 said, "I guess it's according to where you live." I asked, "So you are saying that even here, within this city, there are different places where you could live, where you would be able to trust people?" Participant Q10 answered, "Yes because out there in the Gadsden Arms, that is not going to work." Participant Q01 added, "Which is the projects or one of the housing projects out here for your reference since you are not from around here." Participant Q10 then said, "But see, you may be

able to go to Birhming Heights [majority Black community], and what you can do over there in the projects, you cannot do in Birhming Heights.

Lack of trust in local government. Several of the Gadsden County participants expressed another area of mistrust: the local government and elected officials. The participants' responses reflected a strong disappointment in the performance of several of the locally elected officials. In addition, a recent federal investigation into corruption allegations of many of the elected officials seemed to have severely impacted the trust factor as well as the ability to foster social capital development within the LDMBCs. Participant Q02 provided data concerning this issue:

> Well when you think about police and Black people, there is always distrust. Even though he is Black and he does get involved in the community more, there is still somewhat of a distrust there because a lot of the people on the force are White…I just heard on the news that Sheriff Jim Corders, a White police captain, is under investigation for giving false information to the federal government that led to imprisonment. Now mind you, this is a guy who I have heard about since I have been a child who has always done negative things to us. Now he is one of the officers, from what I have heard, who would plant stuff on you or take things from you and things of that nature. So its things like that [that] goes unchecked in our community.

Participant Q03 stated: "The people elected are not really trying to solve it; they are trying to find more ways to put money in their pockets rather than put it out into the community." Participant Q06 added: "I know the mayor, but I do not think he does

anything. He is just a figurehead." I asked Participant Q09, "What about any political officials that you could look out too?" The participant responded, "Mr. Strouble, I do not trust any of them. None of them." I asked, "None? Please explain why you do not trust any of them?" Participant Q09 stated:

> From 1 or 2 who I know personally, they were adults, and I was a child. I grew up with one living down the street from my grandmother, and that lady was always a crook. I mean I just don't; I do not trust any of them. It is all about what they can tell you to get in office for that moment, and then when they get in, it's totally different.

Participant Q10 said:

> We have law enforcement doing some of the same things that goes on in the streets. So how can we effectively change anything?...They do not care? They are in their high positions, and they think…we are little people…We cannot get the kids together properly if we are doing the same things. For instance, the mayor, but we had this big bust up down at city hall with FDLE (Florida Department of Law Enforcement). These are the people who work in the school system and the police force. How can we effectively put our kids on the right path if these people are getting caught doing foolery?

Lack of social cohesion. The lack of social trust could possibly correlate with the desire of some community members to withdraw from community life. Nine of the ten participants made statements that evidenced a lack of social unity in the LDMBCs of Gadsden County. Furthermore, there was strong consensus among the participants that

an apathetic mind state about the well-being of the community was prevalent. Participants made multiple statements that reflected a sense of collective apathy. Several of the statements could possibly be evidence of internalized racism. Additionally, participants expressed a sense of feeling socially isolated and thus withdrawing from community life.

Collective apathy. Throughout the interview process, several of the participants allowed me to inquire as to what was being done to resolve the problems facing the LDMBCs. Many of the participants repeatedly expressed that nothing was being done or not enough had been done. When asked why they or their fellow community members were not more adamant in making sure these issues they noticed were addressed, they expressed an overarching theme that they feared their request would fall on deaf ears, so they just did nothing. For example, Participant Q02 stated, "I think no one has done anything…because there is no unity." Participant Q06 said, "I think they care about it, but they are pretty stable; they are fine with the way it is. They do not see the problem. It has been that way since I was a child. Participant Q10 added, "There is nothing here to invest in. Nobody cares."

Socially withdrawn from community. Along with the collective apathy was the social isolation and failure to prioritize community activity. Several of the participants suggested that they were too busy with day to day affairs and could not be concerned with the other members of their community. One commonality in the majority of the participants' statements was the understanding that their personal lives and immediate families' well-being was more important than investing in community improvement.

For example, Participant Q01 stated: "I am so out of touch with Quincy because I work and go to school in Tallahassee. I am only coming home to sleep." I asked Participant Q03, " Do you have everyone's interest as a priority?" Participant Q03 stated, "At this moment, I do not think so. Not as much as I could." I then asked, "Why would you say that you do not? The participant responded, "Well right now, I'm just really focused on me and furthering myself." I asked Participant Q05, "So why do you not know any of the organizations?" The participant answered, " I think that it's my personal problem. I have not really tried to figure that out: That's my own issue." When I asked, "Why not?" Participant Q05 stated, "I really do not have an explanation for this." I probed further, "There has to be an explanation. Are you not concerned with the issues? Does it not bother you?" Participant Q05 answered, "It's not that; it's my own laziness." I asked another question: "Let's tap into that; when you say your own personal laziness, what do you mean by that?" Participant Q05 stated:

> I feel that I do not try enough to do certain things. Let's see if I can say this the right way: I feel that I do not push myself hard enough to do things like that although I feel that I should.

I asked, "Is it that you are unmotivated to take action like that?" Participant Q05 said:

> Yes something like that…I'm not in a place where I'm trying to fix the world. I'm just trying to survive college and graduate. But I do care, but I'm just not in a position where I could be that much help.

I asked Participant Q06, "Okay, I'm probing you, so please bear with me. But this is a pressing issue; you grew up with people, around alcoholics, some of them in your

family?" The participant responded, "Yes." I then asked, "Okay, the people did not have jobs; the community looked terrible. You see this. Why didn't you look to see what you could do about this?" The participant answered, "I guess I didn't care. I say I care."

I asked, "Is it that you do not care enough?" Participant Q06 stated, "Yeah not enough." I continued to probe: "But it sounds like you do care, so maybe there is something more to this?" Participant Q06 stated, "I never really thought about it." I asked, "So did you just accept it as the way things were?" Participant Q06 stated: "I kind of just accepted it, but I do not think it's the time for me to try and act being myself. I'm not in a position to help." Participant Q07 provided more perspective on this issue:

> Some people just do not care because they are at a point where they're in a lane that is working for them, and they are not thinking about the future, and others just do not know enough about the process to be able to do anything or the means there or the resources.

Participant Q08 stated:

> People [are] just not really paying attention. Their attention span as far as community involvement is not high. They just have other things that they are focusing on more than the community, which would really help all of us if we would focus on it.

Participant Q09 stated:

> I'm just too busy. I'm just busy. I am a firm believer that I have to take care of myself first. Charity starts at home, and then we help those abroad. So with what,

> I have [a lot] going on now with my daughter being in college, and I have two smaller ones. It's just enough right now, dealing with what I have at home.

Barriers to social capital. Similar to the Leon County participants, several of the Gadsden County participants insinuated that there were barriers limiting their ability to access and utilize social capital to address issues within their communities. The barriers seemed to stem from cultural dysfunctions, economic setbacks, political dysfunction, and racial barriers.

Economic barriers. Several of the participants described economic setbacks at the individual and community level that limited their investments and access to social capital. For example, Participant Q02 stated:

> Quincy is about 70% African American, and then there are Whites and Hispanics. Although we outnumber everyone, we do not control the wealth. Most of the major businesses that are there are all White owned. There are not enough jobs.

Participant Q03 added:

> There is just not much going on in Quincy. If you want or need anything, you have to travel to Tallahassee. Then with there not being so much, kids do not have anything to do but sit around, get in trouble, and drink, smoke, or whatever.

I asked Participant Q06, "Describe the general condition of the African American population in your community. How are they doing materially, emotionally, spiritually?" Participant Q06 responded: "It's pretty hard there. A lot of the houses are run down. Most of the people do not have jobs." Participant Q07 provided the following:

> I think it [feeling economically strained] is a common sentiment, but it is more so geared towards individuality. I'm sure the average person would say that they want change but as far as being the instruments of change, thereof, to me shows the lack of support for having to actually physically do something. Because usually if you do not have the time, it's money that is the concern. So if people are in predicaments where they do not have cars, so they cannot get to different events or different meetings to see what's going on with the community or they do not have the money to donate to these causes, it puts them in a predicament where they are really just dreamers as opposed to doers in terms of getting the work done.

Cultural dysfunctions. The participants all described learned behaviors and immediate survival tactics that many community members had adopted that could be construed as problematic. These behaviors include government dependency, criminal activity, drug and alcohol abuse, and other generally destructive behaviors. Participant Q01 suggested: "In Quincy we have a lot of opportunities, but it's just that a lot of people do not have initiative. So it's easy for them to complain about us not having the same stuff that White people have." Participant Q02 stated:

> A lot of our young men, they in that particular area have a distorted view of what family is as well as what success is…The role models that the young men have these days are guys that are drug dealers. Well not all of them, but a lot of those guys are flashy, and the kids say I want to be like that guy but what does it take to be like that guy?

Participant Q05 added:

> I know that in other parts of Quincy, you have people who do not do anything; they are not trying to better themselves. There are a lot of parts of Quincy where people really do try, but then you have that part of town where people just living off welfare. They do not really want to do anything; they are just hanging. I feel like that's the old projects and stuff for people who do not care to get out of the projects. They just do the bare minimum and stay there. They do not do nothing; they do not go to school; they do not work, just hanging out on the corner.

Participant Q06 suggested:

> They like to hang out on the streets and hang at the corner store. There are a lot of drunks and some prostitutes in the part that I'm from. That's pretty much it… I think they feel defeated. A lot of them have been locked up, and all types of things have happen to them. So they just gave up…Rape, prostitution, drugs, crime [are] in their background and stuff.

Participant Q10 stated, "I feel like they see it as the norm now. Like everyone. You hear about so many people being on crack or smoking dope that it seems like the norm now to everyone. It doesn't even bother them anymore."

Political barriers. The lack of linking social capital coupled with the dearth of trust in local government is possibly correlated to several of the political issues facing the members of the LDMBCs. Several of the statements from the participants evidenced a collective sentiment of a perceived barrier between community members and the social resources necessary to address individual and collective problems. For example,

Participant Q01 stated, “I didn't vote because I did not do my homework on the candidates. That’s the reason I did not vote. I did not want to vote for somebody just because. Then I would be doing the popularity vote.” Participant Q07 said,

> If you do not know a lot about what it takes for change, you have a tendency not to even be involved. Just for example, I know a lot of people who do not vote because they do not know a lot about the political process or who is on the ballot or what they are running for. They do not know about the people on the ballot, so they just drop out of that integral part of their place not only as a citizen, as living in Gadsden County.

Participant Q10 stated:

> I do not think we will see any change in the community until the people who are in these positions, for example, the superintendent, the mayor, and the people in position [change]. I do not think they do the job they are supposed to be doing. Then again, you’re talking about Florida. Anytime voting comes around, Florida's votes are always behind; they turn people away; they do not let them vote. The machines break down.

Racial barriers. All ten of the participants alluded to the fact that there was racial separation of some sort within their respective LDMBCs. Only some of the participants were willing to assert that there were clear racial issues at play within the communities. Nonetheless, participants’ statements revealed a strong sentiment that racial barriers prevented access and utility to social resources that were seemingly more readily

available for White persons despite the majority Black population of Gadsden County. Participant Q01 explained this disparity:

> When you go into Quincy, you will not see that many Caucasians. You will see some, but it depends on where you go. And I don't want to say it's negative, but it's just a separation thing; it's not like we do not like them or anything like that; it's just how it is. Like you have, back to the schools, we have a school called Robert F Monroe. I knew that was a school that a lot of White people go to, but I never thought about how many we actually have in the county until I went with my friend to church one day, and she goes to a predominantly White church. I went to her church, and I was talking to all these students who are in high school or college now, and most of them were home schooled or going to Robert F Monroe. But really none of them were going to East or West Gadsden, none of the Black schools. So I didn't know, so many of them were home schooled. So they either home schooled them or send them to Robert F Monroe, which is a private school…I didn't know we had so many White people in our community. Apparently, we have these spaces we call the White folks neighborhoods, and that is just because they have the big mansions, but that is where the old White folks live. I do not know where the young White folks live at.

I asked Participant Q03, "What is the general condition of the African American community in Quincy Florida? How are they doing? Participant Q03 answered,

> I do not think they are doing too well. Most are on welfare, living in public housing. The majority of African Americans there are on HUD, while there is a

> community specifically dedicated to the Whites called Birhming Heights. Surrounding it, you have projects and run down houses.

I asked, "So the White area looks nice?" Participant Q03 responded, "Yes they have huge houses." I then asked, "How about the Black communities you said were surrounding them?" Participant Q03 answered, "They are not surrounding them. They are on one side of the road, and the Black houses are on the other side." I also asked, "And you said there were housing projects and what else for the Black people?" The participant responded, "Trailers and trailer parks; it's very rural." Participant Q04 added: "I do not really see many White people. When I do see White people, it's out towards Havana, where those houses that look like plantation homes are."

Participant Q07 stated:

> Another thing that I found strange when I moved here was that our White counterparts, I rarely see them. I do shop in the same stores, Winn Dixie, Walmart, and I frequent those places a lot, and I barely see a White face. I always wondered what was with that. But I know there is a separate high school that mostly Whites attend, and I think that's George Monroe High School. That school is mostly White, and they have 100% graduation and college...rate from that school.

Participant Q09 said:

> Gadsden County is a place where a lot of the White people have money. It's a very wealth county because of the Coca Cola plant and the cat litter thing, and I do not think too many Black people were invested in those ventures.

Desire for social change. The Gadsden County participants were very adamant about their desire to bring change to their communities. They expressed a desire to change the social, political, and economic landscape that they were faced with on a day to day basis despite the absence of the social resources that would make positive social change more efficient. For example, Participant Q02 stated:

> I would like to see some major corporations come through there and provide jobs in [the] city. That would be a good start. Then I would like to see a college or an organization that's dedicated to the…building of the city [give] scholarships just to the city residents and…teach them to be entrepreneurs or…teach them industry trades, so they can start their own businesses.

Participant Q03 stated, "There is a lot of room for improvement; a lot of things can be done to make the community better." I asked, "When you say room for improvement, what do you mean?" Participant Q03 responded, "Getting people involved in a lot of things. If you get the people involved, it will create a great energy in the city. It would like boost morale." Participant Q07 contributed, "I have gone to different meetings about the community, and they feel like it's okay now, but it can be better, and we do see eye to eye on that. It can be a little better." Participant Q09 stated:

> I have to be willing because I have more kids coming up. My oldest daughter is out of here, but I have other kids that have to live here, and I have to live here, so I have to do better.

Gadsden County Case Report Summary

The participants from the Gadsden County LDMBCs expressed multiple examples of social capital within their community. Participants suggested that the majority population of African Americans throughout the county is conducive for several of the elements of structural and cognitive bonding social capital. However, despite this majority, there were still issues with linking and bridging social capital, similar to the situation in Leon County. These limits most likely resulted from a lack of social trust and social cohesion, which are both arguably very integral components of social capital. Furthermore, participants felt there were racial, political, economic, and cultural barriers in place that limited individual as well as community access to social capital.

Cross Case Analysis

As part of the cross case analysis, I needed to answer the following question: What are the ways that racism influences social capital in low diversity majority Black communities? The theoretical proposition associated with this research question suggested that various forms of racism impedes on LDMBCs members' ability to access and utilize social capital. The data collected from both cases supports this assertion. In multiple statements, participants from both case sites suggested that racial separation coupled with economic stagnation formed significant barriers to social capital. In addition, barriers have a two pronged effect in the case locations. The first is that they cause a survival mode ideology where members of LDMBCS withdraw from the community, become less likely to share resources, and, ultimately, divest bonding social capital out of fear that other community members will take advantage of them or that

their efforts will fail due to institutional racism. The second factor is that institutional racism weakens LDMBCs members' trust in government. The fragility of social trust leaves the communities subject to several cultural dysfunctions that further hamper the ability and willingness for members to invest in social capital. This is to say that people who are struggling have a hard time seeing the potential benefits in social cohesion and lack faith in collective efficacy.

One possibility that was not expected was that the awareness of institutional and personally mediated racism might actually strengthen bonding social capital. Several of the participants in both cases expressed the understanding that knowing their fellow community members were also suffering from similar disparity related issues served as motivational reason for their feeling accepted or at place within the community.

Another question I needed to answer was the following: How do residents of low-diversity majority Black communities perceive the relationship between racism and their lack of social capital? Throughout the data collection process, it appeared that the majority of the participants understood that external forces limited the social resources available to their communities. Several of them understood that the problem was partially internal. Participants shared the belief that the attitudes and cultural practices adopted by African Americans residing in LDMBCs had a self-oppressing effect. However, many of the participants also indicated a strong belief that racial factors such as White privilege and institutional racism hampered the quality of public services offered to their communities. The most revealing statements reflected the sentiment that both White and Black public officials were not concerned about the well-being of the

LDMBCs. The consensus was that the local government and other public institutions served White interest or personal interest. When I questioned why no Black individuals or organizations were speaking out against this type of activity, many of the participants indicated that there was a latent fear that there would be backlash from the White community, which could cause economic and political consequences for those who opposed the status quo.

The third question I answered was what are ways in which low-diversity Black community members can mitigate the impacts of racism in order to enhance their social capital? Despite the continuous presence of racial disparities within the LDMBCs in the counties of Leon and Gadsden, the participants remained hopeful that changes could be made to their communities. Community members identified numerous problems, but they all surrounded the deficiency of social capital. In order for there to be progress, LDMBCs must collectively address their internal and external issues. Cultural dysfunctions must be investigated and dramatically reduced in order to enhance the access to and utility of social capital. Additionally, members must resolve trust issues. There may be a need to focus community efforts on restoring trust in fellow community members, local government, and public institutions. Finally, there must be accountability. The lack of ability to hold anyone accountable was an overarching theme throughout the collected data. The ability to hold individuals accountable would increase social trust as well as linking social capital for LDMBCs.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the results of the field research, which focused on the relationship between racism and social capital in LDMBCs. The chapter started with the research plan, followed by a detailed account of the analysis procedures. I then displayed the various themes that emerged during the coding process of the research analysis. Subsequently, I provided case reports for both research sites. A detailed contextual analysis evidenced the troubled history of Leon County, Florida and provided a back drop for several of the contemporary racial and social inequalities. Following, I displayed the social inequalities and then gave an explanation of the identified themes and patterns as well as an analysis of the participants' responses: I repeated this same process for the second research site in Gadsden County, Florida. Lastly, I provided a cross case analysis, which addressed the research questions and theoretical propositions utilized in this dissertation. The next chapter includes a detailed interpretation of the findings along with implications for social change and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 5: Interpretations, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Overview

The purpose of this dissertation was to improve the understanding of the relationship between racism and social capital in LDMBCs. In much of the literature on the topic, researchers suggested that social capital is higher in White homogeneous communities. However, when investigating homogenous Black communities the claims of higher levels of social capital are limited to bonding social capital alone (Lin 2000; Lin 2008; Putnam, 2000; Putnam 2007). Bridging and linking social capital, which require connections with dissimilar people, does not seem to increase in homogeneous Black communities.

With these issues in mind, I used focus group and individual interviews with residents of LDMBCs to attain data that I analyzed through qualitative procedures. The analysis of this data allowed for improved explanation of the forces shaping social capital in these respective regions. The use of a case study methodology allowed me to investigate of the relationship in real time within a bounded system. Therefore, the results of this doctoral study can be used to inform theories as well as inform analysis of future studies of social capital in majority African American communities.

In this chapter, I will interpret the findings of the analysis of the data presented in Chapter 4. Furthermore, this chapter will include a thorough explanation of the social change implications of the findings. Subsequently, I will provide recommendations for future research. Lastly, I will provide a conclusion that summarizes the chapter, as well as the complete dissertation.

Summary of Findings

The analysis of the data revealed several themes that serve as indications of the relationship between racism and social capital in LDMBCs. The overarching theme of the data analysis is that racism in general impacts both cognitive and structural social capital. As racism creates the disparity in economic resources as well as the political power, it also affects social resources. The strain caused by economic setbacks, which is disproportionate in African American communities, seemingly detracts from the ability of LDMBC residents to invest in social capital. Multiple participants expressed the lack of time and economic stability necessary to invest adequately in social capital development. This situation is an example of the indirect influence of racism on social capital development.

However, it is important to note that particular types of racism, whether it is structural or internalized, seem to affect different aspects of social capital. Multiple participants expressed that the morale in their respective LDMBC was very low. There was consensus across both case locations that acts of racism such as police brutality, the disparity in government service, economic segregation, and racial segregation created a sense of social isolation.

The results of this social isolation were the prevalence of dysfunctional cultural activities as well as a brain drain of well-to-do community members. Simply put, the community itself is primarily viewed in a negative perspective and residents do not value Black communities and, therefore, seek to escape them whenever possible. The result is a brain drain that increasingly prevents the community from developing social capital by

removing many experts and quality citizens from the LDMBC further increasing social and economic isolation.

Participant's statements evidenced the influence of racism on social trust when they displayed the unwillingness or inability to trust members of their community. Both groups of participants, with few exceptions, showed a deep distrust of the local government or public institutions within the community. The experience of continuing racism at structural, personally mediated, and internalized levels likely influences the high levels of social distrust. There was a consistent expectation of the participants that their communities would receive unequal service compared to White communities. However, the participant's explanations of these perceived differences varied. Some participants expressed that it was outside forces from White communities in allegiance with their handpicked Black leaders that allowed for racial disparities to continue unchecked. Other participants were arguably reflecting high levels of internalized racism when they suggested that the residents of the LDMBCs were complacent with their unequal treatment, and therefore they were bringing the substandard conditions upon themselves.

Another point of interest in the findings was the consistent contradictions concerning elected officials in the community. Perhaps, reflecting the internal struggle of living in a society where you do not feel complete acceptance, the participants expressed high regard and simultaneous distrust for elected officials in their respective communities. In some cases, participants in both groups would boast of particular

leader's accomplishments only to offer harsh criticism of that same leader when confronted with troubling statistics facing the community.

Most participants were aware of several of the disparities facing their community. Even in the absence of knowledge about the professional research on many of the issues facing the community the majority of the participants assumed based on their experiences that there were multiple forms of racial inequalities. Interestingly, several of the participants were reluctant to place the blame on race relations. Many participants described a system of structural racism at work in their communities while at the same time suggesting that race relations had improved dramatically. This situation may be a result of post 1960's civil rights movement's surface improvements that reduced the public acceptability of overt personally mediated racism. However, the movement was unable to adequately reduce many of the lasting racial inequalities that are persistent and still causing setbacks for members of LDMBCs. These findings support the CRT notion of the permanence and perpetual nature of racism as well as Bonilla-Silva's (2013) conceptual understanding of racism without racists.

The findings of this research allow for a logical generalization about LDMBCs that may be applicable in similar cases. The continuing patterns of racist experiences may exacerbate social capital deficiencies that then result in cultural dysfunctions. These cultural dysfunctions are adaptations to continuous problems that reinforce barriers to social change that then in turn reduce the possibility of changing the cycle. Ultimately, the situation appears as a cyclical pattern of interaction between racism and community dysfunctions. Figure 2 provides an example of the cycle.

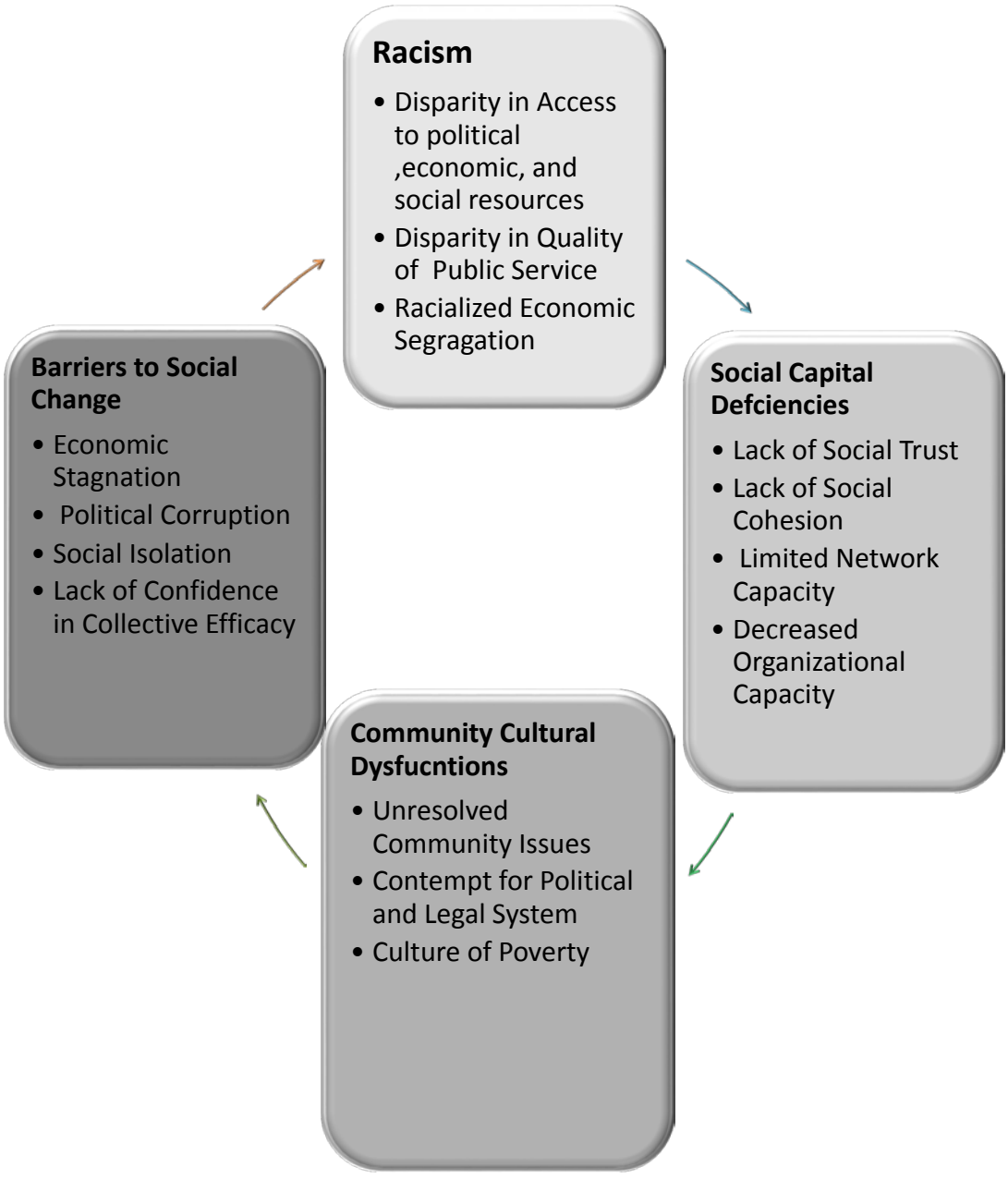

Figure 2. A diagram of the racism community dysfunction cycle..

The evidence for the potential of such a cycle of social outcomes derives from the collected data and the theoretical frameworks used in the study. In the next section, I will discuss the theoretical implications associated with the findings of this research.

Interpretation of Results

The data collection process produced results that were consistent with the findings of much of the available literature concerning racism, social capital, and African American communities. The emerging patterns and themes supported many of the theoretical assumptions derived from the literature. These findings support the notion that African American communities may face a consistent pattern of systemic subjugation.

Literature and Collected Data Connections

Permanence of racism. One of the key theoretical implications drawn from the literature on racism concerned the idea that racism was a constant factor in the lives of African Americans in the United States (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013). The participants in this research study all expressed various experiences of racism. While the magnitude of the experiences varied, there was a consensus that African American people and their communities experienced differential treatment from public institutions, local and state governments, as well as other African American people.

Perhaps the most troubling pattern to emerge in the data was the conflictual relationship between African Americans and the legal system. There was intense and seemingly justified distrust on the part of many participants in the study. Multiple participants reported witnessing or experiencing unfair practices of law enforcement

officers as well as the judicial system. In the Gadsden County community where the population was majority Black, and there was a reportedly more representative police force the complaints were less severe. This occurrence may also result from the fact that Gadsden County residents recently elected their first African American Police Chief. However, in Leon County there were multiple complaints of police brutality, officer misconduct, and lack of ability for redress. In due course, several of the participants expressed the idea that they or members of their respective community were being oppressed and mistreated by law enforcement. In addition, there was a strong sentiment that no one was listening to the grievances of the community members. This data is consistent with much of the research on structural racism in law enforcement (Alexander, 2012; Green, 2008; Lynch, 2011).

It is likely, that the prevalence of racism inhibits the ability of African Americans to optimally develop their communities. This lack of development results in continuing problems that appear unsolvable encouraging many community members to adjust and adapt to the situation. Several participants expressed this sentiment throughout the interview process. The acceptance of inferior service and treatment as normative was an essential component of Jones' (2002) understanding of internalized racism.

Racialized economic segregation, a concept derived from Wilson's (2011) discussion of the persistent racial trends in economic segregation, is another pattern identified in the individual and focus groups interviews data. In addition, the census data and recent reports have supported the notion that economic segregation is a key factor in the marginalization of African American communities in the Tallahassee Metro area

(Florida & Mellander, 2015). Florida and Mellander (2015) ranked the Tallahassee Metro Area as number one in the United States for its level of economic segregation. This economic segregation is consistent with the information reported by the participants in both case locations. The majority of the participants expressed that their communities were both economically and racially segregated.

Black social capital. Orr (2000) suggested that African American communities developed social capital unique to their cultural understanding and local environment. Thus, it was expected that much of the structural sources of social capital identified in the two case locations would be similar to those found throughout the literature. Many of the participants referenced their churches as an essential source of social capital. Another source of social capital for both case sites was the local HBCU Florida A&M University. These institutions served as principal sources of capital providing education, employment, access to expertise, and locations for meetings and discussions.

In terms of cognitive social capital, many of the participants indicated a sense of belonging to their communities. This finding is consistent with Putnam's (2007) hunkering down thesis that suggested that homogeneous communities would exhibit high amounts of social trust. However, as suggested in the Brondolo, Libretti, Riviera, and Walsemann, (2012) study the impact of internalized racism was evident in several of the statements made by participants in regards to social trust. Several participants suggested that their communities were unsafe and that the members were unworthy of trust. This shared understanding leaves reason to suspect that there may be a correlation between internalized racism and bonding social capital in LDMBCs.

Despite the abundance of examples provided referencing bonding social capital both case sites provided few examples of bridging and linking social capital. This finding was also consistent with the literature on social capital in African American communities (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Lin, 2000; Lin, 2008).

As suggested by Lin (2008) heterophilus social capital or social capital between dissimilar groups is seemingly harder to access and utilize for minority communities. Orr (1999) also suggested that African American communities would fare well in terms of Bonding Social Capital, but their intercommunity social capital also referred to as bridging or linking would be lacking. This opinion was extremely evident throughout the data collection process. Each participant expressed various challenges concerning making connections with dissimilar persons and leaders of the community in order to coordinate action to resolve community issues.

Several of the participants complained of outside influence from communities that wanted to divert social resources for their benefit. Racialized economic segregation also played a critical factor in limiting access and utility to bridging social capital. Lastly, corruption of public officials, which resulted in inadequate representation along with the lack of trust in government or the political process, hampered the Linking Social Capital in the case locations. This activity was consistent with the findings in the literature regarding linking and bridging social capital in African American communities (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Kelly, 2012).

Theoretical Consistency

Critical race theory. The use of a critical race theory construct shaped the theoretical proposition that various forms of racism would be prevalent in African American communities and, therefore, would influence the development of social capital in those communities. More specifically, it fostered the assumption that types of racism would have different effects on different aspects of social capital. For example, internalized racism arguably influences interpersonal trust and, therefore, may cause a deficiency in social cohesion and bonding social capital whereas structural and cultural racism would impact both bridging and linking social capital.

These theoretical prepositions were consistent with the findings of the research. In both case locations, evidence of racism was found to be prevalent. The document reviews and interviews provided multiple examples of racialized economic segregation, a disparity in the quality of government service, and disparity in the quality of life within the communities. It is important to note that this doctoral study testing did not utilize any extensive quantitative measures to establish a correlation between racism and social capital. However, participant's statements coupled with the vital and demographic statistics in each region support the idea that racism influences the development of social capital in the selected LDMBCs.

Polarities of democracy model. The polarities of democracy model served as a theoretical construct, which informed the interpretation of the findings within the LDMBCs. The participation and representation polarity possibly explains the lack of linking social capital in LDMBCs. In addition, the diversity and equality polarity can be

utilized to explain the prevalence of bonding social capital and the lack of bridging social capital.

The diversity and equality polarity. Many of the participant's statements corresponded with the identified negative aspects of diversity and equality. Benet (2006) suggested that issues concerning income inequality and differentials in access to political power were among the most detrimental negative aspects of the diversity equality polarity. The findings of this study suggest that racism maintains an imbalance of power that leads to prolonged economic stagnation. This stagnation exacerbates income and wealth disparity. In addition, a host of other negative outcomes seemingly result from racism. Figure 3 shows a polarity map for the diversity and equality polarity.

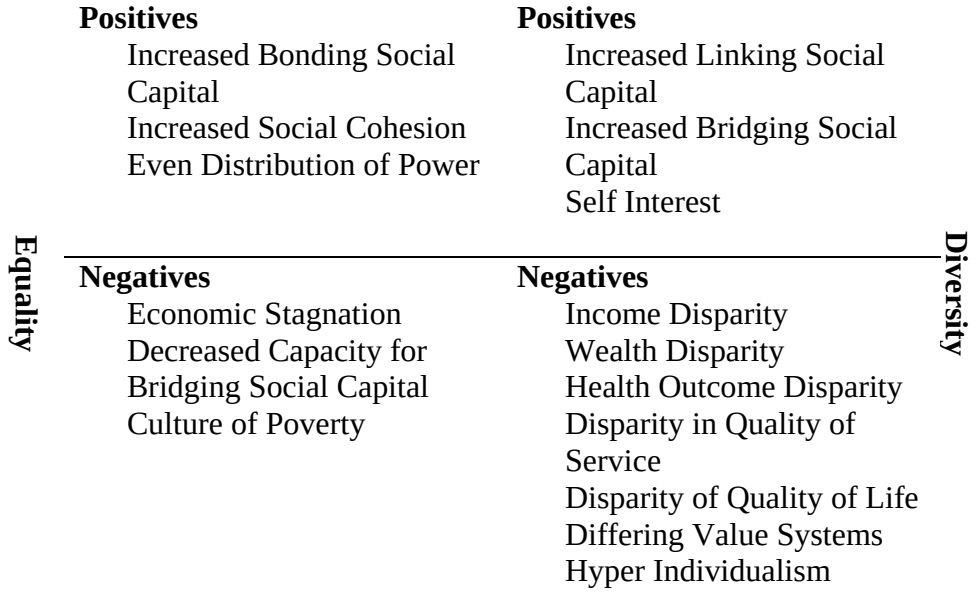

Figure 3. A diagram of the diversity and equality polarity map.

The participation and representation polarity. One of the more significant emerging themes throughout the literature was the poor relationship between the

community and their elected officials. There was also a strong sentiment of distrust of the local government officials from both case sites. Several of the participants expressed that they were feeling too overwhelmed to involve themselves in community improvement activities. The statements from the participants along with documented cases alleged corruption and scandal in Gadsden County supported Benet's (2012b) description of the downsides of the participation and representation polarity.

The research findings suggest that internalized and structural racism may promote the negative aspects of this polarity. Structural racism arguably allows for increased marginalization of oppressed people. Additionally, the disparities of political power may reinforce the inability of community members to hold elected officials accountable. Furthermore internalized racism seemingly causes members of the community to lose faith in collective efficacy. This loss of faith may result in the desire to withdraw from community life and the development of negative outlooks about the community and its residents. This may explain some of the lower voter turnout as well as other forms of civic engagement that our lacking in the LDMBCs. Figure 4 shows a polarities management map for participation and representation.

Figure 4. A diagram of the participation and representation polarity map.

The justice and due process polarity. Justice and due process are both essential functions of a legitimate democracy. Failure to manage this polarity would seemingly have disastrous effects for the social outlook of a community. Many of the participants in the study indicated that they have witnessed a multitude of injustices. Participants repeatedly identified elected officials as well as law enforcement officers as primary culprits in violations of justice and due process standards. Therefore, it can be inferred that a failure to manage the diversity and equality as well as the representation and participation polarities influences the inadequate management of the justice and due process polarity.

The vivid descriptions of police brutality, unequal distribution of resources and mistreatment by the legal system suggested that the LDMBCs were experiencing the downsides of the justice and due process polarity. Residents of LDMBCs may find it

hard to trust the local law enforcement and justice system. Therefore they would be less likely to participate in the system. For example community members may feel discouraged from working with local police officers to promote public safety or participating with the schools systems to improve education initiatives. The lack of participation leads to more negative outcomes such as the inability to hold local government officials accountable which then allows for unchecked police brutality, prosecutorial misconduct, and other unfair punishments. Figure 5 displays a polarities management map for justice and due process.

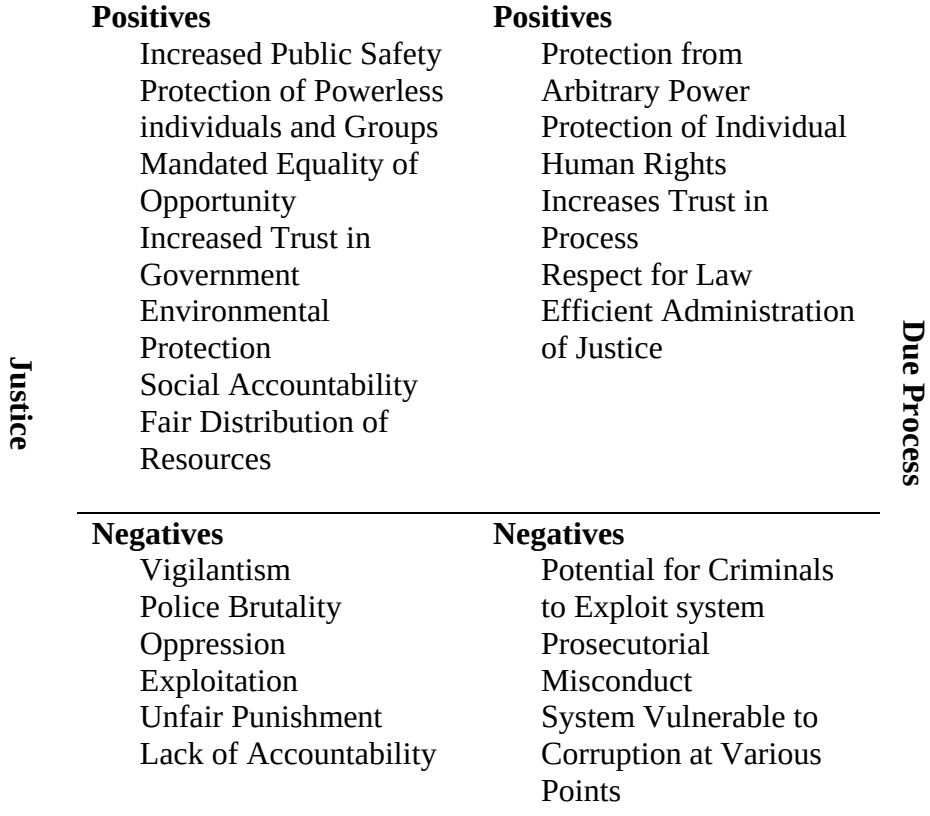

Figure 5. A diagram of the justice and due process polarity map.

Other democratic polarities. Benet (2006) suggested that each of the elements of the polarities of democracy model were essential for improving democratic governance. While all the elements were not expressed in the findings of this research study they still may play important roles in the relationship between racism and social capital in LDMBCs. Although, there were not many participant statements that reflected the upsides or downsides of the human rights and communal obligations polarity, it still may be a factor in community relations. In addition, the freedom and authority polarity relationship may explain some of the issues within the community as well**.**

Polarities management. Johnson's (1996) concept of polarities management made two critical distinctions that are integral to the understanding of the relationship between racism and social capital. The first is his concept of duration and intensity. In this conceptualization, a group experiencing the downside of a pole for a prolonged period will become more focused on the opposite pole and lose site of the downsides of this element. Furthermore, the intensity of which the said persons experience those downsides will influence their desire for the upsides of the other pole. Several of the participants who expressed discontent with their representation sought increased participation as a solution without recognizing it too would have setbacks and consequences for the community.

In Johnson's (1996) conception, there would normally be a natural shift between the two poles. However, due to structural racism that creates a power imbalance, this causes LDMBCs to experience the downsides of both poles continuously. Using this premise, I developed the racism community dysfunction cycle theory. CRT and the

polarities of democracy model both insinuate that imbalances of power will create unfavorable outcomes. Furthermore, the conceptual framework of polarities management suggests that the failure to properly manage polarity relationships will result in a cycle between the negative consequences of each pole. This understanding is the conceptual foundation of the community dysfunction cycle theory. The proposed theory suggests that racism continues to reduce social capital in LDMBC because of the failure to properly manage the diversity and equality, participation and representation, as well as the justice and due process polarities. Racial disparities allow for the imbalance of power, which causes LDMBCs to prolong the experience of the downsides of the aforementioned democratic elements.

Limitations

I intended to identify the intimate details of the nature of the relationship between racism and social capital in this dissertation. However, the case study model coupled with human error is bound to physical and psychological limitations. As mentioned in chapter 1 there was a strong reliance on the trust of the participants to tell the truth. While I expect that the participants all were honest, there is no absolute process to verify that they did not embellish or allow their biases to influence their statements.

Another limitation of this research stems from the qualitative methodology of the study. The reliance on qualitative investigative procedures eliminated the ability to find causation or even correlation between some of the key variables in the study. Therefore, the findings of the study can only be shown to offer support or not support the theoretical prepositions. It is also important to note that the proposed racism community dysfunction

cycle theory was not proven in this study. This theory is instead better understood as a logical generalization deduced from the findings of this research.

Another issue stemming from the chosen methodology was the inability to generalize the findings to other communities. The reduced sample size of n=20 does not equate for a truly representative sample. The results of this study are only applicable to the chosen communities and will require replication and larger samples to improve generalizability. Ultimately, these findings will be more useful for informing researchers of the application of the social capital and critical race theories as well as the polarities of democracy model.

Recommendations

Because racism is such an uneasy topic many researchers have avoided seeking more clarity and understanding of how the phenomena operate in contemporary times. However, to improve public policy and have honest discourse about the various racial disparities that exist in the world, it is imperative that researchers ask the hard questions about racism and its impacts. The racism community dysfunction cycle theory requires further investigation and should be examined in other LDMBCs. Furthermore, increased research on racism and its effects will help policy makers to understand which public issues are indeed results of racism.

There is indeed a significant need for more quantitative research to test and identify the level of correlation between the types of racism. For example, there should be more studies of the relationships of personally mediated and internalized racism with the elements of social capital such as social cohesion, social trust, and shared values.

Furthermore, there is a dire need to identify the magnitude of the relationship between internalized racism and bonding social capital, as well as the relationship between structural racism, and linking social capital. Lastly, a more thorough investigation of the effect that racialized economic segregation has on bridging social capital is integral to improving policy analysis procedures, as well as policy formation in the United States.

However, it is also important that solutions are sought out for some of the better understood racial issues in the country. The findings of this study suggest that the effective management of Benet's (2006, 2012, 2013) polarities of democracy model may serve as a useful policy analysis tool. Using these approaches, policymakers and analysts might better gauge the impacts that local government policy and organizational structure will have on LDMBCs. It is possible that policies that allow for improved management of the polarities of democracy may mediate several of the negative elements presented in the previous sections.

For example, improved policy that allows for efficient management of the justice and due process polarity will likely allow for improved relationships between African American communities and law enforcement. Several of the participants in the study made complaints about abuses of power on the part of officials of the criminal justice system. These types of abuses are likely a result of improper management of the polarities of democracy. The mandatory use of body cameras by officers is one potential policy that will allow for the level of transparency necessary to effectively manage the justice and due process polarity (Harris, 2010). Furthermore, this technology has the potential to protect both civilians and officers from unjust treatment (Harris, 2010).

Additionally, citizen review boards empowered to cite and punish officers who abuse their authority would seemingly allow for proper mitigation of the justice and due process polarity as well as the participation and representation polarity (King, 2015; Sankar, 2010). The findings of this study also suggest that the justice and due process polarity as well as the diversity and equality polarity might be more effectively managed if local police departments give increased hiring consideration to applicants who are culturally competent and also reside in the communities that they will be assigned to protect and serve.

Policy makers should also consider more effective management of the participation and representation polarity to reduce corruption and restore trust in government within LDMBCs. Laws enacted in Florida and other states have had a debilitating effect on Black voter turnout (Herron & Smith, 2012; Uggen, Shannon, & Manza, 2012). The findings of this research indicate that laws aimed at preventing disenfranchisement of African American voters might increase their participation in local and state government (Herron & Smith, 2012; Uggen, Shannon, & Manza, 2012). Particularly, re-instituting the early voting on the Sunday before elections may be instrumental in improving participation among African American communities (Herron & Smith, 2012), thus gaining the positive aspects of participation and representation. Campaign finance laws that reduce the ability of wealthy individuals to unfairly influence elected officials also may serve as potential mechanisms to manage the participation and representation polarity.

Additionally, the diversity and equality polarity requires significant attention in the Tallahassee Metropolitan area. There must be reforms put in place that work to prevent social isolation and racialized economic segregation (Collins & Williams, 1999; Glaeser & Vigdor, 2012; Logan, 2013). The research suggests that policy orientated towards creating affordable housing in various communities might work to break the long lasting trends of economic segregation and allow for proper management of the diversity and equality polarity. More case studies on the use of the polarities of democracy model will hopefully identify best practices for balanced community development and improvement of democratic governance in the United States.

Lastly, I hope to replicate the research strategy that I used in this doctoral study in other LDMBCs. It will be important to identify if similar patterns exist in LDMBCs in other regions of the United States. Along with these studies, it will be important to examine the relationship between racism and social capital in Native American, Latino American, and Asian American communities. Increasing understanding of how racism influences those communities should allow for further development of the racism community dysfunction cycle theory. Ultimately, this approach can be used to identify the process whereby racism affects social capital and therefore community development in contemporary times.

Social Change Implications

The overarching goal of this research was to increase the understanding of the ways that racism influenced social capital in LDMBCs. This goal stemmed from the desire to identify root problems facing African American and other minority communities

in the United States. Social capital is an essential element in a community's sustainability and resistance. As the world population grows, and we must look forward to increasing urbanization and limited resources, it is imperative that people learn to live in proximity to one another. If we are to have peaceful communities that produce active and competent citizens, we must start with removing roadblocks that create disparities. Identifying these root problems will help the process of developing strategies to mitigate issues that hamper community development.

For LDMBCs that harbor nearly 30% of the nation's African Americans it is imperative that society provide these residents equal access to opportunity. The results of this study suggest that a focus on developing bonding, bridging, and linking social capital within these communities is the key to unlocking their productive potential. If the United States is to become an actual post racial nation, it will be imperative that all communities have equitable access to necessary resources for progress.

Conclusion

Racism is not compatible with democracy. Racism and the resulting racial disparities render democratic government illegitimate by robbing its victims of their ability to experience the positives attributes of equality and diversity. This is turn results in interrelationships with the other elements of the polarities of democracy. With the absence of these key democratic elements the victims of racism are subject to a litany of human rights violations. Furthermore, it prevents them from acknowledging and accepting communal obligations or from sharing in the responsibility of participation and

authority. It limits their freedom, infringes on their rights, makes a mockery of due process, and ultimately prevents the effective and efficient administration of justice.

For the individuals experiencing racism as victims, they lose confidence in the ability of government to resolve social issues. The more intense the experience of racism the more they lose hopes and become trapped in a cycle of continuous dysfunction. At this point, we have those who could be future leaders of a great American Democracy that are now subject to undemocratic, oppressive measures. This oppression when left unchecked ultimately destroys the notion of community and with it the hopes of civility and progress.

For those experiencing racism as its benefactors, they become more emboldened. Many of the most brazen disregards for due process and justice are committed by those who expect minimum resistance from the communities they disrupt. The climate polluters, drug dealers, human rights abusers, are all careful to target communities where the social capital is low, and the dysfunction cycle has already set into place.

This process unchecked could lead to the unraveling of human civilization. Therefore, it is imperative that members of communities impacted by racism take the first step to solving their problems. The benefactors as well as those who are not experiencing this oppression first hand are less likely to be motivated to make the necessary systemic changes. Unfortunately, those are the persons best positioned, in terms of resources, to address these problems. It is likely that only some of these persons can be morally compelled to act. Therefore, the responsibility to demand positive social change will ultimately fall on those most impacted.

Despite the substantial risk involved, members of African American and other minority communities must invest in the development of social capital. Meaning, that there must be work done to repair social trust, improve civic engagement, enhance the sense of community, and expand the network and organizational capacity for the purpose of solving collective problems. These features must be in place for there to be any sustainable progress. Communities must be reclaimed and reshaped so that they produce effective change agents. This creation of vibrant sustainable communities with healthy functioning democratic values is perhaps the most significant phase of the modern American Civil Rights movement. The sustainability of their communities tomorrow is dependent upon the investments into social capital they are willing to make today.

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Appendix A: Individual Interview Protocol

Individual Interview Protocol

Pre Interview Questionnaire

Name: **Date of Birth:**

Street Address: **Apt #:** **City:** **Zip Code:**

Years Lived In Community:

Political Affiliations:

Organizational Affiliations:

Education Level:

Occupation:

Marital Status:

Interview Location: **Interview Time:**

Introduction Script:

First, I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this Interview. Please understand that this interview can take up 1 hour of your time. I want to remind you that you are free to end this interview at any time for any reason and it will not incite any retaliation or consequences from the interviewers. Throughout the Interview, you will see me taking notes as you respond to the questions. If at any time, you have any questions about a question I am asking you feel free to ask. Also, if you do not want to answer a question, simply let me know and we can move on.

You were chosen to participate in this interview because you are a member of the local African American community. My research is investigating the relationship between racism and social capital in majority black African American communities**.** **Racism** in this understanding is: ***The processes, norms, structures, ideologies, and behaviors that perpetuate racial inequality and afford privilege to a dominant racial group based on skin*** **color. Social Capital** is defined as: ***The resources, benefits, and networks created and shared by members of a community in order to facilitate coordinated action that solves individual and collective problems.***

Before we start do you have any questions or concerns?

Appendix B: Individual Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Part I Community Profile

1. **Please describe how you identify your role or sense of belonging in this community:**

2. **Describe the nature of the people in your community**

    a. **How do you feel about them**

    b. **What do you think they feel about the community as a whole?**

3. **Do you think Black people in your community have equal access to _____ when compared with White People?**

    Probe: Education, health, public services, financial assistant, recreation, security, childcare)

4. **Who are the leaders in this community** *(probe formal and informal leaders*)

    a. **How do they become leaders**

5. **What do you feel are some of the main issues facing your community (***Consider Job Availability, Social Mobility, Personal Safety, Environmental Safety, Food Security***)**

    a. **What are two main reasons that the problem you identified has not been solved in the last two years**

6. **Have there been any efforts by the community to improve any of the problems you identified**

Part 2 Identified Social Issues

Social Issue Prompt: African Americans in Gadsden/Leon County compared to whites in the same are show the following:

Give example of wealth inequality, education inequality, environmental injustice, and criminal injustice.

7. **What steps can be taken to address any of the issues faced in your community**

8. **What chance for success do you feel that an effort to address such issues would have in this community**

9. **What organizations can you reach out too in order to assist yourself or someone you know with overcoming some of the identified issues?**

10. **What political officials can you reach out too in order to assist yourself or someone you know with overcoming some of the identified issues?**

11. **How will the statistics presented to you impact your political decision making in future elections**

12. **How will the statistics presented to you influence your willingness to join or support an organization that is working to address some of these issues in your community**

Appendix C: Focus Group Interview Protocol

Greetings, I first want to personally Thank you for taking the time to join our discussion of racism and social capital in Tallahassee/Quincy Florida. My name is Bruce Strouble and I'm a doctoral student at Walden University. I am conducting research for my dissertation to investigate the influence that racism has on social capital in majority African American communities. In particular, I hope to learn what exactly racism does to the ability of community members to coordinate action to solve their problems.

So today I want to talk with you about your experiences as members of this community. So, I will start with providing you some background information which included the definitions of social capital and racism as well as the some of the key problems I have identified in my research that face your community.

Before we begin, let me review a couple of rules that will help to make our discussion more productive.

1. First because I will be recording to ensure accuracy, it is important that you speak up, speak clearly and that you only speak one at a time. I do not want to miss any of your comments.
2. Secondly, please do not use your name. Each of you has an assigned Pseudonym. No reports will link what you say to your name, department, or institution. In this way, we will maintain your confidentiality and I can be more effective in protecting your privacy. In addition, I ask that you all respect

the confidentiality of everyone here. Please do not repeat who said what when you leave this meeting.

3. During the 2 hours we'll be here, I will ask you questions, concerning problems identified in your community and those similar too it. Then I will simply listen to what you have to say and take notes. For the most part, I will only participate in the discussion as a moderator. So please, feel free to respond to each other and to speak directly to others in the group.
4. I want to hear from each of you. I am interested in both popular and unpopular viewpoints, common and uncommon experiences. Please do not feel offended if I ask you to hold off so I can get responses from others or if I ask you to participate more.
5. If for any reason you begin to feel uncomfortable, remember you are free to exit the interview without any reprisals.
6. Lastly please be honest about your responses this will greatly improve the reliability of this research project. Please remember that I will be the only person with access to the transcripts and your privacy and confidentiality will be protected so please ignore the video recorder.

If it is OK with you, we will turn on the video recorder and start now.

Pre Interview Prompt:

African Americans in Gadsden/Leon County show evidence of racial based disparity in several socio economic indicators Such As**:** **Pre Interview Prompts**

Health Disparities in Quincy:

Asthma, Cancer, Diabetes, HIV Aids, Domestic Violence, Infant Mortality, Substance Abuse.

Racial Profiling:

African Americans accounted for 47 percent of all instances of racial profiling in Florida, while Latinos accounted for 23 percent, multiracial individuals accounted for 19 percent, Asian Americans accounted for 11 percent, and whites accounted for 3 percent.

- African Americans and Latinos accounted for 70 percent of those stopped by members of the highway patrol—
    - Since those groups comprised only 5 percent of drivers.
    - Minority drivers were also detained for longer periods per stop than white drivers and comprised 80 percent of those whose cars were pulled over and searched, thus becoming victims of stop-and-frisk stops.
    - Only 9 of the 1,100 people stopped during the study were arrested for possession of illegal contraband or ticketed for a violation.
- Florida Statute 901.151—the Florida Stop and Frisk Law—enables a law enforcement officer to temporarily detain an individual whom the officer has reasonable suspicion to believe has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime.

Justifiable Homicide:

When the shooter is white and the victim is African American, the justifiable homicide rate is 34 percent, compared to a rate of 3 percent when the shooter is African American and the victim is white.

Policing of Children

The state leads the nation in school-based arrests as a byproduct of its zero-tolerance policy for disciplinary infractions. These arrests are not distributed equally; African American students make up 46 percent of all school-related referrals to law enforcement, despite making up just 21 percent of Florida youth.

Economic Inequality

- Minorities Account for 73% of All Poverty in Florida
- Lead Nation in Poverty Stagnation (lack of upward financial mobility)
- African Americans have less than 6% Chance For Upward Financial Mobility
- Minorities Account For over 50% of Most Urban Cities but Account For less than 10% of Bank Home Lending
- Overall, nearly two-thirds of nonelderly Blacks have a full-time worker in the family. However, the large majority of Black workers (70%) are employed in blue-collar jobs that typically provide low wages and are less likely than white-

collar jobs to offer health insurance coverage. Reflecting both lower full-time employment rates and higher concentrations of Black workers in blue-collar jobs, African Americans are two and half times more likely than Whites to have family income below the poverty level

Politics

There was a 20-point turnout gap between members of lower income and higher income households in 2010. Only 40% of those, whose family income was less than $50,000 turned out, compared to 60% of those from households earning more than $75,000. Black turnout – 44% in 2010 – continues to trail white turnout, with the gap widening during midterm elections.

- The State has reduced early voting periods, which counted for 32 percent of the African-American voter turnout in Florida in 2008).
- Eleven percent of all Americans lack photo ID. Eighteen percent of Americans over the age of 65 lack photo ID, and 25 percent of African Americans lack photo ID."

Todays, discussion we will try to determine:

1. What resources are available to you all as a community to address these issues?
2. What members of your community have done or have attempted to do to address these issues
3. Why we believe they have failed or succeeded
4. What examples of social capital can be identified in the community
5. What examples of racism can be identified in the community

Appendix D: Focus Group Interview Guiding Questions

1. **Do you really care about the quality of life for everyone in the African American Community?**
    a. Why or Why Not?
    b. Do the people in the community care about other people in the community?
        i. How do you know this?
    c. Is it beneficial to trust to the people in your community?

2. **Are you aware of any general persisting problems facing your community?**
    a. Why are these problems persisting?
    b. Who is responsible for causing the problem?
    c. What will it take to solve it?
    d. Can the problem realistically be resolved?
    e. Is race a factor?

Appendix E: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study of the problems in the African American communities and the methods that can be used to solve them. The researcher is inviting African American men and women ages 18 and older who have lived in Tallahassee or Quincy Florida for at least 5 years to be in the study. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Bruce W. Strouble Jr, who is a Doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to improve understanding of how racism influences African American communities.

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

- Participate in an individual Interview lasting up to 60 minutes in which you answer questions regarding your personal experiences, feelings and thoughts concerning racism, community improvement, and social activity
  - These interviews will be held at Leroy Collins Public Library 200 West Park Avenue Tallahassee Fl, 32303 or Gadsden County Library 732 South Pat Thomas Pky.
  - Quincy, FL 32351-4210
  - If you desire the interviews can be held in your home.
- Participate in 1 focus group interviews lasting up to 120 minutes with other members of your community in which you will be challenged to discuss potential methods of addressing community issues
- Participate in follow-up copy review to make sure researcher understands your statements
- Keep a printed copy of this consent form.

Here are some sample questions:

At the beginning of the Interview you will be given information about problems in your community. After this you will be asked questions like:

1. How do you describe the way the people in your community feel about the community as a whole?
2. What steps are you willing to take to address the any of the identified issues facing your community?
3. What organizations and or political officials can you reach out too in order to assist yourself or someone you know with overcoming some of the identified issues?
4. How will the information presented to you impact your political decision making in future elections
5. How will the information presented to you influence your willingness to join or support an organization that is working to address some of these issues

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. There will be no penalties and you will not be treated differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during or after the study. **You may stop at any time** and you will still receive your gift cards at the conclusion of the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

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

Participating in this study will help the researcher and other researchers gain more understanding on the issues that are taking place in your community as well as those in similar communities.
Participants will learn more about issues within their community.

Payment:

All participants will receive a $20 dollar gift card as a token of appreciation for participating in the study. The gift cards will be mailed to all participants in no less than 30 days following the conclusion of their participation in the study. The cards will be given even if you choose to stop your participation before the interview or focus groups have concluded.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept private. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by using encryption protection on the hard drive of a laptop computer. During the Focus group sessions each participant will be given a fake name to protect their private information from other participants. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via phone or email [redacted] if you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension ***3121210***. Walden University's approval number for this study is **08-15-14-0334183** and it expires on **August 14, 2015.**

Statement of Consent:

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

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature _____

Researcher's Signature _____