CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND ITS EFFECTS IN NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:
THE INFLUENCE OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND
EFFECTIVENESS

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

The School of Social Work in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Pittsburgh

2004

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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July 23, 2004

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While contemporary social workers (Johnson, 1998; Schorr, 1997; Weil, 1996) point to a revitalization of community based social work strategies over the past decade that promote the active engagement of residents in poor communities; these efforts have not been accompanied by research that presents clear measurable results (Itzhaky & York, 2002). This project contributes to existing research in community practice by exploring the relationships among citizen participation in neighborhood organizations, perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness, and participants' personal and collective competencies, and sense of community. The current study is guided by prior research that demonstrates the problems and issues faced by residents in poor neighborhoods today, and the importance of citizen participation as a vehicle for community improvement. Furthermore, several theoretical perspectives were used to explain the nature of citizen participation: the ecological perspective, perceived control, collective efficacy, sense of community, and empowerment theory. A cross sectional, self-report survey design was used to examine citizen participation among participants (N = 124) in four neighborhood organizations in poor communities in Pittsburgh. Respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness had a weak effect on their participation. However, the more positive respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood

organization's characteristics and effectiveness, the greater their perceived effects from participation (i.e., increased personal and collective competencies and sense of community). Furthermore, the more respondents participated in their neighborhood organization, the greater their perceived effects from participation. Finally, the greater respondents' motivation for participation, the more involved they were in their neighborhood organization. The current study demonstrates the importance of social work practice interventions that focus on engaging citizens to improve their communities, and social work research that examines citizen participation in a community context. Social work strategies that analyze and understand the motivation of current and potential participants, and help to build community and organizational capacity, are important for facilitating citizen participation. Furthermore, social work researchers must work with practitioners to analyze interventions in ways that present clear measurable results, use more sophisticated research methodologies, and build a knowledge base upon which social work practitioners can guide their work in poor communities.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful that I have had an opportunity to step away from my work in poor communities to better understand the efforts of residents who volunteer their time and energy to improving their neighborhoods. There are many people I am grateful to for their encouragement, support and inspiration. I am particularly indebted to my deceased parents, Ann and Bob, for instilling in me the genuine desire to learn and to use my knowledge and skills to help improve the lives of others. My parents made great sacrifices to ensure that my brothers, sisters and I received the best possible education, and they always encouraged and supported all of us no matter what we did. My parents have been my special angels continuing to watch over me the past three years as I have completed my Ph.D. I also want to thank my brothers Bob and Tom, their wives Sue and Lynn, my sisters Cynthia and Rose, and their husbands, Rich and Dave, for their encouragement and support, as well as all of my nieces and nephews: Rachel, Tracy, Matt, Christina, Jessica, Jeannine, Bobbi Lynn, Bob, Anthony, Tom and David. Finally, I am grateful to my husband Sal for his support so that I could go to school full-time and complete my degree so quickly, and to his family (Sam, Sharon and Scott) for their support and encouragement.

Esther Sales has challenged and encouraged me throughout this process as my teacher, mentor and dissertation advisor. My debt to Esther and my committee members Gary Koeske, Moe Coleman and Pam Meadowcroft cannot be repaid. I learned and accomplished exactly what I originally intended when I applied to the Ph.D. program at the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh: how to conduct and apply research and evaluation on community practice in poor communities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

1.   INTRODUCTION

Poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods are frequently hostile environments where children and families deal with negative life situations, such as crime, poverty, unemployment, decay, and social isolation. The goal of social work practice in poor, disadvantaged communities is to engage residents, and at the same time develop the capacity of local organizations through which residents can address negative conditions in their communities. Gamble and Weil (1995) define citizen participation as the "active, voluntary engagement of individuals and groups to change problematic conditions and to influence policies and programs that affect the quality of their lives or the lives of others" (p. 483). Poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods have historically been and continue to be an important focus for social work practice. Some of the first social workers in America lived and worked in poor neighborhoods, and today's social workers continue to empower residents of poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods to address their own needs.

Current research demonstrates the problems and issues faced by residents in poor neighborhoods today (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Kato & Sealand, 1993; Chase-Lansdale, Gordon, Brooks-Gunn & Klebanov, 1997; Crane, 1991; Coulton, Korbin & Su, 1999; Duncan, Brooks-Gunn & Klebanov, 1994; Ku, Sonenstein & Pleck, 1993; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 1999; Loeber & Wikstrom, 1993; Peeples & Loeber, 1994; Rosenbaum, Kulieke & Rubinowitz, 1988; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Simons, Johnson, Beaman, Conger & Whitbeck, 1996). Current research also demonstrates the importance of citizen participation in poor neighborhoods. Sampson and his colleagues (2002) indicated in a recent review that the negative effects of living

in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods are influenced by neighborhood social processes, including participation in community organizations (Elliott, Wilson, Huizinga, Sampson, Elliott & Rankin, 1996; Gies & Ross, 1998; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997; Veysey & Messner, 1999).

While contemporary social workers (Johnson, 1998; Schorr, 1997; Weil, 1996) point to a revitalization of community based social work strategies over the past decade that promote the active engagement of residents in poor communities; these strategies have not been accompanied by research that presents clear measurable results (Itzhaky & York, 2002). This project contributes to existing research in community practice by exploring the relationships among citizen participation in neighborhood organizations, perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness, and participants' personal and collective competencies, and sense of community. The results of this study will help social workers and other community practitioners understand the nature of citizen participation, and develop community engagement and capacity building strategies in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods.

1.1.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers states that the "primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed or living in poverty" (NASW, 1997). It goes on to say that social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Some of the first social workers in America engaged residents in addressing their own needs through their work in

settlement houses and community centers in poor, inner city neighborhoods in the early part of the twentieth century (Fisher, 1994). The sections below describe historical social work approaches to citizen participation in poor neighborhoods; the problem of poor neighborhoods today; and current research that demonstrates the importance of citizen participation strategies in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods.

1.1.1. Historical Social Work Approaches to Citizen Participation in Poor Neighborhoods

In the early part of the twentieth century, the goal of social workers in poor neighborhoods was to resolve the conflicts of modern life that resulted from the rapid industrialization and social changes that occurred during the latter part of the nineteenth century, including mass migration, high unemployment, and the growing gap between the rich and poor (Putnam, 2000). They were part of the national liberal reform movement called progressivism, whose goals were to ensure that everyone had an opportunity for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness (Fisher, 1994). There was a general feeling that urbanization, industrialization and immigration had undermined neighborliness and diminished the economic and spiritual community in America (Putnam, 2000).

A major goal of Progressives was cultivating community and addressing the economic and structural conditions of poverty. Settlement houses were initially developed by Progressive social workers to teach English to new settlers as well as the civic knowledge necessary for citizenship. Later, their activities broadened to include job skills training, kindergartens, day care centers, art, music and cultural activities, and providing space for local unions, ethnic clubs and other community groups to gather to discuss issues (Putnam, 2000). The more reform oriented settlement house workers also engaged in political or social action by advancing

reforms in the areas of welfare (Mothers' Pensions), code enforcement, child labor and juvenile justice (Trattner, 1998).

Early social workers in the Progressive Era were also involved in the community center movement. Stanton Coit, one of the key leaders of this movement, sought to expand the notion of participatory democracy in neighborhoods throughout the country (Putnam, 2000). Mary Parker Follett, a community center leader and settlement worker in Boston sought to recreate neighborhood bonds she felt had been eroded by new trends (Putnam). Similar to settlement houses, community centers attempted to foster harmony and cooperation among the working class and immigrant populations and deal with the conditions of slum life. Unlike settlement houses, which were governed by powerful outsiders, the goal of community centers was to foster citizen involvement in decisions; however, most were eventually governed by social welfare professionals who made all of the important decisions (Fisher, 1994).

Social workers working at the neighborhood level in the 1960s worked with community action agencies that were developed by the federal government through the War on Poverty. Like the settlement house and community center movements, the War on Poverty was a response to the belief that economic growth had not resolved the "income inequities" in America (Fisher, 1994). Social theorists and others began to take notice of these disparities and warned of impending class and racial conflicts (Fisher). Michael Harrington's *The Other America: Poverty in the United States*, published in 1962, drew public attention toward a previously "invisible" population of poor people in rural areas of the United States, specifically Appalachia, and in primarily black urban ghettos (Fisher).

In response to the unrest and social disorder of the civil rights movement and to new evidence of more widespread poverty, the federal government passed the Economic Opportunity

Act of 1965 (Fisher, 1994). The Economic Opportunity Act authorized the creation of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) which were to be "developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents in the areas and members of the groups served" (Kramer, 1969, p. 1). Unlike other programs where operations and funding were controlled by local government, CAAs funding came directly from the federal government (Fisher). The federal government offered up to 90 percent of the financing for approved programs as an incentive to organize a representative group of the poor for the planning and administration of poverty programs (Kramer). However, local officials became increasingly threatened by the advocacy and social action projects of the CAAs, so in 1967 the federal government passed the Green Amendment, which required that all CAAs be designated by state or local governments and rerouted all grants through local officials versus directly allocating them to local community organizations (Fisher).

Approximately 1,000 CAAs were funded within 18 months of passage of the OEA; however, citizen participation did not come without struggle for most CAAs (Fisher, 1994). At first, public officials and agency leaders dominated the boards of CAAs, but local activists eventually gained appointments through pressure and protests (Fisher). Where the poor were actively involved, the CAAs focused on neighborhood advocacy, organizing and development, such as defending welfare recipients' rights, setting up well-baby clinics, community development, school lunch and rodent extermination programs, and fostering community solidarity and power (Fisher).

CAAs were able to engage citizens in the political process and provide a power base for the election of significant numbers of black mayors – from none in 1968 to 108 in 1974 (Fisher, 1994). The CAAs were important educational experiences for tens of thousands of poor and

black people who became active in local politics for the first time (Fisher). They joined voluntary organizations and political groups that had the power to exert pressure on the system for better services, benefits and jobs (Fisher).

Social workers in the 1970s and 1980s responded to new social, economic and political changes, including high unemployment and inflation, a surge in the welfare rolls, increasing conservatism, declining federal resources, and attacks on the welfare state, by creating public-private partnerships and community action efforts that focused on some of the worst neighborhood problems (Fisher, 1994). The 1960s War on Poverty and Civil Rights movement created strong neighborhood and community based organizations that remained in place and strengthened their efforts despite the lack of government funding. New community development efforts grew out of grassroots community action agencies and other civil rights organizations, supported by national and local foundations, corporations and intermediaries. Fisher describes these new community organizing efforts as the "new populist movement," which was rooted in the values of democracy, civic participation and community control - the idea that residents could define and control planning and development in their own communities.

Community and neighborhood development organizing efforts focused on building resident controlled and led boards of directors and on maintaining and strengthening neighborhood networks and organizations, and on the physical and economic restoration of their neighborhoods (Fisher, 1994). In the 1970s and 1980s, hundreds of new neighborhood and community development organizations were created out of new federal sources of support for housing development, or evolved out of social service and community action agencies of the 1960s (Pierce & Steinbach, 1987). By 1995, there were approximately 2,200 neighborhood and community development organizations throughout the country (NCCED, 1995).

1.1.2.   The Problem of Poor, Disadvantaged Neighborhoods Today

Poor, disadvantaged communities are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (1995) as census tracts where at least 20% of residents are poor. More than 1 in 5 Americans, or 52 million people, lived in a poverty area in 1990, and just over two-thirds of poverty area residents lived in a metropolitan area (U.S. Census Bureau). While the share of all poor people in census tracts with poverty rates of 40 percent or more (defined as concentrated poverty) decreased from 17% to 12% in the 1990s, the percentage in the 20-30% range actually increased from 18% to 21% (Kingsley & Pettit, 2003). The four neighborhood organizations participating in the current study are located in neighborhoods with poverty rates over 20% (USCSUR, 2002).

Research on neighborhood effects demonstrates the negative consequences of living in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods. The following studies examined the effects of living in poor neighborhoods on education, mental health, sexuality and child bearing. In one study examining IQ, teenage births and school-leaving, Brooks-Gunn and her colleagues (1993) found that children growing up in affluent neighborhoods appeared to do better than children growing up in low-income neighborhoods even when family-level differences were controlled. In the Gautreaux Project, where poor minority public housing residents were moved throughout the Chicago area, youth who moved to more affluent suburbs were more likely to stay in school, take college preparatory classes, and go on to college than their peers who remained in the city (Rosenbaum, et al, 1988). Another study found that black and white adolescents were exposed to sharp increases in the risk of dropping out of school in the worst neighborhoods in large cities even after controlling for individual characteristics (Crane, 1991). The study also found that African American males were most adversely affected by living with low-income neighbors.

Research also demonstrates that living in poor neighborhoods can affect mental health, well-being and other behavioral problems. Among younger children, one study found that the presence of low-income neighbors was associated with increased amounts of reported externalizing behavior problems (Chase-Lansdale, et al., 1997; Duncan, et al., 1994). Among older children, another study found that African American children in low income neighborhoods displayed more peer-reported aggression than did their peers in middle income neighborhoods. Among adolescents, the Pittsburgh Youth Study found that residing in low-income or underclass neighborhoods was positively associated with delinquent and criminal behavior, including the severity and frequency of delinquency (Loeber & Wikstrom, 1993; Peeples & Loeber, 1994). Several national and regional studies also show that residing in low income neighborhoods was associated with higher rates of criminal and delinquent behavior, as well as internalizing behaviors (Sampson & Groves, 1989; Simons, et al., 1996). Finally, Coulton and her colleagues (1999) found that neighborhoods with high levels of impoverishment, instability, and child care burden were perceived by neighborhood residents as having lower overall quality, greater disorder, and a reluctance of adults to control children.

Furthermore, research on neighborhood effects demonstrates that living in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods can affect sexuality and childbearing. Several studies have found that poor neighborhoods with few professional and managerial workers were associated with increased risk of adolescent and non-marital childbearing (Brooks-Gunn, et al., 1993; Crane, 1991). In another study, neighborhood poverty was positively associated with the frequency of intercourse and having impregnated someone, and negatively associated with effective contraceptive use among males (Ku, et al., 1993).

1.1.3.   Research on Neighborhood Social Processes: Why Citizen Participation Matters

While the above studies demonstrate that living in poor, disadvantaged neighborhood can produce negative outcomes, a recent review of the literature by Sampson and his colleagues (2002) demonstrates that neighborhood social processes are important in reducing the negative effects of living in poor neighborhoods, including reducing crime and adolescent behavioral problems. They found four neighborhood social processes that affect individual and community level outcomes in disadvantaged neighborhoods, including neighborhood social ties and interaction, norms and collective efficacy, social activity patterns, and institutional resources, including participation in community organizations (Sampson, et al., 2002). In one study, social ties with neighbors were connected to less perceived powerlessness among residents (Gies & Ross, 1998). Veysey & Messner (1999) found that organizational participation and social networks were associated with less victimization. Sampson and his colleagues (1997) found that collective efficacy, defined as social cohesion and trust among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good, was linked to reduced violence in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Furthermore, aspects of neighborhood social organization, including high levels of local participation in organizations, expectations for informal social control, the ability of residents to guide the behavior of others toward prosocial norms, mutual support for children, and the density of local friendship networks have been found to work against criminal deviance (Sampson & Groves, 1989).

Finally, Elliott and his colleagues (1996) showed that the effects of neighborhood disadvantage on the developmental outcomes of adolescents were largely mediated by the level and form of neighborhood organization. They found that higher levels of informal control in a neighborhood (i.e. respect for authority, social control, mutual respect, neighborhood satisfaction

and bonding) resulted in lower adolescent behavioral problems and association with delinquent youth, and higher personal efficacy and educational expectations.

1.2.   RELEVANCE OF THE PROBLEM TO CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The above section describes the historical development of social work practice in poor communities, the problems and issues faced by residents of poor communities today, and the importance of citizen participation and engagement strategies. This section describes the revitalization of community based social work strategies over the past decade that promote the active engagement of residents in poor communities, and the factors influencing this revitalization (Johnson, 1998; Schorr, 1997; Weil, 1996).

Weil (1996) points out that social work in the United States today faces extraordinary challenges, including diminishing federal responsibility, including the transfer of power about social programs and human services to states and localities, the decline of democratic participation, and the globalization of the economy. Furthermore, local and grassroots movements for community-based social change grounded in empowerment approaches are increasing (Weil). Weil argues that "social workers will be called on to respond to both the continuing dismantling of the federal safety net and local concerns for economic and social development that sustains and supports families and communities" (p. 481). Social workers, therefore, must respond to these challenges with strategies that are proactive, advocate for populations that are poor and vulnerable, and emphasize and expand skills in community-focused practice that connect empowerment strategies with social and economic development (Weil). Social work strategies to engage and empower residents of poor, disadvantaged

communities to address social and economic conditions in their communities have become critically important given these changes.

1.2.1.   Political, Social and Economic Forces Affecting Social Work Today

Weil (1996) describes several political, social and economic forces that affect social work practice in communities today.   Chief among them is the continuing devolution of social programs to the state and local levels, due in part to a backlash against poor people and immigrant groups (Weil).   Furthermore, there is a growing assumption that private nonprofit organizations can respond better, and more cheaply, to local social problems than public services can.   Weil argues that this shift of responsibility from the federal government to state and local governments and nonprofits has resulted in decreased public funding for social and human services, the growth of managed care, and outsourcing to for-profit organizations.

These shifts are occurring at the same time that democratic participation in America is declining (Weil, 1996). Putnam (1995) documents the decline of social capital, which is part of our social life and includes the networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together to pursue shared objectives.   A key component of social capital is civic engagement, which is the degree to which citizens participate in activities that affect the political decision making process at all levels, including membership in neighborhood or political groups (Temkin & Rohe, 1998).   Gardner (1994) also argues that increased mobility has chipped away social anchors, including a sense of continuity and identity, and shared values.

Economic forces shaping social work practice today include the globalization of the economy, specifically the shifting of jobs overseas to lower-cost labor markets, and corporate downsizing, job loss and displacement (Weil, 1996).   These economic forces have resulted in economic insecurity, particularly for poor and vulnerable populations, including residents of

disadvantaged communities. Contemporary social workers and scholars (Bailey, Johnson, Smith, Wood & Yankey, 1996; Berger & Neuhaus; 1991; Gardner, 1994; Johnson, 1998; Nisbett, 1980; Schorr, 1997; Weil, 1996) argue for strategies that focus on community building, the development of a civil society, including democratic participation, a sense of shared values and common identity, and a strong voluntary sector. Weil argues that the "nation needs strategies and interventions at all levels to build viable communities that meet the basic needs of their members," and "result in civil societies that develop and continually reshape effective infrastructures and mediating institutions" (p. 482). Berger & Neuhaus (1991) argue that strong viable communities can provide a stimulus for individual identity, and create a sense of belonging and security. Grassroots neighborhood organizations, such as the groups examined in this study, are important mediating institutions that focus on community building, foster democratic participation, and build a sense of identity, belonging and shared values.

1.2.2. The Revitalization of Community Practice

Social workers and other community practitioners working in the nonprofit, public and foundation sectors have responded to the above political, social and economic forces with a renewed focus on community-based strategies that focus on engaging citizens in improving the negative conditions in their communities. Weil (1994), Schorr (1997), and Johnson (1998) point to a revitalization of community practice strategies over the past decade. New community based interventions have been initiated by the federal government (i.e., Enterprise Zones and Empowerment Communities) and national foundations and organizations across the country (i.e., initiatives sponsored by the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trust, and the Enterprise Foundation; the Rebuilding Communities and Family-2-Family initiatives sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation; the Community-centered Family Service program

initiated by the Alliance for Children and Families; and the Community Building Initiative sponsored by the Local Initiative Support Corporation). Furthermore, funding for community based services often requires intensive citizen participation and interagency collaboration (Weil).

A major focus of these community practice strategies is an emphasis on community building, and making services more effective, accessible, integrated, and comprehensive in the context of the local community where the services occur (Johnson, 1998; Weil, 1996). Community practice strategies focus on grassroots organization, community building, and empowerment based interventions to strengthen participation in democratic processes, assist groups in advocating for their needs and organizing for social justice, and improving the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations (Weil & Gamble, 1995). Community building strategies support and foster positive connections among individuals, groups, organizations and neighborhoods, and strengthen the norms, supports, and problem-solving resources of the community (Weil, 1996). Weil argues that social work strategies today should help clients, communities and organizations respond to social change, including developing the capacity of grassroots and nonprofit organizations, enhancing political and social participation in community life, integrating social and economic development strategies, and expanding research efforts to encompass the best means of capacity building and environmental sustainability. Furthermore, community building strategies help people join together to realize that their individual problems have social causes and collective solutions, and in the process reduce social isolation, and increase interaction in ways produce psychosocial benefits, including increasing perceived and real power (Bandura, 1982; Checkoway, Freeman & Hovaguimian, 1988).

1.2.3.   The Need for Quantitative Research in Community Practice

Evidence-based practice, which aims to provide evidence-based research that practitioners can use to inform interventions, is becoming increasingly important in social work (Gibbs & Gambrill, 2002). However, there is very limited evidence-based research in the area of community practice. In a recent review of the literature, the researcher for this study found only 20 out of 269 studies that presented quantitative findings of community practice interventions (Ohmer & Korr, under review).

The present study was developed in response to the recent growth in community building practice and community based service delivery, as well the need for more extensive research that quantitatively analyzes grassroots, community based organizations. The researcher for the current study worked on several community building initiatives focusing on engaging residents and building their capacity to address problems and issues in poor communities. The major gap in the majority of these initiatives was the lack of research presenting quantitative findings, particularly on the psychosocial effects of participation (i.e., the development of personal and collective competencies and sense of community). Wandersman and Florin (2000) also point out that studies relating involvement in neighborhood and community organizations to organizational variables, such as structure, operations and social climate of the community organizations, are particularly thin. They argue that a major resource of small voluntary organizations, such as neighborhood organizations, is the participation of its members, including their time and energy which must be mobilized into active involvement and performance of tasks. Furthermore, knowledge of organizational variables that influence involvement and participation can be used to intervene to build capacity in such organizations (Chavis, Florin, Wandersman & Rich, 1986).

1.3.   PURPOSE OF THE CURRENT STUDY

The purpose of this study was to help fill the gap in current research in community practice by exploring the relationships among citizen participation in neighborhood organizations, perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness, and participants' personal, political and collective competencies and sense of community. Specifically, the study examined how participants' initial and current motivation for participating influenced their level of their participation and participation in decision making; and how citizen participation influenced participants' personal and collective competencies and sense of community. It also examined the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on the level and form of citizen participation, and participants' personal and collective competencies and sense of community.

The findings from this study will help social workers and other community practitioners measure and describe the effects of citizen participation, target their interventions more effectively, and develop strategies to enhance citizen participation and organizational capacity in disadvantaged neighborhoods. The study provides specific measures that can be used by practitioners to evaluate community practice interventions. This study also provides community practitioners with a greater understanding of how residents are affected by various levels of participation in community organizations. The neighborhood organizations involved in the study can use the results to enhance their membership recruitment and fundraising strategies. For example, they could use the study results to describe the effects/benefits of participation to current and potential members and funders. A greater understanding of the organizational level variables that influence citizen participation may also help social work practitioners and resident leaders working with neighborhood organizations target their interventions more effectively, and

develop strategies to enhance citizen participation and organizational capacity. For example, the findings may indicate the type of organizational structure, decision making processes, and opportunities for involvement that enhance citizen participation. Social work practitioners and neighborhood leaders can then focus on these strategies as they develop the capacity and membership of neighborhood organizations in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

In summary, this study helps to fill a gap in the current research on community practice interventions in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods, provides valuable information for social work practitioners and neighborhood leaders, and demonstrates the importance of social work strategies that facilitate citizen participation in neighborhood organizations to address the difficult social problems.

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The above research questions are guided by several theoretical perspectives that explain the nature of citizen participation in neighborhood and community organizations: the ecological perspective, perceived control, collective efficacy, sense of community, and empowerment theory. The ecological perspective provides an overall framework for understanding the relationship between residents and the disadvantaged neighborhoods in which they live. Perceived control, the belief that one can influence outcomes, encompasses theories of self efficacy and locus of control (Zimmerman, 2000). Bandura's (1982) theory of perceived self-efficacy explains how participation is related to participants' personal beliefs about their own competencies, while Rotter's (1966) theory of locus of control explains how participation is related to participants' sense of control over their environment. Sociopolitical control, a sphere-specific form of perceived control relevant to citizen participation, refers to beliefs about one's capabilities, efficacy, and sense of control in social and political systems (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). Sampson & Raudenbush's (1999) theory of collective efficacy explains the shared willingness of residents to intervene for the common good, which depends on conditions of mutual trust and cohesion. McMillan and Chavis' (1986) theory of psychological sense of community explains the effects of neighborhood participation on residents' sense of belonging to their communities. Finally, empowerment theory has been used to describe the influence of

empowering and empowered organizations on citizen participation (Zimmerman, 2000). Empowering organizations provide a structure for people to gain control over their lives, participate in decision making, and provide opportunities for shared responsibility and leadership; and empowered organizations effectively compete for resources, network with other organizations, influence policy decisions, or offer effective alternatives for service provision.

2.1.1.   The Ecological Perspective

Ecological models are utilized by researchers and social work practitioners to understand individuals in the context of a series of environments or ecological systems in which they reside, including the family, peer group, neighborhood, community, and institutions, such as the school or workplace (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Kato, & Sealand, 1993). Bronfenbrenner (1989) describes the ecological framework for human behavior as the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation throughout the life course between an active, growing human being and his or her environment. Using Bronfenbrenner's framework, Elliott and his colleagues (1996) see the neighborhood as a transactional setting that directly and indirectly influences individual behavior and development.

An important concept deriving from the ecological perspective is that of the "goodness-of-fit" between people and their environments. Goodness-of-fit suggests that nutritive environments provide the necessary resources, security, and support at the appropriate times in the appropriate ways, but hostile environments inhibit development and the ability to cope due to a lack or distortion of environmental supports (Greene, 1999). Disadvantaged neighborhoods are frequently hostile environments where children and families deal with negative life situations, such as crime, poverty, unemployment, decay, and social isolation. Pinderhughes (1983) uses an ecological framework to suggest that the powerlessness of individuals living in distressed

communities can only be addressed through strategies whereby people can influence the external social system to reduce destructive forces and work with systems outside the family, such as churches, businesses or schools, to improve their environment. Citizen participation in neighborhood organizations provides a vehicle for residents to influence external social systems and work with their neighbors and other organizations to improve their communities.

2.1.2. Perceived Control: Self Efficacy and Locus of Control

Citizen participation in neighborhood organizations can affect perceived control, which is the belief that one can influence outcomes (Zimmerman, 2000). Sociopolitical control is a sphere-specific form of perceived control that refers to beliefs about one's capabilities and efficacy in social and political systems, including influencing policy decisions, leading a group of people, or organizing one's neighbors (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). Zimmerman states that sociopolitical control may be particularly relevant for members of voluntary organizations, such as neighborhood organizations, or for individuals involved in community organizing. Individuals with low sociopolitical control may be disengaged from community life, hesitant about participating in community organizations, or uninvolved in political decisions (Zimmerman & Zahniser). On the other hand, involvement in community organizations is expected to be associated with higher levels of sociopolitical control (Zimmerman & Zahniser).

Sociopolitical control integrates three domains of perceived control, including: (1) personality (locus of control); (2) motivational; and (3) cognitive (self efficacy) domains (Zimmerman, 2000). The personality domain, or locus of control, refers to one's beliefs about the cause of the success and failure in one's life (Rotter, 1966). Rotter's theory of locus of control is defined as the degree to which individuals perceive events in their lives as a consequence of their own choice or volition (personal), the consequence of powerful others

(external), or fate (chance). Locus of control is closely related to the concept of learned helplessness, which is the belief that one cannot influence events that affect one's life or environment, which produces self doubts and a disincentive to try (Overmeier & Seligman, 1976; 1975). Zimmerman argues, however, that when individuals have the opportunity to develop and use their personal resources in an effort to exert control, this experience results in learned hopefulness. The personal resources that residents may use and/or develop by participating in neighborhood organizations include specific skills (i.e., leadership, problem solving), or knowledge about causal agents (Zimmerman). A sense of learned hopefulness, therefore, may translate into feelings that one can exert control over the policies and programs that affect outcomes and conditions in one's neighborhood. The personality domain of perceived control helps explain why people participate in neighborhood organizations (i.e., to develop and use their personal resources), as well as the types of personal resources they may develop by participating.

The motivational domain of perceived control also helps to explain why people participate in neighborhood organizations. The motivational domain signifies one's desire to influence the environment as an intrinsic need (de Charms, 1968; White, 1959). White refers to effectance motivation as the drive to master or control one's environment, which appears once the primary drives (i.e., such as hunger or thirst) have been satisfied. de Charms' notion of personal causation is similar in that personal knowledge of being a change agent in the environment is intrinsically satisfying. Motivation to control one's environment is related to behavior that is directed, selective and persistent (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). Participating in neighborhood organizations provides an opportunity for residents to satisfy their intrinsic drive to exert control over the conditions in their immediate environment: their neighborhood.

The cognitive domain of perceived control refers to one's self efficacy or self-judgment about one's capabilities to organize and execute actions necessary to achieve desired goals (Bandura, 1982). Self efficacy theory helps to explain why people participate in neighborhood organizations, as well as how participation affects participants' self-judgment and behavior. According to self efficacy theory, individuals who perceive themselves as inefficacious may be imagining their difficulties as insurmountable (Bandura, 1989), and often avoid certain problem solving activities, even though they may possess the skills necessary to address challenges (Pecukonis & Wenocur, 1994). Individuals who view themselves as efficacious may take action even though they perceive insurmountable or significant obstacles (Bandura, 1989). Bandura's (1989) theory of self efficacy suggests that residents who have strong beliefs in their capabilities approach potential stressors with the assurance that they can exercise some control over them, including addressing the problems often found in disadvantaged neighborhoods. In this sense, self efficacy is a potentially empowering concept (Pecukonis & Wenocur).

Self efficacy theory (Bandura, 1982) describes individuals who give up trying because they believe they cannot do what is required as having low efficacy expectations. Bandura (1986) argues that experiences that produce knowledge and skills and build one's confidence in using one's capabilities can result in higher efficacy expectations. Participating in neighborhood organizations provides a vehicle through which individuals can build their knowledge, skills and confidence. Individuals who are confident of their capabilities but give up trying because of an unresponsive environment have low outcome expectations (Bandura, 1986). Pecukonis and Wenocur (1994) argue that experiences that give people an opportunity to influence the environment can result in higher outcome expectations because individuals can actualize the competencies and skills they possess and/or gain the benefits or entitlements they desire.

Residents who participate in neighborhood organizations have an opportunity to use their knowledge and skills to influence the negative conditions in their neighborhoods through collective action.

2.1.3.   Collective Efficacy

Citizen participation can also facilitate the development of collective efficacy, which is the belief that residents can work together and intervene to maintain social control (Wandersman & Florin, 2000). Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) propose an analogy between individual efficacy and neighborhood efficacy in that both refer to the capacity for achieving an intended effect; however, at the neighborhood level, the shared willingness of local residents to intervene for the common good depends on conditions of mutual trust and cohesion among residents. Sampson and Raudenbush also argue that residents are not likely to take action in neighborhoods where people mistrust each other and the rules are unclear. Collective efficacy, therefore, is "the linkage of cohesion and mutual trust with shared expectations for intervening in support of neighborhood social control" (Sampson & Raudenbush, pp. 612-613).

Pecukonis and Wenocur (1994) argue that "efficacy embraced by the collective provides a unique structural arrangement that allows individuals with common needs to combine and maximize their efforts toward a common end" (p. 14). Bandura (1982) points out that perceived collective efficacy influences what people in groups may choose to do, the amount of effort they exert, and their staying power when their efforts fail to produce intended results. A group's perception of their problem solving skills and ability to improve their lives and the lives of other members is positively associated with their willingness to engage in challenging activities, such as addressing decaying housing or crime in a neighborhood (Pecukonis & Wenocur). Therefore,

perceived efficacy of collective action is important for maintaining as well as initiating participation in community organizations (Perkins & Long, 2002).

2.1.4. Sense of Community

Citizen participation in neighborhood organizations can also influence interpersonal relationships, including fostering a sense of identification with a neighborhood and sense of community that buffers feelings of isolation (Wandersman & Florin, 2000). McMillan and Chavis (1986) define sense of community as "a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (p. 9). According to McMillan and Chavis there are four different components of sense of community, including membership, influence, integration and need satisfaction, and shared emotional connection.

Membership reflects feelings of emotional safety with a sense of belonging to, and identification with, the larger collective. For example, an individual is thought to link affectively and feel a connection to his or her environment if the environment gives him/her a minimum of security (Garcia, Guiliani & Wiesenfeld, 1999). Membership is also connected one's personal material (i.e., improvements in one's home) or nonmaterial (i.e., community participation) investment in the community (Garcia, Guiliani & Wiesenfeld).

Influence reflects the reciprocal relationship of the individual and the community in terms of their ability to affect change in each other (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Garcia and her colleagues (1999) argue that the mobilization of influence must be done through participation in community life, and through this process there is a direct effect on sense of community. Integration and need satisfaction reflects the ability of individuals to get their needs met through cooperative behavior in the community, thereby reinforcing the individuals' appropriate

community behavior (McMillan & Chavis). Garcia and her colleagues argue that a series of processes are established in a community that make personal satisfaction possible while collective needs can also be fulfilled.

Finally, emotional connection reflects the emotional support stemming from the struggles and successes of community living (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Shared emotional connection can be appreciated in the following mechanisms: the frequency and quality of the interaction, shared history, and the investment that people make in their community (McMillan & Chavis). Residents' sense of community contributes to the confidence they have in their neighborhoods (Unger & Wandersman, 1985). Furthermore, a greater sense of community can encourage residents to invest money and time in improving homes and surroundings and increase their participation in neighborhood organizations (Ahlbrandt, 1984; Wandersman, Jakubs & Giamartino, 1981).

2.1.5. Empowering and Empowered Organizations

Organizational characteristics, structure and effectiveness can influence the nature of citizen participation (Wandersman & Florin, 2000). Zimmerman (2000) uses empowerment theory to describe the characteristics of empowering and empowered organizations. Zimmerman argues that empowerment is a process in which efforts to exert control are central, and that empowerment theory "suggests that actions, activities or structures may be empowering, and that the outcome of such processes result in a level of being empowered" (p. 45). Zimmerman states that empowering organizations provide a structure for people to gain control over their lives, participate in decision making, and provide opportunities for shared responsibility and leadership. These types of organizations provide an opportunity for their members to develop their skills and abilities and sense of control. Empowering organizations also provide settings in

which people with similar interests can share information and experiences and develop a sense of identity with other members (Zimmerman). Maton and Salem (1995) describe four important characteristics of organizations that are empowering, derived from their multiple case study of three empowering community settings: (1) a culture of growth and community building; (2) opportunities for members to take on meaningful and multiple roles; (3) a peer based support system that helps members develop a social identity; and (4) shared leadership with commitment to both members and the organization. Empowering organizations also provide real decision making power to their members; otherwise, they may undermine the process of empowerment (Gruber & Trickett, 1987).

Empowered organizations effectively compete for resources, network with other organizations, influence policy decisions, or offer effective alternatives for service provision (Zimmerman, 2000). These types of organizations "successfully thrive among their competitors, meet their goals, and develop in ways that enhance their effectiveness" (Zimmerman, p. 52). Zimmerman includes the following as important characteristics of empowered organizations: (1) they become key brokers in the policy-decision making process; (2) they extend their influence to wider geographical areas and more diverse audiences; (3) they effectively mobilize resources such as money, facilities, and members by connecting with other organizations to share information and resources, and creating a strong base of support.

In summary, the ecological perspective; perceived control, which includes self efficacy and locus of control; collective efficacy; sense of community; and empowerment theory help to explain the nature of citizen participation and its effects, as well as the potential influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on citizen participation in neighborhood organizations.

2.2. ANALYSIS OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Several empirical research studies contribute to the research objectives and theoretical perspectives described in the previous sections. Prior research indicates various motivations for people to participate in community organizations, as well as the relationship between motivation and the level of participation (Florin, Friedmann, Wandersman & Meier, 1989; Kerman, 1996; Prestby, Wandersman, Florin, Rich & Chavis, 1990; Wandersman, Florin, Chavis, Rich & Prestby, 1985; Wandersman, Florin, Friedmann & Meier, 1987; Whitworth, 1993). Research has also shown that a neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness can influence the nature of citizen participation and its effects (Dougherty, 1988; Giamartino & Wandersman, 1983; Florin, Chavis, Wandersman & Rich, 1992; Knoke & Wood, 1981; Maton, 1988; McMillan, Florin, Stevenson, Kerman & Mitchell, 1995; Milburn & Barbarin, 1987; Prestby & Wandersman, 1985, Wandersman & Florin, 2000; Yates, 1973; Zimmerman, 2000). Finally, previous research has demonstrated that participation in neighborhood and community organizations can lead to increased personal and collective competencies, and sense of community (Brodsky, O'Campo, & Aronson, 1999; Chavis, Florin, Rich & Wandersman, 1987; Chavis & Wandersman, 1990; Itzhaky & York, 2002; Itzhaky & York, 2000; Obst, Smith, & Zinkiewicz, 2002; Perkins, Brown, & Taylor, 1996; Perkins, Florin, Wandersman, & Chavis, 1990; Prezza, Amici, Roberti & Tedeschi, 2001; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Shultz, Israel, Zimmerman, & Checkoway, 1995; Smith & Propst, 2001; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Zimmerman and Zahniser, 1991).

2.2.1.   Motivation for Citizen Participation

Wandersman and Florin (2000) argue that individuals choose organizations in which they will participate based on their own characteristics (i.e., values, needs, and personality), and the characteristics of the organizations (i.e., purpose, efficacy). However, the empirical literature on why people participate in voluntary organizations is particularly thin (Wandersman & Florin). Furthermore, the majority of prior research is cross sectional in nature; however, most of the studies offer comparative analyses. The studies described below analyze participants' motivation for participation in voluntary organizations, as well as the benefits and costs of participation.

In their study examining motivation for participation, Wandersman and his colleagues (1985) identified five cognitive social learning variables as predictors of participation in community settings, including skills (i.e., What can I do?), view of the situation (i.e., How bad are the problems?), expectations (i.e., How much can I realistically expect to accomplish?), values (i.e.., How important is this situation to me?), and personal standards (i.e., Is it my duty?). The researchers compared the cognitive social learning variables with a larger set of demographic and personality trait variables to discriminate members from non-members. The results showed that the cognitive social learning variables accounted for more of the variance in participation than the demographic and personality variables. The results from Wandersman study were replicated in a cross-cultural study of neighborhood participation in Israel by Florin and his colleagues (1989). Two other studies used the same cognitive social learning variables to examine participation. One study using structural equation modeling found that these five variables accounted for nearly 50% of the participation in neighborhood organizations

(Whitworth, 1993), while another study found that they accounted for almost 45% of the behavioral intentions to participate in a community coalition (Kerman, 1996).

Wandersman and his colleagues (1987) analyzed the benefits and costs of participation in a cross sectional study that compared members and non-members of voluntary organizations. Both members and non-members agreed that the benefits of participation are in making a contribution and helping others, versus self interest or personal gain. The study also found that non-members perceived more costs than members. In the Block Booster Project, Prestby and his colleagues (1990) examined individual level benefit and cost items, and organizational level measures of incentive and cost-management strategies based on social exchange and political economy theory. The study revealed two cost factors, including personal and social/organizational costs, and two benefit factors, including social/community and personal benefits. Furthermore, the most active participants perceived significantly more social/communal benefits than less active participants, and the least active participants saw more social/organizational costs.

2.2.2.   Citizen Participation and Organizational Characteristics and Effectiveness

Previous research has demonstrated that organizational characteristics and effectiveness can influence the nature of citizen participation; however, there is limited research on how organizational level variables influence the effects of citizen participation on individuals who volunteer their time and energy to neighborhood organizations. There are several weaknesses to the research on citizen participation and organizational characteristics and effectiveness. First, none of these studies used experimental methods; therefore, causality cannot be determined. Furthermore, none of the studies used random assignment, and almost all of these studies were cross sectional in nature. Bivariate (correlations) statistical procedures are typically used in the

older studies, which weakens the results. However, more recent studies utilize multivariate statistical procedures.

Research has demonstrated that participants in voluntary neighborhood organizations prefer organizations that are formal and structured over those that are informal and unstructured. Milburn and Barbarin (1987) categorized 18 neighborhood associations into four groups according to the degree of structure present (highly structured, structured, unstructured, and highly unstructured). They found that the degree of organizational structure in the organization was strongly related to the degree of members' organizational involvement. In their study of block associations, Prestby and Wandersman (1985) found that members in structured organizations participated more, and spent more time outside of meetings working for the organization. Wandersman and Florin (2000) argue that more structure in an organization reduces ambiguities by delineating clear roles, task responsibilities, and operating procedures, which means that a greater variety of options are open to engage participants. Milburn and Barbarin's study found that clear role and task performance allowed participants to better manage their time, committing to those activities in which they were most interested.

The way in which organizations conduct their business also influences participation, particularly the degree to which they engage members in decision making (Wandersman & Florin, 2000). Knoke and Wood (1981) found that increased participation in decision making was related to members' time spent, commitment, and task performance in the organization. In the Prestby and Wandersman study (1985), members spent more time volunteering in block associations that used a democratic decision making process.

Wandersman and Florin (2000) suggest that the social climate of the organization is another useful way of assessing the characteristics of an organization, including perceptions of

relationships between members, the support and control of leaders, and structural dimensions. Yates (1973) found that social climate is related to the activity level of block and neighborhood organizations. Giamartino and Wandersman (1983) used a Group Environment Scale to analyze the relationship among ten social climate dimensions and block association members' satisfaction, enjoyment, and time involvement. Using correlational analyses, they found that while level of satisfaction and enjoyment among block association members was significantly related to organizational characteristics (i.e., cohesiveness, order and organization, and leader control), the average activity level of members was not related.

In the above study, Giamartino and Wandersman aggregated individual members' scores within the groups, and then used the group as the unit of analysis. Wandersman and Florin point out that this method does not reveal "how much of the observed relationships were caused by an actual group interaction process that affects the members' response, and how much by the mere sum of (presumably preexisting) individual affects" (p. 257). Florin and his colleagues (1990) later reanalyzed data from the Giamartino and Wandersman study, adjusting group-level correlations for the presence of individual effects. The researchers used the statistical program LEVEL to adjust correlations at the group level for effects at the individual level. The adjusted group level correlations showed how group interaction created differences between groups beyond the sum of the individual effects, revealing four sizable correlations that were masked by the unadjusted group correlations. In the new analysis of the data, Florin and his colleagues found that the average time involvement of members of block associations was higher in organizations with a social climate that was higher in cohesion, lower in tolerance for independent action that was uncoordinated with the group, higher in encouragement for sharing personal feelings and information, and higher in tolerance for negative feelings or disagreements.

Very limited research examines the influence of organizational effectiveness on citizen participation. In a cross sectional study, community coalitions that generated higher levels of participation and empowerment among members were found to be more successful in influencing the policies and resource allocation of key community decision-makers, i.e., school superintendents, government officials (McMillan, et al., 1995). For this analysis, the researchers used the statistical program LEVEL to examine and adjust group level correlations for the presence of individual effects to determine which group level characteristics would be related to organizational empowerment and participation.

A few studies examine the influence of both organizational characteristics and effectiveness on citizen participation. The study by Giamartino and Wandersman (1983) examined above also investigated the relationship between organizational climate at the time of the initial interviews and the status/viability of the organization one year after the initial interviews. Using correlational analyses, they found that organizations that were still active and viable after one year to be characterized by higher levels of cohesiveness, leader support, task orientation, order and organization, and leader control. The researchers' hypothesis that satisfaction and involvement would be related to block organization viability one year later was supported, since strong positive correlations were found between satisfaction and involvement and status one year later.

In their study of 28 block associations (called the Block Booster Project), Florin and his colleagues (1992) distinguished the characteristics of inactive and active block associations in terms of both organizational characteristics and effectiveness. The Block Booster Project gathered data on 28 block associations from a variety of sources from February 1985 to May 1985, and by May 1986, eight of these associations had lapsed into inactivity and ceased

operations. Data gathered 12-15 months earlier was used to distinguish the characteristics of block associations that had maintained operations from those that had ceased operations. The study found that active block associations recruited members proactively, mobilized a greater proportion of residents into becoming members, increased active participation among nominal members, offered more incentives, and engaged members in more activities that offered a range of participation opportunities (i.e., five or more different activities). Furthermore, active organizations had more formal and democratic structures (i.e., precise and written rules and procedures) and decision making processes, and a greater number of officers and committees. Finally, active organizations established linkages with and received help from external resources that helped them maintain organizational viability: sixty-seven percent of the block associations that maintained operations received help from six or more external organizations.

Limited research examines the influence of organizational characteristics on the effects of citizen participation. Dougherty (1988) found that high levels of task orientation increased neighborhood association members' perception of control over neighborhood and local government policy. Maton (1988) examined the relationship between organizational characteristics and the self esteem, psychological well being, and group appraisal of 144 members of three different self-help groups. In this study, participants from groups with shared responsibilities and roles reported more self-esteem and well-being than participants in groups where control was centered in a single leader; and participants from groups with higher levels of organization and order reported more benefits from involvement than those in less organized groups.

McMillan and his colleagues (1995) found that individuals who spent more time and played more roles in local community task forces (i.e., participated more) reported higher levels

of psychological empowerment and reported more benefits from participation. Psychological empowerment in this study was conceptualized to include perceptions of increased personal knowledge, skills, participatory competencies and expectations of future contributions, and a heightened sense of current and future group accomplishments. Using stepwise multiple regression analysis, this study found that organizational climate (i.e., involvement/inclusion, satisfaction, and perceptions of order and efficiency) was the strongest independent variable associated with psychological empowerment, and that it contributed significant unique variance to psychological empowerment, over and above all of the other independent variables, including participation. McMillan and his colleagues argue that the results of this study indicate a strong association between psychological empowerment and the perception of oneself as part of an inclusive and focused group effort with which one identifies and to which one commits. Finally, this study found several organizational characteristics that were associated with collective empowerment, including having an organization that promoted participation benefits and reduced participation costs, and was task focused and inclusive of members in discussions and decisions.

In summary, the above studies demonstrate the influence of organizational characteristics and effectiveness on citizen participation; however, many of these studies are older, cross sectional analyses using less sophisticated statistical techniques, specifically bivariate correlations. The more recent studies that used more sophisticated techniques were mainly cross sectional studies. Furthermore, none of the studies used random assignment. Finally, the lack of experimental, or quasi-experimental designs prohibit a causal argument.

2.2.3.   Citizen Participation and Personal and Collective Competencies

Research has demonstrated that citizen participation is associated with the development of personal and collective competencies. A major weakness of these studies is that none of them use experimental methods or random assignment. The majority of prior studies were cross sectional, using mostly multivariate statistical procedures. This research has demonstrated an association between citizen participation and personal and collective competencies; however, this association is bi-directional. Some studies used longitudinal and quasi-experimental methods, including comparison groups, suggesting that citizen participation is associated with increased personal and collective competencies among participants in community organizations.

In a series of studies, Itzhaky and York (2000[a], 2000[b], 2002) measure the results of a community organizing and development program in Israel that emphasized the physical and social rehabilitation of urban neighborhoods, and mandated citizen participation. In a cross sectional study of resident activists carried out in 1994, Itzhaky and York (2000[a]) analyzed the relationships among the three types of citizen participation (i.e., level of organizational participation, participation in decision making, and participation as a representative of other residents), and personal empowerment (i.e., defined as a sense of control over personal and community decisions and services for their children and families). Using hierarchical multiple regression, they found that the level of organizational participation affected participants' sense of control over personal and community decisions; participation in decision making affected control over services; and participation as a representative of other residents affected both types of personal empowerment.

In two related studies, Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988) found that greater participation among students and community residents in a variety of community organizations was related to

increased expectations and actual experiences of personal and political efficacy. Respondents answered the same questions about their involvement in voluntary organizations and questions related to psychological empowerment in both studies. The researchers divided participants in each study into three subgroups, those with low participation in various community organization activities, those with moderate activity, and those who were considered highly active. Results from the MANOVA and ANOVA analyses in both studies revealed significant group differences between those who were highly active and those with low levels of participation. Students and residents involved in community organizations reported a greater sense of psychological empowerment than their less involved counterparts. Specially, the "more involved participants reported a greater sense of political efficacy, competence and mastery, a greater desire for control, more civic duty, and a general belief that their success is a result of internal rather than external factors" than those who participated less (Zimmerman & Rappaport, p. 746). Furthermore, participants who were more involved scored higher on these dimensions than those who were less involved.

Previous research has also demonstrated that citizen participation is associated with a specific type of personal and political competency called sociopolitical control, which includes leadership competence and policy control. In a series of three studies on citizen participation and sociopolitical control using multivariate analysis of variance, Zimmerman and Zahniser (1991) found that individuals who were more involved in voluntary organizations and community activities scored higher on sociopolitical control than those individuals who were less involved. A paired comparison analysis (Newman-Keuls) was also conducted on three groups in each study based on their level of involvement (i.e., low, moderate and high). In one study on citizen participation in neighborhood organizations, there were significant differences on sociopolitical

control for all three groups, and residents who were more involved in community activities scored higher on sociopolitical control than those who were the least active. In Zimmerman and Zahniser's study of church members, sociopolitical control was higher for more involved church members, even after age and education were statistically controlled.

Itzhaky and York (2000[b]) analyzed sociopolitical by comparing more experienced activists with less experienced activists in the same community organizing program mentioned above, using MANOVA and the Fisher Z test. They found that greater levels of participation were positively associated with sociopolitical control among the more experienced community activists, but this was not the case for the less experienced activists. Specifically, general participation (i.e., frequency of involvement) was significantly associated with both policy control and leadership competence among the most experienced activists. However, participation in decision making among the most experienced activists was only associated with policy control, but not with leadership competence.

Smith and Propst (2001) compared Zimmerman and Zahniser's (1991) general policy control scale to a topic/sphere-specific measure of policy control related to participation in natural resource organizations (i.e., outdoor recreation, service, and environmental groups) using three ANCOVAs. While participation in natural resource organizations was moderately associated with Zimmerman and Zahniser's general measure of policy control, it was more significantly associated with natural resource policy control, and the amount of explained variation was more than twice the amount explained for the general policy control measure (12.7% versus 4.9%). However, participation in natural resource organizations was not associated with leadership competence (Smith & Propst).

Longitudinal research by Itzhaky and York (2002) showed that citizen participation led to increases in self esteem, mastery, and sense of control. In a survey of resident activists in 1990 and 1993, Itzhaky and York found statistically significant increases in residents' self-esteem (i.e., value in relation to others), and feelings of mastery of their surroundings (i.e., control of the environment and the future). In another survey of resident activists in 1992 and 1997, Itzhaky and York found statistically significant increases in the following types of empowerment: personal empowerment, with regard to relationships with their spouses and children and in contacts with service delivery personnel, and community empowerment (i.e. understanding services in the community, knowledge of ways to improve services, lobbying, and strong contacts with politicians).

Finally, limited research has demonstrated that citizen participation is related to collective efficacy. Using a cross sectional, comparison group design, Chavis and his colleagues (1987) found that block association members were significantly more likely than nonmembers to have expectations of collective efficacy, including thinking that they can solve problems by working collectively and expecting residents to intervene to maintain social control. Moreover, members of block associations were also significantly more likely to engage in collective (as opposed to individual) anti-crime efforts than non-members.

Perkins and his colleagues (1996) used individual and block level (contextual) survey and observational data from studies in three cities (New York City, Baltimore and Salt Lake City) to predict residents' participation in grassroots community organizations, cross-sectionally and after a one-year lag time. Longitudinal data from New York City was used to predict the viability of block associations seven years later. The researchers found that community-focused social cognitions, including perceived organizational collective efficacy/civic responsibility and

community attachments, were consistently and positively related to participation at both the individual and block levels of analysis. Specifically, at both the individual and block levels in all three cities, the perceived organizational collective efficacy/civic responsibility factor was positively related to participation, although the betas were significant only in the first two years in New York City and not in the other two cities. Separate correlations for collective efficacy and civic responsibility in the New York City study showed that only civic responsibility, but not collective efficacy, was a significantly and positively related to participation seven years later.

The above literature strongly supports the association between community participation and personal and political competencies; however, the link between community participation and collective competencies is much weaker since there is very limited research on this association, and the research has produced some inconsistent results.

2.2.4. Citizen Participation and Sense of Community

Citizen participation is also associated with sense of community; however, the majority of this research was also cross sectional in nature, suggesting the bi-directionality of this relationship. None of the studies used an experimental design; however, several studies used more sophisticated methodologies, including random assignment, comparison group techniques and longitudinal analysis. The studies also used multivariate statistical procedures to analyze the relationship between citizen participation and sense of community.

Brodsky and her colleagues (1999) conducted a study of neighborhood sense of community with residents in three poor and disadvantaged urban neighborhoods in Baltimore, characterized by high crime, high risk of violence, low employment, low income and lack of resources. This was a cross sectional study; however, random sampling was used to select the sample. The researchers also used multi-level regression modeling (i.e., Hierarchical Linear

Modeling) to identify individual-level and neighborhood-level determinants of psychological sense of community. A number of variables related to community involvement at the individual and neighborhood level were associated with psychological sense of community. Individuals "who regularly attended church, synagogue, or mosque, and were involved in neighborhood organizations, lived in neighborhoods with higher voter registration, and lived in neighborhoods with higher rates of community-level neighborhood involvement all had higher psychological sense of community" (p. 673). This finding supports the hypothesis that active involvement in community institutions leads to a greater sense of community and that a stronger sense of community promotes active involvement (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

In a cross sectional study of sense of community in rural, regional, and urban geographical locations, participation in community organizations and having children were the variables that emerged as the most important predictors of sense of community (Obst, et al., 2002). This study used convenience sampling procedures and hierarchical multiple regression. Using stepwise multiple regression procedures, Prezza and her colleagues (2001) found that sense of community was predicted in part by participation in groups and associations, such as sports associations, parishes, cultural organizations, trade unions/political party and voluntary work associations in several towns and villages in Italy. This study used random sampling methods. In two locations, streets, buildings and apartments were randomly selecting and interviewers attempted to interview all residents in those locations. In the third location, participants were randomly selected from electoral lists.

Several studies of block associations have also demonstrated a relationship between citizen participation and sense of community. In the Block Booster Project, Chavis and his colleagues (1987) found that members of block associations were significantly more likely than

nonmembers to express a higher sense of community with other residents on their block. In the Neighborhood Participation Project, longitudinal analysis compared blocks with and without block associations over a one-year period. Using these data, Chavis and Wandersman (1990) found that participation in block associations increased an individual's sense of community. Results showed that participation measured at Time 1 contributed significantly to a sense of community measured at Time 2, and a sense of community at Time 1 contributed almost as powerfully to participation at Time 2. The methodologies used in this study include longitudinal path analysis using hierarchical regression techniques to improve the estimation of causal parameters in the analysis.

While most of the above studies measuring the relationship between citizen participation and sense of community are cross sectional in nature, their use of more sophisticated sampling and statistical methods strengthens the argument that involvement in community organizations is positively related sense of community. The results of the longitudinal analysis suggested a strong interdependence between participation and sense of community but not a causal direction. Also, the lack of experimental methods does not allow for a causal argument.

2.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES: HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The theoretical perspectives and empirical studies described in previous sections inform the current study on citizen participation. An ecological perspective guides the overall study of citizen participation in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods, which are frequently hostile environments where children and families deal with negative life situations, such as crime, poverty, unemployment, decay, and social isolation. Citizen participation in neighborhood organizations provides a vehicle through which residents influence the external social system to

reduce destructive forces in their neighborhoods, and work with systems outside the family, such as churches, businesses or schools, to improve their environment. The review by Sampson and his colleagues (2002) demonstrates the importance of neighborhood social processes, including citizen participation, in reducing the negative effects of living in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods. Several studies found participation in community organizations and collective efficacy were associated with less powerlessness, crime and victimization (Gies & Ross, 1998; Sampson, et al., 1997; Veysey & Messner, 1999).

2.3.1.   Conceptual Model

Wandersman and Florin (2000) describe three major areas for the analysis of citizen participation, including the characteristics and motivations of people who participate; the characteristics of organizations or environments that facilitate or inhibit effective participation; and the effects of different forms of participation in three areas (i.e., effects on physical, social and/or economic conditions, effects on individual participants' attitudes, beliefs and/or skills, and effects on interpersonal relationships). The current study focused on all three major areas for the analysis of citizen participation by examining the relationships among citizen participation in neighborhood organizations, perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness, and residents' personal, political and collective competencies, and sense of community. **Figure 1** illustrates the conceptual model for the current study.
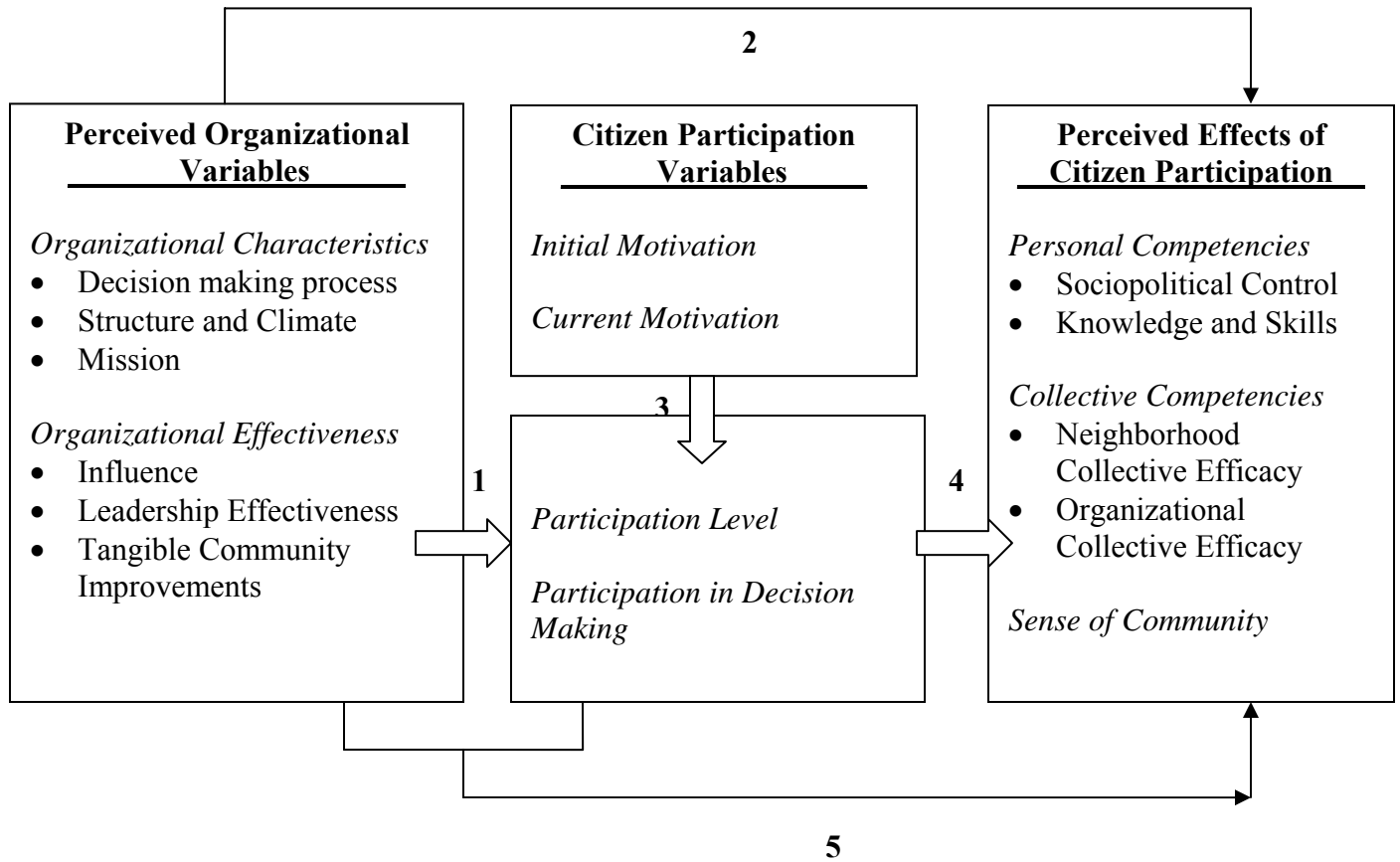
Figure 1: Conceptual Model and Key Study Variables

As illustrated in the first box, the **perceived organizational variables** include *organizational characteristics* (i.e., decision making process, organizational structure and climate, and organizational mission) and *organizational effectiveness* (i.e., effectiveness in influencing issues in the wider community, effectiveness of the organization's leadership, and effectiveness of the organization in achieving tangible community improvements).   The **perceived organizational variables** are conceptualized in **Figure 1** as influencing both the citizen participation variables (**1**) in the second box on the bottom of the figure (participation level and participation in decision making), and the effects of citizen participation (**2**), in the third box.   The variables measuring **citizen participation in neighborhood organizations**

include *initial and current motivation for participation*, the *level of participation* in various organizational activities, and *participation in decision making. Motivation for participation* is conceptualized as influencing the *level of participation* and *participation in decision making* **(3)**. The **citizen participation variables** are conceptualized in **Figure 1** as influencing the effects of citizen participation (**4**). The **effects of citizen participation** include *personal competencies* (i.e., sociopolitical control, which measures leadership competence, general policy control and neighborhood policy control, and perceived knowledge and skills related to participation in neighborhood organizations), *collective competencies* (i.e., neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy) and *sense of community*. Finally, both the **perceived organizational variables** and the **citizen participation variables** are conceptualized as influencing the **effects of citizen participation (5)**.

2.3.2.   Hypotheses and Research Questions

The relationship between organizational characteristics and effectiveness, and citizen participation is explained by empowerment theory and demonstrated by previous research. Empowerment theory describes the influence of empowering and empowered organizations on citizen participation (Zimmerman, 2000). Empowering organizations provide a structure for people to gain control over their lives, participate in decision making, and provide opportunities for shared responsibility and leadership; and empowered organizations effectively compete for resources, network with other organizations, influence policy decisions, or offer effective alternatives for service provision. The majority of prior research examines the influence of organizational characteristics on citizen participation. There are very few studies on how organizational effectiveness influences citizen participation. Furthermore, there are even fewer studies that examine the influence of organizational characteristics and effectiveness on the

effects of citizen participation. Wandersman and Florin (2000) point out that studies relating involvement in neighborhood and community organizations to organizational variables, such as structure, operations and social climate of the community organizations, are particularly thin. They argue that a major resource of small voluntary organizations, such as neighborhood organizations, is the participation of its members, including their time and energy which must be mobilized into active involvement and performance of tasks. Furthermore, knowledge of organizational variables that influence involvement and participation can be used to intervene to build capacity in such organizations (Chavis, Florin, Wandersman & Rich; 1986; Chavis).

This study helps to fill this gap in the research by examining how participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organizations' characteristics and effectiveness influence the nature and effects of citizen participation. Because the majority of the research on organizational variables demonstrates a fairly strong connection between organizational characteristics and effectiveness and citizen participation (Florin, et al., 1990; Knoke & Wood, 1981; Milburn & Barbarin, 1987; McMillan, et al., 1995; Prestby & Wandersman, 1985; Yates, 1973), the following hypotheses were examined as conceptualized by **Relationship 1 in Figure 1,** controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization:

- *1(a) Hypothesis:* The more positive participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organizations' characteristics and effectiveness, the more they will participate in the organization.

- *1(b) Hypothesis:* The more positive participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organizations' characteristics and effectiveness, the more involved they will be in decision making.

Zimmerman's theory of empowered and empowering organizations helps to explain how organizational variables can influence participants' personal and collective competencies and sense of community. There is limited research, however, examining the influence of organizational characteristics and effectiveness on the effects of citizen participation (Dougherty, 1988; Maton, 1988, McMillan, et al., 1995). Therefore, this study did not make any predictions regarding this relationship; however, the following research questions were examined to analyze **Relationship 2 in Figure 1**, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization:

- *2(a) Research Question:* What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived sociopolitical control?

- *2(b) Research Question:* What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived knowledge and skills?

- *2(c) Research Question:* What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived neighborhood collective efficacy?

- *2(d) Research Question:* What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived organizational collective efficacy?

- *2(e) Research Question:* What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived sense of community?

Several theories explain why people participate in community organizations, as well the effects of participation on participants' personal and collective competencies and sense of community. Engaging residents in neighborhood organizations helps to their reduce powerlessness by increasing their personal competencies (sociopolitical control and specific knowledge and skills), collective competencies (neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy), and their sense of community. As Rothman (1995) explains, community participation

signifies the gaining of community competence, or the skills to make decisions that people can agree on and enact together, and the development of a sense of personal mastery among residents.

Theories of perceived control, self efficacy, locus of control, collective efficacy, and sense of community help to explain the association between citizen participation in neighborhood organizations and personal, political and collective competencies and sense of community. Perceived control, the belief that one can influence outcomes, encompasses theories of self efficacy and locus of control (Zimmerman, 2000). Bandura's (1982) theory of perceived self-efficacy explains how participation is related to participants' personal beliefs about their own competencies, while Rotter's (1966) theory of locus of control explains how participation is related to participants' sense of control over their environment. Sociopolitical control, a sphere-specific form of perceived control relevant to citizen participation, refers to beliefs about one's capabilities, efficacy, and sense of control in social and political systems (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). Sampson & Raudenbush's (1999) theory of collective efficacy explains the shared willingness of residents to intervene for the common good, which depends on conditions of mutual trust and cohesion. McMillan and Chavis' (1986) theory of psychological sense of community explains the effects of neighborhood participation on residents' sense of belonging to their communities.

Prior research indicates a relationship between motivation for participation and the level of participation (Florin, et al., 1989; Kerman, 1996; Prestby, et al., 1990; Wandersman, et al., 1985; Wandersman, et al., 1987; Whitworth, 1993). Therefore, the following hypotheses were examined as conceptualized by **Relationship 3 in Figure 1**, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization:

- *3(a) Hypothesis:* The stronger the initial and current motivation for participation, the greater the level of participation in the neighborhood organization.

- *3(b) Hypothesis:* The stronger the initial and current motivation for participation, the greater the level of participation in decision making.

Furthermore, previous research demonstrates a fairly strong relationship between participation in community organizations and personal competencies, including increased sociopolitical control, and sense of community (Brodsky, et al., 1999; Itzhaky & York, 2002; Perkins, et al., 1996; Perkins, et al., 1990; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Schulz, et al., 1995). There is limited research indicating that community participation leads to collective efficacy (Chavis, et al., 1987; Perkins, et al., 1996). Therefore, the following hypotheses were examined as conceptualized in **Relationship 4 in Figure 1**, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization:

- *4(a) Hypothesis:* The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater the level of perceived sociopolitical control.

- *4(b) Hypothesis:* The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater the level of perceived knowledge and skills.

- *4(c) Hypothesis:* The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater perceived neighborhood collective efficacy.

- *4(d) Hypothesis:* The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater perceived organizational collective efficacy.

- *4(e) Hypothesis:* The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater perceived sense of community.

The study by McMillan and his colleagues (1995) is the only study that examines the influence organizational characteristics and effectiveness and community participation on the effects of participation (i.e., measured as psychological empowerment). Because of the extremely limited research examining these relationships, this study did not make any specific predictions regarding this relationship. However, the following research questions were examined to analyze **Relationship 5 in Figure 1**, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization**:**

- *5(a) Research Question:* What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived sociopolitical control?

- *5(b) Research Question:* What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived knowledge and skills?

- *5(c) Research Question:* What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived neighborhood collective efficacy?

- *5(d) Research Question:* What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived organizational collective efficacy?

- *5(e) Research Question:* What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived sense of community?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. SETTING, SAMPLE, AND PROCEDURES

This was a quantitative study of citizen participation in four poor, disadvantaged urban neighborhoods in the Pittsburgh region. This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to survey members and participants of four nonprofit neighborhood organizations. The following three criteria were used to select the neighborhood organizations for the current study: (1) the purpose of the neighborhood organization was to improve problematic conditions, and influence policies and programs that affect the quality of life in the neighborhood; (2) the organization had a membership base of 50 to 100 members/participants in the neighborhood they served; and (3) the neighborhood served by the organization was considered a poverty area as defined by the U.S. Census (i.e., census tracts where at least 20% of residents are poor).

Description of Participating Neighborhood Organizations

The four participating neighborhood organizations were: The Hazelwood Initiative, Inc. (located in the Hazelwood neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh), the Homestead Area Economic Revitalization Corporation (HERC- located in Allegheny County), Operation Better Block (OBB - located in the Homewood neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh), and the Central Northside Neighborhood Council (CNNC – located in the Central North side neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh). All four neighborhood organizations work to improve the conditions in their neighborhoods through various community initiatives, have a membership base of at least

50 to 100 members and participants, and are located in neighborhoods that are considered poverty areas.

The Hazelwood Initiative is a nonprofit neighborhood organization dedicated to the betterment of the Greater Hazelwood area through volunteer driven initiatives to improve and beautify the neighborhood (Hazelwood Homepage, n.d.). The Hazelwood Initiative had approximately 120-140 members and participants at the time of the current study. Their projects include beautification initiatives (i.e., a sitting garden and gazebo, community gardens), holiday lights on Second Avenue (business district), community planning (Vision and Master Plan for the former LTV Coke plant site), social and recreational activities (i.e., annual 5K race, little league, summer concerts), and a community newspaper (Hazelwood Homepage, n.d.). The Hazelwood Initiative has several committees, including communications, fundraising, membership, planting, community planning, and committees for recreational and other events (Hazelwood Homepage, n.d.). The total population of Hazelwood in 2000 was 5,334; 63% White, 34% African American, and 3% other (USCSUR, 2002). Twenty-four percent of the population had an income below the poverty level in 1999 (UCSUR).

The Homestead Area Economic Revitalization Corporation (HERC) is dedicated to the revitalization of the Homestead community, and had approximately 60 members and participants at the time of the current study. HERC has several committees, including an executive committee, general membership, housing, main street program, streetscape program, revolving loan fund, budget and finance, fundraising, and by laws, and committees for specific projects including Operation Clean Sweep and Flower Garden Planting (HERC, n.d.). HERC has several projects in Homestead, including affordable housing projects (housing rehabilitation and new construction), economic development (Eighth Avenue Main Street Program), safety and

beautification (Operation Clean Sweep and Eighth Avenue Streetscape Flower Gardens) (MVI, n.d.). The total population of Homestead in 2000 was 3,569; 51% African American, 43% White, and 6% other. Twenty-seven percent of the population had an income below the poverty level in 1999 (UCSUR, 2002).

The mission of Operation Better Block (OBB) is to improve the living conditions of Homewood residents, promote community growth and stability, and help residents build the skills necessary to overcome obstacles to success (OBB, n.d.). OBB had approximately 55 members and participants at the time of the study. The core program of OBB is the Neighborhood and Community Development Program, which helps to improve the community through grass-roots Block Associations made up of residents who develop self help projects on their blocks (OBB). Together with OBB, residents comprising the Block Associations work collectively to identify and solve economic, physical, and social problems affecting the community (OBB). Program activities include residential block organizing, leadership training, and community planning (OBB). OBB has several committees, including program direction, finance, public relations, and nominating, as well as a committee consisting of the Chairpersons of the Block Associations (OBB). The population of Homewood (Homewood North and South) in 2000 was 8,169; 97% African American, 2% White, 1% other (UCSUR). Thirty-eight percent of the population had an income below the poverty level in 1999 (UCSUR).

The Central Northside Neighborhood Council (CNNC) is a nonprofit neighborhood organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents of Central Northside (CNNC brochure, n.d.). CNNC had approximately 80 members and participants at the time of the current study. The priorities of the CNNC include revitalization of the Federal/North area (business district), the development of affordable housing, outreach to youth, and community

involvement (CNNC brochure, n.d.).   CNNC has several committees, including affordable housing, the Federal North/Federal Hill business district committee, friends of the tot-lot (maintains gardens and playgrounds near Alpine Avenue tot-lot), membership/outreach, youth, and public safety (CNNC brochure, n.d.).   The population of Central Northside in 2000 was 3,200; 56% African American, 41% White, and 3% other.   Thirty percent of the population had an income below the poverty level in 1999 (UCSUR).

3.1.1.   Description of Study Sample and Response Rate

The sample was drawn from the following sources: lists of official members of the four neighborhood organizations, and lists of participants in organizational activities, meetings or projects in 2003 who were not currently members.   The survey was distributed to 231 neighborhood organization members and participants who were residents of the neighborhoods served by the each of the following neighborhood organizations at the time of the study: 111 from the Hazelwood Initiative, 47 from the HERC, 33 from CNNC, and 40 from OBB.   The response rate was 54%; with a total 124 surveys returned: 57 from Hazelwood (51% response rate), 25 from HERC (53% response rate), 13 from CNNC (39% response rate), and 29 from OBB (72% response rate).   The researcher estimated the necessary sample size to conduct the bivariate (e.g., using Cohen's statistical power analysis, see Koeske, 1999, p. 58), multivariate (e.g., Stevens, 1992; Tabachnick & Fiddell; 1996), and factor analyses (e.g., see Koeske, 2000). The final N of 124 was determined to be adequate to detect differences in correlations at the .30 level, and to conduct the factor and multivariate analyses in the current study.

Table 1 on the next page summarizes the major characteristics of the study sample.

Table 1: Description of Study Sample

Age	
Average Age	58 years old
Range	27 to 92 years old
Sex	
Female	62%
Male	38%
Race	
White	59%
African American	39%
Other	2%
Employment Status	
Employed Full-Time	40%
Retired	40%
Employed Part-Time	8%
Homemakers	3%
Unemployed	3%
Students	1%
Other	6%
Education	
Graduate or Professional Degree	32%
College Degree	18%
Some College	25%
High School Diploma/GED	19%
Some High School	6%
Income	
$10,000 or less	8%
$10,001-$20,000	16%
$20,001-$35,000	24%
$35,001-$50,000	15%
$50,001-$75,000	16%
$75,001-$100,000	12%
$100,001 or more	7%
Average HH Size	2.3
Marital Status	
Married	49%
Never Married	23%
Divorced	10%
Widowed	8%
Domestic Partnership	5%
Separated	4%
Other	1%
Homeownership Status	
Homeowner	81%
Renter	19%
Home Value (Homeowners)	
$50,000 or less	48%
$50,001-$100,000	27%
$100,001 or more	25%
Neighborhood Residency (Average)	34 years
Percentage of Registered Voters	97%

The majority of respondents in the sample were White (59%), female (62%), and registered voters (97%). Forty percent were employed full-time, and 40% were retired. Sixty-three percent had incomes below $50,000 a year. Eighty-one percent were homeowners, and almost half (48%) reported that their homes were valued at $50,000 or less. Furthermore, respondents had lived in their neighborhoods for an average of 34 years. Almost half of the respondents were married (49%), and 23% were never married. Thirty-two percent had a graduate or professional degree, 18% had a college degree, and 25% had some college. The average age of all respondents was 58 years old, and the average household size was 2.3 persons.

3.1.2. Procedures

Data were gathered through a self-administered seven page survey that was distributed at official meetings and organizational events held in February, March and April, 2004, hand delivered door-to-door to members and participants who did not attend any of the meetings or organizational events, and/or through the mail:

- Meetings: 124 (54%) of all surveys distributed; 77 (62%) of all surveys received; response rate for this method: 62%.

- Hand Delivered: 38 (16%) of all surveys distributed; 29 (23%) of all surveys received; response rate for this method: 76%.

- Mail: 69 (30%) of all surveys distributed; 18 (15%) of all surveys received; response rate for this method: 26%.

Appendix A displays a copy of the script that was used to explain the survey at the neighborhood organization meetings. To encourage participation, door prizes (i.e., $10 gift certificates for local grocery and department stores) were raffled off to respondents who filled out the survey. At the neighborhood organization meetings, respondents filled out a confidential

survey, and a separate post card to enter the raffle. Surveys were also distributed door-to-door and/or through the mail to members and participants who did not participate in any of the official meetings, events, or activities, (i.e., this included members and participants who did not fill out the raffle post cards at the meetings and events). A letter, accompanied by a copy of the survey, a stamped return envelope, and a post card to enter the raffle was distributed.

The letter accompanying all surveys contained information about the purpose of the study, how the sample was selected, how long it took to complete the survey, and assurances of confidentiality. **Appendix B** displays a copy of the survey cover letter. A follow-up reminder post card was distributed to potential respondents who had not yet filled out and returned a survey. **Appendix C** displays the language that was used in the follow-up reminder post card. The researcher used the returned post cards for the raffle to indicate which respondents had already filled out a survey. Reminder post cards were only sent to those potential respondents who had not already returned a post card for the raffle. The follow-up reminder post card courteously reminded respondents to fill out and return the survey, and provided a phone number to call if potential respondents had any questions or needed another copy of the survey.

3.1.3. Human Subject Concerns

Federal regulations identify several categories of minimal risk research as exempt from the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Research Subjects, which means they are exempt from the requirement for a signed consent form (Institutional Review Board, [IRB], n.d.). The researcher applied and received exempt status under the IRB (See **Appendix D** for a copy of the IRB approval letter). The study met the exempt research category, which includes "tests, surveys, interviews, or observations of public behavior" (IRB, n.d.). This category of exempt research includes "evaluation of individuals using educational or cognitive tests, surveys,

questionnaires, structured or open-ended interviews, or systematic observations of public behavior" (IRB, n.d.). This study protected human subjects by not including any private identifiable information on participants, including birth date and initials, social security number, phone number, or other private or sensitive information that could affect the individual's reputation, employability, or financial standing (IRB, n.d.). Furthermore, this study met the exempt criteria because the subjects were adults, not children.

Exempt studies, however, must meet the ethical principles listed in the Belmont Report, particularly respect for persons, and ensuring that the "subjects are fully informed about the nature of the research project so that they can make an informed decision to participate or not" (IRB, n.d.). The researcher provided information about the study at the meetings and events of the neighborhood organizations, and in the survey cover letter, including an overview of the proposed study, and the basic elements of informed consent. The researcher informed participants of the study's purpose to understand their participation in their neighborhood organization, provided a brief overview of the types of questions on the survey (i.e., questions about their background and participation in their organization), and informed them that individuals who filled out a survey would be entered into a raffle to win various door prizes (i.e., gift certificates to local grocery and/or department stores). The study did not present any direct benefits to participants; however, there was a potential risk of breach of confidentiality. Therefore, the information provided at organizational meetings and events and the survey cover letter contained the basic elements of informed consent, including: stating that their responses were confidential and would not be identified in any way, their participation was voluntary, and that they may withdraw from the project at any time.

Because the study was conducted off-site (i.e., not at the University of Pittsburgh), written authorization to conduct the research was secured from the four participating neighborhood organizations (See **Appendix E** for a copy of the letters from the neighborhood organizations). The researcher completed and passed the research integrity and human subjects' modules of the University of Pittsburgh Education and Certification Program, which was required before IRB approval letters can be issued for the study (IRB, n.d.).

3.2.   OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY VARIABLES AND MEASURES

This section contains descriptions of the survey measures used in the current study, the measures from previous studies that were used and/or adapted for the current study, the results from the factor and reliability analyses, and the items used to operationalize the variables. Please see **Appendix F** for a complete description of the measures from previous studies that were used and/or adapted for the current study. Please see **Appendix G** for a copy of the survey. The survey was pre-tested with members of the Hazelwood Initiative and the Central Northside Neighborhood Council, and revisions were made to clarify several of the questions.

Reliability has to do with the amount of random error in a measure; the less random error, the more reliable the measure is considered to be (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). One of the most common methods of calculating reliability is to determine the internal consistency reliability by calculating the coefficient alpha (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). The aggregate reliability for the scales from previous studies and the results from the reliability and factor analyses for the current study are discussed under the description of each of the key variables and measures in the following section.

Validity refers to the extent to which a measure accurately reflects the meaning of the concept being analyzed (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). Empirical validity pertains to the "degree to which a measure is correlated with other indicators of the concept it intends to measure and with related concepts" (Rubin & Babbie, 2001, p. 194). Validity information for the measures from previous studies is indicated in the section below when it was available. Furthermore, the key variables in the study were analyzed for their validity using bivariate correlations to examine their relationship with related concepts. These results are discussed in the next chapter.

3.2.1. Perceived Organizational Variables

This study measured and aggregated individual perceptions of organizational variables versus obtaining objective measures. The following measures analyzed respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness.

(1) *Perceived Organizational Characteristics.* The survey contained 3 subscales with 23 items measuring the following organizational characteristics: (a) 9 items on decision making process, (b) 8 items on organizational structure and climate, and (c) 6 items on organizational mission. Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with statements regarding the decision making process, structure/climate, and mission of the neighborhood organization, on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 5 meaning "strongly agree." Respondents could also indicate 98 for "don't know." A mean was computed for this scale; the higher the score, the more positive the perception of the neighborhood organization's characteristics. The following describes previous measures that were used and/or adapted for the current study, the results from the factor and reliability analyses, and the final items used in scale for the current study.

Previous Measures used/adapted for the Current Study

(a) Decision-making process: The original 9 items on decision making were taken directly from Allen's (2001) subscale on group decision making (Cronbach's alpha = .76), which is part of an overall Evaluation of Community Organizing, which analyzed the effectiveness of community organizing in achieving social change. Allen conducted a pre-test to determine the validity of the overall Evaluation of Community Organizing scale, which was based on a similar scale by Shields (1992). Allen compared the responses to her scale with responses to Shield's (1992) scale. Using summated ratings and compared means, Allen found that the scores for all the study variables correlated, indicating that the two instruments measured the same constructs.

(b) Structure and Climate: The 8 items on organizational structure and climate were adapted from an organizational climate scale by McMillan and his colleagues (1995), which measures the task focus of the organization (i.e., "the group needs more formalization and structure") (Cronbach's alpha = .84), and involvement/inclusion in the organization (i.e., "everyone is involved in discussions, not just a few") (Cronbach's alpha = .85). Validity information is not provided by McMillan and his colleagues (1995); however, the two subscales exhibited correlations with other variables in their study.

(c) Mission: The 6 items on organizational mission were taken from a 12 item subscale by Bishop and his colleagues (1997) measuring the perception that members are engaged with others in pursuit of a common mission (Cronbach's alpha = .93). No specific information on the validity of this measure is provided by Bishop and his colleagues; however, this mission subscale exhibited correlations with other variables in their study.

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

One item measuring decision making was eliminated because over 26% of the data was missing (i.e., respondents did not answer the question or answered "don't know"); (i.e., "When a decision needs to be made, we appoint a group of members to decide," 28% missing). This item was also eliminated from the decision making subscale in the Allen (1999) study after a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. A principal components factor analysis was conducted, which resulted in the elimination of one weak item which was below .40 in the component matrix and did not load on the decision making subscale (i.e., "People are often persuaded to go along with the group"). This item was also eliminated from the decision making subscale in the Allen (1999) study. An analysis of the reliability results also indicated that one item measuring mission had a large negative corrected item-total correlation (i.e., "The goals of the organization are challenging"). The researcher reviewed a sample of cases (N=20) from the survey indicating that respondents understood the word "challenging" in a positive manner, while this item was developed as a negative item by Bishop and his colleagues (1997) in their study. Because of this confusion, this item was also eliminated. The factor analysis (i.e., scree test) suggested a one factor solution, and the remaining 20 items were combined into one parsimonious and readily interpretable scale. The reliability for the final organizational characteristics scale was .93. The reliability for each of the subscales was: decision making process (Cronbach's alpha = .87), structure (Cronbach's alpha = .85), and mission (Cronbach's alpha = .92).

Items in the Organizational Characteristics Scale for the Current Study

(a) Decision-making process: The final 7 items (9 original items) measuring decision making in the current study included: "When we make a decision, pretty much everyone has to

agree it's the best way to go," "The group is asked for preferences and opinions," "We hold each other accountable for our actions," and "There are clear rules about what kinds of decisions must be made by the whole group."

(b) Structure and Climate: All 8 items (i.e., 3 are reverse coded) on organizational structure and climate were retained, including: "The organization is disorganized and inefficient" (reverse coded), "The organization needs more formalization and structure" (reverse coded), "There are plenty of opportunities for people of diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds to participate in the organization," "There are multiple roles participants can play in the organization," and "The organization actively encourages and solicits people of diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds to participate."

(c) Mission: The final 5 items (6 original items) used in the currently study included: "There is a clear sense of mission in the organization," "The goals of the organization are important to members," and "There is a sense of common purpose in the organization."

(2) *Perceived Organizational Effectiveness.* The organizational effectiveness scale in the current study consisted of 24 items on the following areas: (a) 8 items measuring the effectiveness of the neighborhood organization in influencing issues in the wider community, (b) 7 items measuring the effectiveness of the organization's leadership, and (c) 9 items measuring the effectiveness of the organization in achieving tangible community improvements. Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed with statements regarding the effectiveness of the organization on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 5 meaning "strongly agree." Respondents could also indicate 98 for "don't know." A mean was computed for this scale; the higher the score, the more participants perceived the neighborhood organization to be effective. The following describes previous measures that were used/adapted

for the current study, the results from the factor and reliability analyses, and the final items used in the scale for the current study.

Previous Measures used/adapted for the Current Study

(a) Influence: The 8 items used in the current study were taken directly from a 3-item subscale by Hughey and his colleagues (1999) measuring the influence of community organizations, which is part of an overall Community Organization Sense of Community scale (Cronbach's alpha = .61); and adapted from a 5-item subscale by Allen (1999) measuring community support (i.e., "we have support for our organization among the poor in the neighborhood"), (Cronbach's alpha = .77). Information on the validity of Allen's overall scale is described in the previous section. Hughey and his colleagues (1999) found that their overall Community Organization Sense of Community Scale demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity with two other measures of psychological sense of community, and the instrument exhibited appropriate correlation with community involvement and political participation.

(b) Leadership Effectiveness: This subscale consisted of 7 items taken directly from or adapted from Allen (1999). One item was taken from Allen's (1999) 5-item community support subscale (i.e., "our leadership has been able to work with others outside the organization"), and several other items were adapted from Allen's 5-item funding effectiveness subscale (i.e., "local foundations provide funding to our group"), (Cronbach's alpha = .66).

(c) Tangible Community Improvements: The 9 items measuring the effectiveness of the neighborhood organization in achieving tangible community improvements were taken or adapted from Allen's (1999) 13-item effectiveness subscale (i.e., "as a result of our efforts, policies that affect our community have been changed") (Cronbach's alpha = .79).

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, three items were eliminated from the scale because over 26% of the data was missing (i.e., respondents did not answer the question or answered "don't know"). Two items measuring the influence of the organization were eliminated: "The organization has helped elect someone to a position of government power or leadership" (43% missing), and "Resources in the community have been allocated differently as a result of the organization's efforts" (36% missing). One item measuring tangible community improvement was also eliminated: "Local banks increased lending in our area" (40% missing). A principal components factor analysis was conducted resulting in the elimination of one weak item that did not load strongly on any of the factors and had low communality (i.e., "The organization gets very little done in this community"). The factor analysis (i.e., scree test) suggested a one factor solution, and the remaining 20 items were combined into one scale. The reliability for the final organizational effectiveness scale was .93. The reliability for each of the subscales was: influence (Cronbach's alpha = .74), leadership (Cronbach's alpha = .91), and tangible community improvements (Cronbach's alpha = .89).

Items in the Organizational Effectiveness Scale for the Current Study

(a) Influence: The final 5 items (8 original items) measuring influence in the current study included: "The organization gets overlooked in this community" (reverse coded), "The organization has had a part in solving at least one problem in this community," "People in the community-at-large are in agreement with the organization's purpose," and "The organization has support among government officials in the community."

(b) Leadership Effectiveness: All 7 original items measuring leadership effectiveness were retained. For the current study, respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed

that the leadership of the organization has been able to: "Motivate and inspire participants and members," "Recruit capable and competent staff and board members," "Successfully raise resources from its members," and "Successfully raise resources from local foundations and/or corporate philanthropy."

(c) Tangible Community Improvements: The final scale for the current study consisted of 8 items (9 original items). Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed that as a result of the organization's efforts: "Life conditions of community residents have improved," "The community has access to more affordable housing," "The community has access to better information and resources," "Illegal or undesirable businesses were shut down," "The community is safer," and "The community is more visually attractive."

3.2.2.   Citizen Participation Variables

(1) *Motivation for Participation.* The scale measuring initial and current motivation for participation was informed by Wandersman and his colleagues' (1985) study of five cognitive social learning variables that predicted participation in community settings (i.e., skills, view of the situation, expectations, values, and personal standards). However, the items for the motivation scales were developed specifically for the current study. Respondents were asked to describe the importance, from 1 meaning "not important" to 5 meaning "very important," of 11 items describing possible reasons for their initial and current participation in the neighborhood organizing. Specifically, respondents were asked why they initially participated, and why they continue to participate. The higher the score, the greater the level of importance. A mean score were derived for each item, with separate mean scores for the items measuring initial and current motivation for participation. These scores were used to rank the items in their order of importance. This information was used for descriptive purposes and is presented in the results

section. For the correlational and multiple regression analyses, the mean score was calculated across all of the items for initial and current motivation for participation. The following describes the results from the factor and reliability analyses, and the final items used in the scales for the current study.

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, one item was eliminated from both initial and current motivation scales because over 26% of the data was missing (i.e., respondents did not answer the question or answered "don't know"). The item was the one that allowed respondents to specify another reason for participating in the organization (90% missing for initial motivation, and 87% missing for current motivation).

A principal components factor analysis resulted in the elimination of one weak item which was below .40 in the component matrix in both the initial and current motivation scales (i.e., "Because of a neighbor/friend's involvement"). While the factor analysis (i.e., scree test) suggested a two factor solution for both the initial and current motivation scales, the 9 items for each of the scales were combined to create one initial motivation scale and one current motivation scale. The reliability for the initial motivation scale was .81. The reliability for the current motivation scale was .84.

Items for the Initial and Current Motivation Scales for the Current Study

The final 9 items for the initial and current motivation scales used in the current study included: "To improve neighborhood conditions," "To strengthen the neighborhood organization," "To serve as a leader for the organization," "To get to know people in my neighborhood," and "To contribute my knowledge and skills."

(2) *Participation Level.* There were several questions that asked respondents about their level of participation in the neighborhood organization. Respondents were asked if they were a member of the neighborhood organization. If they were a member, respondents were asked how long they had been a member (number of years), and their level of membership (i.e., member only, member and worker, or member and leader). All respondents were then asked the number of hours they give each month to the organization. These items were used for descriptive purposes and are presented in the results section.

A scale measuring *participation level* was developed for the current study and was used in the analysis of the key variables. In the current study, respondents were asked, on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "never" to 5 meaning "often," how often in the past year they had participated in various organizational activities and functions. A mean was computed for this scale, and the higher the score, the greater the respondents' level of participation in the neighborhood organization. The following describes previous measures that were used/adapted for the current study, the results from the factor and reliability analyses, and the final items used in the scales for the current study.

Previous Measures used/adapted for the Current Study

The 11 items in the participation level subscale were taken or adapted from the following three studies: York's (1990) 3-item organizational participation scale (i.e., "how often do you attend meetings?"), (Cronbach's alpha = .89); Perkins and his colleagues' (1990) 8-item citizen participation index (i.e., "in the past year have you attended a meeting?"), (Cronbach's alpha = .78 and .80); and additional items for Perkins' 8-item citizen participation index developed by Perkins and Long (1990), (i.e., "how often have you helped organize activities other than meetings for the association?"). Validity information is not provided by York or Perkins and

Long; however, results from their studies found that their participation subscales exhibited correlations with other study variables.

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, there were no items eliminated based on missing data. A principal components analysis was conducted resulting in a one factor solution, and the 11 items were combined into one scale measuring participation level. The reliability for the final scale was .95.

Items in the Participation Scale for the Current Study

All 11 original items were retained for this scale. In the current study, respondents were asked how often in the past year they have: "Attended organizational functions and activities?" "Actively participated in discussions?" "Done work for the organization outside of meetings?" "Served as a member of a committee?" "Served as an officer or as a committee chair?" "Tried to recruit new members?" and "Served as a representative of the organization to other community groups?"

(3) *Participation in Decision Making.* This question was taken directly from a study by Itzhaky and York (2000), and measured how participants perceived their role in the neighborhood organization. Respondents were asked to indicate how involved they were in the neighborhood organization by checking one of the following items: 1 = I take no part at all; 2 = I play a passive role; 3 = I participate in relaying information; 4 = I carry out various tasks at the instruction of the staff (this study adds: "and/or board" to this question because the organizations have only one staff person); 5 = I participate partially in planning, decision making and implementation; and 6 = I am a full partner in planning, decision making and implementation. The higher the score, the greater the participation in decision making.

3.2.3.   Variables Measuring the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

(1) *Perceived Personal Competencies.* Personal competencies measured in the current study included: (a) sociopolitical control (an 8-item subscale measuring leadership competence, a 9-item subscale measuring general policy control, and an 8-item subscale measuring policy control related to participation in neighborhood organizations), and (b) perceived knowledge and skills (a 9-item subscale measuring knowledge and skills gained as a result of participation in the neighborhood organization).

(a) <u>Perceived Sociopolitical Control</u>. Respondents in the current study were asked the extent to which they agreed on a scale from 1 to 6, 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 6 meaning "strongly agree," with statements regarding perceptions about themselves regarding leadership competence, general policy control and neighborhood policy control. A mean was computed for each of the subscales measuring sociopolitical control. The higher the score; the greater the level of sociopolitical control in each of the above three areas. The following explains previous measures that were used/adapted for the current study, the results from the factor and reliability analyses, and the items used to create the final scales.

Previous Measures used/adapted for the Current Study

The current study used/adapted the following measures: (i) This study used the 17-item sociopolitical control scale by Zimmerman and Zahniser (1991) to measure leadership competence (Cronbach's alpha = .78), and general policy control (Cronbach's alpha = .75), and (ii) this study also adapted a scale developed by Smith and Propst (2001) to measure policy control related to participation in natural resource organizations (Cronbach's alpha = .80). Smith and Propst (2001) demonstrated the usefulness of a sphere-specific measure of policy control for the sociopolitical control measure in their study of natural resource organizations (Cronbach's

alpha = .80).   The current study tested the usefulness of a sphere-specific measure of policy

control related to participation in neighborhood organizations. Zimmerman and Zahniser report

that four measures were used to examine the validity of the resulting factors for the measures,

including an alienation scale consisting of three subscales, and a single leadership item

developed for their study. Construct validity of the scale was supported by the results of the

correlations of the study scale with measures of alienation and leadership for three different

study samples. The scale was further validated by the finding that individuals who are more

involved in voluntary organizations and community activities scored higher on the scales than

their less involved counterparts. Smith and Propst assessed the validity of the two subscales

measuring sociopolitical control using two analyses of covariance. The results showed that the

behavioral measure of participation in natural resource decision making significantly explained

scores on the Natural Resource Policy Control scale by showing that people who participate

more have a greater sense of control, controlling for several other covariates, including age, sex

and education.

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, there were no items eliminated because of missing data.   The leadership

competence and general policy control subscales from Zimmerman and Zahniser's (1991)

sociopolitical control scale were partially replicated in a principal components factor analysis.

Similar to the Zimmerman and Zahniser and the Smith and Propst (2001) studies described

above, the researcher separated leadership competence from policy control as distinct indicators

of sociopolitical control. The reliability for the 8 item leadership competence scale was .73, and

the reliability for the 9 item general policy control scale was .76.

A principal components factor analysis of the neighborhood policy control scale resulted in the elimination of one weak item which was below .40 in the component matrix (i.e., "People like me are generally well qualified to participate in neighborhood development activities and decision making"). While the factor analysis (i.e., scree test) suggested a two factor solution, the remaining 7 items were combined into one parsimonious and readily interpretable scale similar to the Smith and Propst study (2001). The reliability for the neighborhood policy scale was .73.

Items in the Sociopolitical Control Subscales for the Current Study

(a)(1) Perceived Leadership Competence (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991): The 8 items (i.e., 4 of which are reverse coded) on leadership competence included: "I would prefer to be a leader rather than a follower," "I would rather not try something I'm not good at" (reverse coded), "I am often a leader in groups," "I can usually organize people to get things done," and "I find it hard to talk in front of a group (reverse coded)."

(a)(2) Perceived General Policy Control (Zimmerman & Zahniser): The 9 items (i.e., 5 are reverse coded) on general policy control included: "I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues which confront our society," "So many other people are active in local issues and organizations that it doesn't matter much to me whether I participate or not" (reverse coded), "I enjoy political participation because I want to have as much say in running government as possible," and "Most public officials wouldn't listen to me no matter what I did" (reverse coded).

(a)(3) Perceived Neighborhood Policy Control: The 7 items (8 original items) on neighborhood policy control (i.e., 4 are reverse coded) included: "I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the important issues that confront our neighborhood," "So many other people are active in this neighborhood organization that it doesn't matter much to me whether I

participate or not" (reverse coded), "I enjoy participation because I want to have as much say in running this neighborhood organization as possible," and "Most local people who run this neighborhood organization wouldn't listen to me no matter what I did" (reverse coded).

(b) <u>Perceived Knowledge and Skills</u>. Respondents in the current study were asked on a scale from 1 to 4, 1 meaning "no change," to 4 meaning "major increase," the extent to which they felt participating in the neighborhood organization had changed their knowledge and skills related to participating in the neighborhood organization in 8 areas. A mean was computed for this scale, and the higher the score, the greater the change/increase in the level of knowledge and skills. The following section explains previous measures that were used/adapted for the current study, the results from the factor and reliability analyses, and the items used to create the final scales.

Previous Measures used/adapted for the Current Study

The perceived knowledge and skills scale developed for this study included 8 items which were adapted from a 7-item scale by McMillan and his colleagues (1995) measuring the knowledge, beliefs, and skills of coalition task force participants (i.e., "knowledge of risk and protective factors related to alcohol and other drug abuse"), (Cronbach's alpha = .91). Validity information is not provided by McMillan and his colleagues; however, results from their study found that their subscale exhibited correlations with other study variables.

Results from Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, there were no items eliminated because of missing data. While the factor analysis (i.e., scree test) suggested a two factor solution, the 8 items were combined to create one parsimonious and readily interpretable measure of knowledge and skills. The reliability for the scale was .95.

Items in the Knowledge and Skills Scale for the Current Study

The scale for the current study had 8 items, including: "Knowledge of neighborhood housing issues," "Knowledge of neighborhood business district issues," "Skills in decision making," and "Skills in neighborhood planning and development."

(2) *Perceived Collective Competencies.* Collective competencies were measured using two variables, one measuring (a) neighborhood collective efficacy and the other measuring (b) organizational collective efficacy.

(a) <u>Perceived Neighborhood Collective Efficacy</u>. The present study used Sampson and Raudenbush's (1999) 9 item measure of neighborhood *collective efficacy* that includes two subscales, one for *informal social control* and one for *social cohesion/trust*. The aggregate reliability for the collective efficacy scale by Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) was .68 and .80 at the tract and neighborhood cluster levels, respectively. Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) analyzed the empirical validity of the neighborhood collective efficacy scale by "testing the association of systematically observed disorder with independent measures of officially recorded and survey-reported crime, census-based socio-demographic composition, and a survey-based measure that taps the collective efficacy of residents in achieving informal social control" (p. 605). Validity was supported by results from the study that showed a significant association of observed disorder with the independent measures of disorder and collective efficacy.

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, there were no items eliminated because of missing data. The social control and social cohesion/trust subscales from Sampson and Raudenbush's (1999) collective efficacy scale were replicated in a principal components factor analysis. Similar to the Sampson and

Raudenbush study, the two factors were combined to create a more parsimonious and readily interpretable measure of collective efficacy. The reliability for the 9 item scale was .85.

Items in the Neighborhood Collective Efficacy Scale for the Current Study

The neighborhood collective efficacy scale combined two subscales. The 5-item *informal social control* subscale asked residents the likelihood, on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "very unlikely" to 5 meaning "very likely," that their neighbors can be counted on to do something if: "children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner," "children were showing disrespect to an adult," and "the fire station closest to the home was threatened with budget cuts." The *social cohesion/trust* subscale contained 4 conceptually related items (i.e., 2 are reverse coded) that asked residents how strongly they agreed on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 5 meaning "strongly agree", with the several statements including: "People around here are willing to help their neighbors," and "People in this neighborhood do not share the same values" (reverse coded). A mean was computed, and the higher the score, the greater the collective efficacy.

(b) Perceived Organizational Collective Efficacy. This study used/adapted the 6-item collective efficacy scale by Perkins and Long (2002) (Cronbach's alpha = .82). Perkins and Long (2002) developed their measure of organizational collective efficacy for a study of block associations in New York city, which they argue is more closely related to the efficacy of collective action than Sampson and Raudenbush's (1999) measure of more generalized neighborhood collective efficacy. Perkins and Long argue that their measure of collective efficacy is an appraisal of group behavior that is democratic and organized. Bandura (2001) also argues that self and collective efficacy measures must be tailored to the activity domains and must be linked to factors that regulate functioning in the selected domain. Similar to personal

self efficacy, collective efficacy is situated relative to a particular domain or task. Validity information is not provided by Perkins and Long; however, results from their study found that their collective efficacy scale exhibited correlations with other study variables. The 8-item organizational collective efficacy scale in the current study asked respondents how likely on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "very unlikely" to 5 meaning "very likely" that the neighborhood organization can accomplish several goals. A mean was computed for this scale, and the higher the score, the greater the level of organizational collective efficacy.

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, there were no items eliminated because of missing data. A principal components analysis was conducted for the items measuring organizational collective efficacy resulting in a one factor solution. The reliability for the 8 item scale was .99.

Items in the Organizational Collective Efficacy Scale in the Current Study

The 8-item organizational collective efficacy scale in the current study asked respondents how likely on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "very unlikely" to 5 meaning "very likely" that the neighborhood organization could accomplish several goals, including: "Improve physical conditions in the neighborhood like cleanliness or housing upkeep," "Get people in the neighborhood to help each other more," "Improve the business district in the neighborhood," and "Plan and develop solutions to neighborhood problems."

(3) *Perceived Sense of Community.* To measure *sense of community*, the present study adapted the short form of the Sense of Community Index (SCI) (Perkins, et al., 1990). This study will use the SCI to assess neighborhood versus block level sense of community, using scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "strongly disagree," to 5 meaning "strongly agree," see, for

example Brodsky, et al., 1999. A mean was computed for this scale, and the higher the score, the greater the sense of community.

The SCI consists of 12 items measuring psychological sense of community. Chipuer and Pretty (1999) state that the internal consistency of the total SCI scale has been reported in other studies to range from 0.71 to 0.80. Chipuer and Pretty's (1999) study reports a reliability estimate of .66. The reliability of a revised neighborhood version of the SCI used in a study by Brodsky and her colleagues (1999) was .78. Chipuer and Pretty state the construct validity of the SCI in representing the dimensions of the McMillan and Chavis model (1986) are found in several qualitative studies (Brodsky, 1996; Plas & Lewis, 1996; Sonn & Fisher, 1996). Furthermore, Chipuer and Pretty also point out that the SCI was associated with study variables in several quantitative studies, including their own study (McCarthy, Pretty & Catano, 1990; Perkins, et al., 1990; Pretty, 1990).

Results from the Factor and Reliability Analyses

First, there were no items eliminated because of missing data. A principal components analysis was conducted for the items measuring sense of community; however, the items did not load on the a priori subscales indicated by McMillan and Chavis (1986). Chipuer and Pretty (1999) argue that the use of the sense of community scale as a unidimensional measure may be the most appropriate until the items making up the scale are reformulated to reflect the four underlying dimensions as conceptualized. Therefore, this study combined the factors to create one parsimonious and readily interpretable measure of sense of community. The reliability for the 12 item scale was .85.

Items in the Sense of Community Scale for the Current Study

The 12 items (i.e., 5 are reverse coded) used in the current study included: "People in this neighborhood do not share the same values" (reverse coded), "I can recognize most of my neighbors," "I care about what my neighbors think of my actions," and "It is very important to me to live in this neighborhood."

4.   RESULTS

This chapter presents the results from the current study, including descriptive statistics, correlations among the key study variables, and the results from the multiple regression analyses. The data for the current study were entered, managed and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The copies of the survey were stored in a locked filing cabinet at the home of the researcher.

Descriptive statistics were used to generate the means, medians, standard deviations, the range, skewness, and kurtosis for the key variables in the study. Bivariate statistics (i.e., correlations) were used to analyze the relationships among the key study variables measuring residents' views of their neighborhood organizations' characteristics and effectiveness, citizen participation in neighborhood organizations (i.e., participation level, participation in decision making, and initial and current motivation for participation), and the effects of citizen participation (personal competencies including sociopolitical control and knowledge and skills, collective competencies, including neighborhood and collective efficacy, and sense of community). Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to examine the study's major hypotheses and research questions, controlling for demographic and neighborhood organization variables.

4.1. DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

This section provides the descriptive results from the study, and additional descriptive information on the involvement of respondents in their neighborhood organization, and their connection to their neighborhoods. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the key variables used in the current study.

4.1.1. Perceived Organizational Variables

Perceived Organizational Characteristics

The organizational characteristics and all of the subscales were negatively skewed and were transformed by squaring the scales, resulting in a normal distribution. Respondents viewed their neighborhood organization's characteristics positively ($M = 4.01$ on a scale from 1 to 5), with the organization's mission ($M = 4.21$) being viewed the most positively, followed by the structure/climate ($M = 3.96$) and the decision making process ($M = 3.93$). The high scores for the organizational characteristic's scales demonstrate that respondents agreed that their neighborhood organization was organized and efficient, encouraged and offered plenty of opportunities for people of diverse racial and socioeconomic backgrounds to participate, and made use of everyone's skills and abilities. Respondents also agreed that their organization's mission was clear, their goals were meaningful to members and to the community, and there was a common sense of purpose. Finally, respondents agreed that their organization's decision making process was democratic and clear, and allowed members to hold each other accountable for their actions.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Key Study Variables

Variable	N	Score Range	Mean	Median	SD	Actual Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
Organizational Variables:								
Organizational Characteristics	112	1-5	4.01	4.06	.77	1.17-5.00	-1.27/-.60*	2.02/-.04*
1. Decision Making	111	1-5	3.93	4.00	.89	1.00-5.00	-1.10/-.39*	1.40/-.53*
2. Structure/Climate	110	1-5	3.96	4.00	.80	1.43-5.00	-.79/-.23*	.59/-.62*
3. Mission	111	1-5	4.21	4.40	.85	1.00-5.00	-1.47/-.75*	2.69/-.13*
Organizational Effectiveness	114	1-5	3.56	3.65	.80	1.19-5.00	-.84/-.07*	1.01/-.17*
1. Influence	112	1-5	3.67	3.67	.80	1.00-5.00	-.48	.39
2. Leadership	105	1-5	3.88	4.00	.87	1.00-5.00	-.96/-.25*	1.15/-.58*
3. Community Improvements	117	1-5	3.28	3.29	.97	1.00-5.00	-.49	-.15
Citizen Participation Variables:								
Initial Motivation for Participation	112	1-5	3.98	4.00	.66	2.33-5.00	-.40	-.40
Current Motivation for Participation	101	1-5	3.98	4.11	.70	2.00-5.00	-.42	-.52
Participation Level	121	1-5	2.99	3.10	1.23	1.00-5.00	.03	-1.22
Participation in Decision Making	117	1-5	3.53	3.00	1.66	1.00-6.00	.21	-1.20
Effects of Citizen Participation:								
Sociopolitical Control - Leadership Competence	115	1-6	3.99	4.00	.83	1.63-5.75	-.24	.19
Sociopolitical Control - General Policy Control	115	1-6	4.44	4.56	.84	2.00-6.00	-.48	-.16
Sociopolitical Control - Neighborhood Policy Control	116	1-6	4.55	4.59	.84	2.57-6.00	-.22	-.73
Knowledge and Skills	113	1-4	2.84	3.00	.77	1.00-4.00	-.74/-.18*	-.15/.45*
Neighborhood Collective Efficacy	118	1-5	3.36	3.44	.77	1.00-5.00	-.30	.22
Organizational Collective Efficacy	118	1-5	3.74	3.88	.78	1.00-5.00	-.83/-.09*	1.10/-.12*
Sense of Community	118	1-5	3.65	3.65	.69	1.92-5.00	-.20	-.26

* Transformed variable measure

Perceived Organizational Effectiveness

The organizational effectiveness scale and the leadership subscale were negatively skewed and were transformed by squaring the scales. Respondents viewed their organization's effectiveness in a neutral to positive manner (M = 3.56 on a scale from 1 to 5), with the organization's leadership (M = 3.88) being viewed the most positively, followed by the organization's influence in the wider community (M = 3.67), and their effectiveness in achieving tangible community improvements (M = 3.28). Respondents perceived their organization's leadership to be successful in working with others outside the organization, motivating and inspiring members, recruiting competent staff, and successfully raising resources from the members, the community, foundations, and public sources. Respondents had fairly positive views of their organization's effectiveness at influencing community problems, and securing support from the local community, including businesses and government. Finally, respondents were fairly neutral about the effectiveness of the organization in achieving tangible community improvements, including improving the life conditions of residents, increasing access to affordable housing, improving the business district, and increasing safety.

4.1.2. Citizen Participation Variables

Initial and Current Motivation for Participation

Respondents' initial and current motivation for participation were both fairly high (M = 3.98 for both scales on a scale from 1 to 5). Table 3 shows the various reasons for initial and current involvement, ranked from highest to lowest.

Table 3: Initial and Current Reasons for Participation in Neighborhood Organization

Reason for Participation	Initially (*Mean*)	Currently (*Mean*)
To improve neighborhood conditions.	4.74	4.70
To influence neighborhood development.	4.56	4.53
To learn about neighborhood issues.	4.47	4.40
To strengthen the neighborhood organization.	4.29	4.36
To influence government policies.	4.05	4.03
To contribute my knowledge and skills.	3.86	3.98
To get to know people in my neighborhood.	3.77	3.63
To gain new skills and abilities.	3.28	3.31
To serve as a leader for the organization.	2.67	2.80

Respondents felt that the most important reasons for both their initial and current participation in the neighborhood organization were those related to community versus personal issues. The first five motivations listed in Table 3 are focused on either improving, learning about and/or influencing their community, while the last four motivations are focused their own personal contributions and/or gains. The similarity in the scores for initial and current participation may be due to the way the survey was designed, with questions regarding initial and current motivation next to each other. Or it may be that respondents' reasons for their initial and current motivation for participation are, in fact, quite similar.

Participation Level

Respondents' level of participation in their neighborhood organization was 2.99 on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning "never" and 5 meaning "often," signifying that respondents were engaged in the organization at a moderate level. Table 4 displays the level of participant involvement in the organization from the highest to lowest activity/function.

Table 4: Level of Participation in the Neighborhood Organization

Organizational Activity/Function	Mean (Highest to lowest)
Attended various organizational functions and activities.	3.66
Attended meetings of the organization.	3.62
Actively participated in discussions.	3.46
Did work for the organization outside of meetings.	3.31
Tried to get people out to meetings and activities.	2.92
Served as a member of a committee.	2.92
Tried to recruit new members.	2.84
Worked on other activities for the organization.	2.81
Helped organize activities (other than meetings)	2.66
Served as a representative of the organization to other community groups.	2.33
Served as an officer or committee chair.	2.27

Respondents were most frequently involved in various organizational functions and activities, participating in meetings and discussions, and doing work outside of meetings for the organization. They were least involved in serving as a representative of the organization to other community groups, and serving as an officer or committee chair.

Furthermore, 89% of respondents were members of the neighborhood organization, and the average length of membership was 9 years. Thirty-eight percent of members said they were members and workers (encouraged neighbors to come to meetings, and/or do work on a committee or activity outside of meetings), 36% were members only (attended and occasionally talked at meetings), and 27% said they were members and leaders (acted as an officer or committee leader). On average, respondents spent 9 hours a month working for their neighborhood organization.

Participation in Decision Making

The mean for participation in decision making was 3.53 on a scale from 1 to 6. Table 5 displays the level of involvement in decision making by study respondents.

Table 5: Participation in Decision Making

Level of Participation in Decision Making	Percentage of Respondents
(1) I take no part at all	10%
(2) I play a passive role.	22%
(3) I participate in relaying information.	23%
(4) I carry out various tasks at the instruction of the staff and/or board.	14%
(5) I participate partially in planning, decision making and implementation.	10%
(6) I am a full partner in planning, decision making, and implementation.	21%

Approximately 32% of respondents were not actively involved in their neighborhood organization (i.e., see items 1 and 2 above); while the majority (68%) of respondents played some type of active role in the organization (i.e., i.e., see items 3 through 6). Interestingly, 21% of respondents felt they were full partners in planning, decision making and implementation, which is close to the percentage of respondents who said they were members and leaders (27%) of the organization.

4.1.3.   Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Perceived Personal Competencies: Sociopolitical Control

The current study included three subscales measuring sociopolitical control: leadership competence, general policy control, and neighborhood policy control (a sphere specific measure developed for the current study). The mean for leadership competence was 3.99, for general policy control, 4.44, and for neighborhood policy control, 4.55 (all on a scale from 1 to 6).

Respondents in the current study felt more confident about their ability to influence government policies (i.e., understanding important political issues, feeling qualified to participate in political activity, and influencing government officials and elections), and neighborhood policies (i.e., understanding neighborhood issues and development, and participating in and influencing the neighborhood organization), than about their leadership abilities. Zimmerman and Zahniser (1991) suggest that higher scores on policy control and lower scores on leadership competence may indicate that respondents are activists, but not necessarily initiators of actions.

Perceived Personal Competencies: Knowledge and Skills

The knowledge and skills scale was negatively skewed and was transformed by squaring it. The mean for knowledge and skills was 2.84 on a scale from 1 to 4, with 3 meaning "moderate increase." On average, respondents in the current study experienced a moderate increase in knowledge and skills related to their participation in the neighborhood organization. Table 6 displays the means for the items related to knowledge and skills gained by participants, indicating the areas where participants experienced the most change to those where they experienced the least amount of change.

Table 6: Change in Knowledge and Skills

Knowledge and Skills	Mean
Knowledge of government policies affecting my neighborhood.	3.18
Knowledge of neighborhood safety issues.	3.18
Knowledge of neighborhood housing issues.	3.07
Knowledge of neighborhood business district issues.	3.05
Skills in neighborhood planning and development.	2.71
Skills in decision making.	2.56
Skills in organizing group activities.	2.56
Skills in leading group activities.	2.51

Table 6 demonstrates that participants felt that they gained more knowledge versus more skills by participating in their neighborhood organization. Interestingly, participants felt they gained the most skills related to neighborhood planning and development versus skills generally related to their overall participation.

Perceived Collective Competencies: Neighborhood and Organizational Collective Efficacy

Respondents in the current study were asked questions regarding their perceptions of their neighborhood's collective efficacy (informal social control and social cohesion/trust), and their neighborhood organization's collective efficacy. The organizational collective efficacy scale was negatively skewed, and was transformed by squaring it. The mean for neighborhood collective efficacy in the current study was 3.36, and the mean for organizational collective efficacy was 3.74 (on a scale from 1 to 5). Respondents in the current study had more positive views of their neighborhood organization's collective ability to solve problems (i.e., improve physical conditions, reduce crime, increase decent affordable housing, and get people to help each other), than their neighborhood's overall ability to solve problems (i.e., which includes their level of trust and willingness to maintain social control, e.g., counting on neighbors to intervene if children were skipping school, or a fire station was closing down). Mean scores were not reported in previous studies; therefore, no comparisons could be made.

Perceived Sense of Community

The mean for perceived sense of community in the current study was 3.65 on a scale from 1 to 5, which suggests that respondents had a neutral to somewhat positive connection to their neighborhoods, including thinking their neighborhood was a good place to live, knowing their neighbors, feeling that people who live in their neighborhood could solve problems, and

expecting to live in their neighborhood for a long time. The mean for neighborhood sense of community in the Brodsky study (1999) was 3.59 on a scale from 1 to 5, which is slightly lower than the mean for the current study (note: Brodsky's scale eliminated two items after getting feedback in the field from community residents).

Several other questions in the current study asked respondents about their view of and connection to their neighborhoods. The majority of respondents (56%) viewed their neighborhood as good (48%) to excellent (8%), while 38% said fair and only 6% said poor. Furthermore, respondents lived in their neighborhoods for an average of 34 years, which indicates that respondents in the current study were very stable residents of their neighborhoods. It is surprising that respondents' perceived sense of community was not greater, given their positive views of the neighborhood and their considerable length of residency in the community.

4.2.   BIVARIATE RESULTS

4.2.1.   Citizen Participation and Perceived Organizational Variables

Table 7 presents the correlations among the citizen participation variables (initial and current motivation for participation, participation level, and participation in decision making), and the perceived organizational variables (organizational characteristics and organizational effectiveness).

Table 7: Correlations among Citizen Participation and Perceived Organizational Variables

Variable	PL	PDM	IM	CM	OC
Participation Level (PL)					
Participation in Decision Making (PDM)	.77**				
Initial Motivation (IM)	.29**	.17			
Current Motivation (CM)	.41**	.32**	.83**		
Organizational Characteristics (OC)	.24*	.18	.43**	.45**	
Organizational Effectiveness (OE)	.15	.12	.27**	.30**	.66**

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; two tailed

The current study expected initial and current motivation to be associated with participation level and participation in decision making [see Hypotheses 3(a) and 3(b), pp. 46-47]. The correlations in Table 7 were consistent with these expectations:

- Current motivation [$r (101) = .41$, $p < .01$], followed by initial motivation [$r (110) = .29$, $p < .01$] were significantly associated with participation level.

- Initial motivation [$r (106) = .17$, $p = .09$] was not significantly associated with participation in decision making, but current motivation was significantly associated with participation in decision making [$r (99) = .32$, $p < .01$].

The current study expected perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness to be associated with participation level and participation in decision making [see Hypotheses 1(a) and 1(b), p. 44]. The correlations in Table 7 partially support these expectations:

- Perceived organizational characteristics were significantly associated with participation level [r (110) = .24, p < .05], but not participation in decision making [r (106) = .18, p = .22].

- Perceived organizational effectiveness was not significantly associated with either participation level [r (112) = .15, p = .11], or participation in decision making [r (108) = .12, p = .22].

Table 7 also demonstrates the following significant correlations which were not predicted in the conceptual model:

- Participation level was significantly associated with participation in decision making [r (117) = .77, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational characteristics were significantly associated with both initial [r (104) = .43, p < .01] and current motivation for participation [r (95) = .45, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational effectiveness was significantly associated with both initial [r (105) = .27, p < .01] and current motivation for participation [r (95) = .30, p < .01].

- Current and initial motivation were significantly associated with each other [r (97) = .83, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational characteristics and organizational effectiveness were significantly associated with each other [r (107) = .66, p < .01].

4.2.2. Perceived Organizational Variables and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Table 8 presents the correlations among the perceived organizational variables (organizational characteristics and organizational effectiveness) and perceived effects of citizen

participation variables (sociopolitical control scales, knowledge and skills, neighborhood and collective efficacy, and sense of community).

Table 8: Correlations among Perceived Organizational Variables & the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Variable	OC	OE	SPL	SPP	SPN	KS	NCE	OCE
Organizational Characteristics (OC)								
Organizational Effectiveness (OE)	.66**							
SPC - Leadership (SPL)	.09	.01						
SPC - Policy Control (SPP)	.25**	.26**	.60**					
SPC-Neighborhood Policy Control (SPN)	.45**	.35**	.42**	.71**				
Knowledge and Skills (KS)	.30**	.29**	.44**	.35**	.34**			
Neighborhood Collective Efficacy (NCE)	.32**	.48**	.19*	.17	.14	.28**		
Organizational Collective Efficacy (OCE)	.55**	.67**	.24*	.38**	.39**	.44**	.50**	
Sense of Community (SOC)	.45**	.59**	.24*	.28**	.37**	.41**	.64**	.45**

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; two tailed

The study did not make any predictions about the relationship between organizational characteristics and the effects of citizen participation [see Research questions 2(a) through 2(e), p. 45]. The correlations in Table 8 demonstrated significant relationships between perceived organizational characteristics and all of the dependent variables measuring the perceived effects of citizen participation, except leadership competence, as indicated below:

- Perceived organizational characteristics were not associated with perceived leadership competence [r (105) = .09, p = .39], but were associated with perceived general

policy control [r (105) = .25, p < .01], and neighborhood policy control [r (106) = .45, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational characteristics were significantly associated with perceived knowledge and skills [r (107) = .30, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational characteristics were significantly associated with perceived neighborhood collective efficacy [r (107) = .32, p < .01] and organizational collective efficacy [r (109) = .55, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational characteristics were also significantly associated with perceived sense of community [r (107) = .45, p < .01].

The above correlations are notably high among perceived organizational characteristics and neighborhood policy control, organizational collective efficacy, and sense of community, indicating a very strong association.

The study did not make any predictions about the relationship between perceived organizational effectiveness and the perceived effects of citizen participation [see Research questions 2(a) through 2(e), p. 45]. The correlations in Table 8 demonstrated a significant relationship between organizational effectiveness and all of the dependent variables measuring the effects of citizen participation, except leadership competence:

- Perceived organizational effectiveness was not associated with perceived leadership competence [r (108) = .01, p = .94], but was associated with perceived general policy control [r (108) = .26, p < .01], and neighborhood policy control [r (108) = .35, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational effectiveness was significantly associated with perceived knowledge and skills [r (106) = .29, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational effectiveness was significantly associated with perceived neighborhood collective efficacy [r (111) = .48, p < .01] and organizational collective efficacy [r (112) = .67, p < .01].

- Perceived organizational effectiveness was also significantly associated with perceived sense of community [r (111) = .59, p < .01].

The above correlations are notably high among perceived organizational effectiveness and neighborhood collective efficacy, organizational collective efficacy and sense of community, indicating a very strong association.

4.2.3.   Participation Variables and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Table 9 presents the correlations among the participation variables (participation level and participation in decision making) and the perceived effects of citizen participation (sociopolitical control, knowledge and skills, neighborhood and collective efficacy, and sense of community). This study expected participation level to be associated with the perceived effects of citizen participation (see Hypotheses 4(a) through 4(e), p. 47]. The correlations in Table 9 demonstrated that all of these hypotheses were supported except for Hypothesis 4(c); participation level was associated with all of the perceived effects of citizen participation except perceived neighborhood collective efficacy, as indicated below:

- Participation level was significantly associated with perceived leadership competence [r (115) = .40, p < .01], general policy control [r (115) = .39, p < .01], and neighborhood policy control [r (116) = .50, p < .01].

- Participation level was significantly associated with perceived knowledge and skills [r (113) = .55, p < .01].

Table 9: Correlations among Participation & the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Variable	PL	PDM	SPL	SPP	SPN	KS	NCE	OCE
Participation Level (PL)								
Participation in Decision Making (DM)	.77**							
SPC - Leadership (SPL)	.40**	.32**						
SPC - Policy Control (SPP)	.39**	.40**	.60**					
SPC-Neighborhood Policy Control (SPN)	.50**	.48**	.42**	.71**				
Knowledge and Skills (KS)	.55**	.50**	.44**	.35**	.34**			
Neighborhood Collective Efficacy (NCE)	.16	.11	.19*	.17	.14	.28**		
Organizational Collective Efficacy (OCE)	.31**	.26**	.24*	.38**	.39**	.44**	.50**	
Sense of Community (SOC)	.24**	.19*	.24*	.28**	.37**	.41**	.64**	.45**

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; two tailed

- Participation level was not significantly associated with perceived neighborhood collective efficacy [r (117) = .16, p = .09], but it was significantly associated with perceived organizational collective efficacy [r (117) = .31, $p < .01$].
- Participation level was also significantly associated with perceived sense of community [r (117) = .24, $p < .01$].

The above correlations were notably high among participation level and perceived neighborhood policy control and knowledge and skills, indicating a very strong association.

This study expected that participation in decision making would be associated with the perceived effects of citizen participation (see Hypotheses 4(a) through 4(e), p. 47]. The correlations in Table 9 demonstrated that all of these hypotheses were supported except for

Hypothesis 4(c); participation in decision making was associated with all of the perceived effects of citizen participation except perceived neighborhood collective efficacy, as indicated below:

- Participation in decision making was significantly associated with perceived leadership competence [r (112) = .32, $p < .01$], general policy control [r (112) = .40, $p < .01$], and neighborhood policy control [r (113) = .48, $p < .01$].

- Participation in decision making was significantly associated with perceived knowledge and skills [r (109) = .50, $p < .01$].

- Participation in decision making was not significantly associated with perceived neighborhood collective efficacy [r (113) = .11, $p = .25$], but it was significantly associated with perceived organizational collective efficacy [r (113) = .26, $p < .01$].

- Participation in decision making was also significantly associated with perceived sense of community [r (113) = .19, $p < .05$].

The above correlations were notably high among participation in decision making and perceived neighborhood policy control, and knowledge and skills, indicating a very strong association.

Tables 8 and 9 also demonstrate the following significant correlations among the variables measuring the perceived effects of citizen participation which were not predicted in the conceptual model:

- Perceived leadership competence was significantly associated with both perceived general policy control [r (112) = .60, $p < .01$], and neighborhood policy control [r (113) = .42, $p < .01$]. Perceived general policy control and neighborhood policy control were also associated with each other [r (115) = .71, $p < .01$].

- All three sociopolitical control subscales were associated with perceived knowledge and skills: perceived leadership competence [r (108) = .44, p < .01], general policy control [r (107) = .35, p < .01], and neighborhood policy control [r (108) = .34, p < .01].

- All three sociopolitical control subscales were associated with perceived organizational collective efficacy: perceived leadership competence [r (112) = .24, p < .05], general policy control [r (113) = .38, p < .01], and neighborhood policy control [r (114) = .39, p < .01]; however, only perceived leadership competence was associated with perceived neighborhood collective efficacy [r (113) = .19, p < .05].

- All three sociopolitical control subscales were associated with perceived sense of community: perceived leadership competence [r (113) = .24, p < .05], general policy control [r (112) = .28, p < .01], and neighborhood policy control [r (113) = .37, p < .01].

- Perceived knowledge and skills was associated with perceived neighborhood collective efficacy [r (110) = .28, p < .01], organizational collective efficacy [r (110) = .44, p < .01], and sense of community [r (110) = .41, p < .01].

- Perceived neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy were significantly associated with each other [r (116) = .50, p < .01].

- Perceived neighborhood collective efficacy [r (118) = .64, p < .01], and organizational collective efficacy [r (116) = .45, p < .01] were significantly associated with perceived sense of community.

In summary, the bivariate correlations among the key study variables were significant except for the following: initial motivation, perceived organizational characteristics and

organizational effectiveness were not significantly associated with participation in decision making; perceived organizational effectiveness was not associated with participation level; perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness were not associated with leadership competence; and participation level and participation in decision making were not associated with perceived neighborhood collective efficacy.

4.3. MULTIVARIATE RESULTS

This section presents the results from the multivariate analyses. Hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to address the current study's research questions and hypotheses (please refer to Figure 1 on page 42 for a diagram of the study's conceptual model and key study variables). The hierarchical multiple regression analyses controlled for both the demographic and neighborhood organization variables.

Analysis Strategy

The researcher ran a series of bivariate analyses to determine which key demographic variables were associated with the key study variables. The following demographic variables were analyzed: age, sex, race, income and education. Age was significantly associated with organizational effectiveness ($r = .28$, $p < .01$); the older the respondent the more effective they perceived their neighborhood organization. Sex was not significantly associated with any of the variables. Race was significantly associated with initial motivation for participation ($r = -24$, $p < .05$); Caucasians exhibited stronger initial motivation for participation than African Americans. Education was significantly associated with the following variables:

- participation in decision making ($r = .32$, $p < .01$); the higher a respondents' education, the more they participated in decision making,

- initial motivation for participation ($r = -.22$, $p < .05$); the higher a respondents' education, the less important their initial motivation for participation, and

- perceived knowledge and skills gained ($r = .21$, $p < .05$); the higher the respondents' education, the greater their perceived knowledge and skills gained.

Income was associated with initial ($r = .36$, $p < .01$) and current motivation ($r = .28$, $p < .01$) for participation; the higher a respondents' income, the more important their initial and current motivation for participation. For the analyses examining the influence of motivation on participation, income was controlled for, as well as age, education and race. The researcher controlled for age, education and race for all of the other analyses.

The measures in this study were not used to correlate relationships at the individual level to the group or organizational level since this was not a nested design. In other words, these data were not used to make inferences for organizations. The researcher ran a series of bivariate analyses (one way analyses of variance) to determine if there were significant differences among the key study variables due to the neighborhood organization. The results demonstrated that there were significant differences due to the neighborhood organization for the following variables: participation in decision making [$F (3, 113) = 4.01$, $p < .01$], initial motivation for participation [$F (3, 108) = 3.48$, $p < .05$], and perceived organizational effectiveness [$F (3, 107) = 3.16$, $p < .05$]. Therefore, variances due to organization were accounted for by controlling for neighborhood organization as a main effect. The researcher controlled for neighborhood organization in the multivariate analyses by creating three dummy variables representing the four neighborhood organizations in the study. The neighborhood organization in Homestead

(Homestead Area Economic Revitalization Corporation) was used as the reference group, and three dummy variables were created for each of the following neighborhood organizations: the Hazelwood Initiative, Operation Better Block (Homewood), and the Central Northside Neighborhood Council (CNNC).

The demographic variables were entered into the first block for each of the multivariate analyses, and the three dummy neighborhood organization variables were entered into the second block. The third block contained the independent variables for each of the study's research questions and hypotheses. When organizational characteristics and/or effectiveness were significant, the researcher entered the subscales for organizational characteristics (decision making, structure/climate and mission) and organizational effectiveness (influence, leadership and tangible community improvements) into the third block to examine the specific organizational variable(s) that predicted the dependent variable.

Examination of the Assumptions for Multiple Regression

The researcher examined the assumptions for conducting the multiple regression analyses. The influence statistics for all of the analyses were examined, which suggested several influential cases. The residual plots for each of the analyses were also examined, which suggested several outliers. The researcher re-analyzed the relationships without these cases; however, the removal of these cases did not change the significance of the relationships among the variables. In all of the analyses, the relationships that were significant remained slightly more or slightly less significant. Furthermore, relationships that were not significant did not become significant with these cases removed. Therefore, no cases were eliminated. Examination of the histograms revealed normal distributions for all of the analyses, and examination of the residual plots revealed that the assumption of linearity was also met.

The researcher also examined the issue of multicollinearity among the predictor variables to be used in the multiple regression analyses. Multicollinearity can be a problem because it can severely limit the size of the *R* since the predictor variables are explaining much of the same variability on the dependent variable, individual effects are confounded due to the overlapping information, and multicollinearity tends to increase the variances of the regression coefficients, which ultimately results in a more unstable prediction equation (Stevens, 1992). As indicated in the above bivariate results, there were several predictor variables that had moderate to high intercorrelations, specifically: participation level and participation in decision making [$r(117)$ = .77, $p < .01$]; initial motivation and current motivation for participation [$r(95)$ = .30, $p < .01$], perceived organizational characteristics and perceived organizational effectiveness [$r(107)$ = .66, $p < .01$], and perceived organizational characteristics and participation level [$r(110)$ = .24, p < .05]. The issue of multicollinearity was examined for all of the multiple regression analyses using two statistical methods. First, tolerance statistics were obtained and examined for each independent/predictor variable. Norisus (1998) states that if the tolerance value for a given independent/predictor variable is less than .10, multicollinearity is a distinct problem. Examination of the tolerance statistics indicated that the independent variables were tolerated in all of the models (i.e. tolerance statistics exceeded .20). The researcher also examined the variance inflation factor for each of the independent/predictor variables for all of the analyses. The variance inflation factor (VIF) for a given predictor indicates whether there exists a strong linear association between it and all remaining predictors (Stevens, 1992). Stevens argues that values of VIF that are greater than 10.0 are generally a cause for concern. Examination of the VIF statistics for each of the analyses indicated values less than 4.0. Therefore, both the

tolerance and VIF statistics indicated that multicollinearity was not an issue for the multiple regression analyses.

The following sections present the results of the multivariate analyses, broken down by each of the study's major hypotheses and research questions.

4.3.1. Perceived Organizational Variables and Participation Variables

Hypotheses 1(a) and 1(b) examined the relationships among the perceived organizational variables and respondents' participation level and participation in decision making, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. The results from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses examining each of these hypotheses are presented in this section.

Perceived Organizational Variables and Participation Level

1(a) Hypothesis: The more positive participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organizations' characteristics and effectiveness, the more they will participate in the organization.

Table 10 presents the summary of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis of the perceived organizational variables predicting to participation level, controlling for demographics (age, race and education), and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .38$, $R^2_{adj} = .07$, $F (8, 92) = 1.92$, $p = .07$, indicating that the model not significant for participation level. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics and effectiveness were not individual predictors to participation level. However, the R^2 change was significant, indicating that organizational characteristics and organizational effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to participation level and the amount of variance explained by this block was 8%.

Table 10: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables & Participation Level

Variables	*B*	*SE B*	β	*t*	Δ R²
Step 1					.03
Age	.00	.01	.03	.26	
Education	.16	.10	.17	1.56	
Race	-.04	.23	-.02	-.20	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.61	.34	-1.80	-1.80	
Central NS	-.11	.47	-.03	-.23	
Homewood	-.58	.49	-.20	-1.19	
Step 3					.08*
Organizational Characteristics	.05	.03	.25	1.84	
Organizational Effectiveness	.01	.03	.07	.53	

* p < .05

Perceived Organizational Variables and Participation in Decision Making

1(b) Hypothesis: The more positive participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organizations' characteristics and effectiveness, the more involved they will be in decision making.

Table 11 presents the summary of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational variables predicting to participation in decision making. For this analysis, R = .45, R^2_{adj} = .13, F (8, 92) = 2.93, p < .01. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics and effectiveness were not significant individual predictors to participation in decision making. However, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to participation in decision making and the amount of variance explained by this block was 6%. In addition, education was significant: β = .334, t (92) = 3.22, p < .01; the more educated the respondent the more they participated in decision making.

Table 11: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables & Participation in Decision Making

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.11*
Age	.00	.01	.04	.40	
Education	.44	.14	.33	3.22**	
Race	.13	.30	.04	.44	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.79	.44	-.24	-1.79	
Central NS	.03	.61	.01	.07	
Homewood	-.70	.63	-.17	-1.10	
Step 3					.06*
Organizational Characteristics	.06	.04	.21	1.60	
Organizational Effectiveness	.02	.04	.06	.45	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$

In summary, the results from the multivariate analyses for the overall model partially supported hypotheses 1(a) or 1(b) that participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organizations' characteristics and effectiveness would influence their participation level and participation in decision making, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. Organizational characteristics and effectiveness did not individually contribute to participation level or participation in decision making; however, as a block (i.e., in Step 3) they did make a weak contribution to participation level and participation in decision making, with organizational characteristics having the strongest effect. It is important to note that in the bivariate results, there was a significant relationship only between perceived organizational characteristics and participation level.

4.3.2.   Perceived Organizational Variables and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Research questions 2(a) through 2(e) examined the relationships among the perceived organizational variables and respondents' perceptions of the effects of citizen participation,

controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. The results from the hierarchical

multiple regression analyses for these questions are presented in this section.

Perceived Organizational Variables & Perceived Personal Competencies: Sociopolitical

Control

> *2(a) Research Question:* What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics
>
> and effectiveness on perceived sociopolitical control (i.e., leadership competence, general
>
> policy control and neighborhood policy control)?
>
> *Leadership Competence:* Table 12 presents the summary of the hierarchical multiple

regression analysis for the perceived organizational variables predicting to perceived leadership

competence, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Table 12: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables and Perceived Leadership Competence

Variables	B	$SE\ B$	β	t	ΔR^2
Step 1					.14*
Age	-.03	.01	-.06	-.56	
Education	.22	.07	.34	3.35**	
Race	-.18	.15	-.12	-1.23	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	-.29	.22	-.16	-1.31	
Central NS	-.52	.30	-.19	-1.71	
Homewood	-.27	.31	-.14	-.87	
Step 3					.03
Organizational Characteristics	.02	.02	.15	1.12	
Organizational Effectiveness	.01	.02	.05	.35	

*p < .05; **p < .01*

For this analysis, $R = .44$, $R^2_{adj} = .13$, $F\ (8,\ 92) = 2.81$, $p < .01$. Upon review of the

coefficients, organizational characteristics and organizational effectiveness were not significant

individual predictors to perceived leadership competence. Education was significant: $\beta = .342$, *t*

(92) = 3.35, $p < .001$, indicating that the higher the respondents' education the greater the leadership competence.

General Policy Control. Table 13 presents a summary of the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis of the perceived organizational variables predicting to perceived general policy control, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Table 13: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables and Perceived General Policy Control

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.15***
Age	.01	.01	.24	2.39*	
Education	.26	.07	.40	3.97**	
Race	-.04	.15	-.02	-.25	
Step 2					.20
Hazelwood	-.37	.22	-.22	-1.72	
Central NS	-.31	.30	-.12	-1.04	
Homewood	-.01	.31	-.00	-.02	
Step 3					.12***
Organizational Characteristics	.02	.02	.15	1.25	
Organizational Effectiveness	.04	.02	.25	2.02*	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.01**
Age	.01	.01	.24	2.31*	
Education	.26	.07	.40	3.85**	
Race	-.04	.15	-.02	-.24	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.37	.22	-.22	-1.66	
Central NS	-.31	.30	-.12	-1.01	
Homewood	-.01	.31	-.00	-.02	
Step 3					.14*
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.03	.02	.22	1.60	
Structure/Climate	.04	.02	.27	1.79	
Mission	-.02	.02	-.13	-.91	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.13	.15	.12	.89	
Leadership	-.04	.02	-.27	-1.60	
Community Improvements	.20	.12	.23	1.67	

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

For this analysis, $R = .55$, $R^2_{adj} = .25$, $F (8, 92) = 5.09$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived general policy control, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. This model accounted for 25% of the variance in general policy control. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to general policy control and the amount of variance explained by this block was 12%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics were not significant; however, organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to general policy control ($\beta = .254$, $t (92) = 2.02$, $p < .05$). Age ($\beta = .240$, $t (92) = 2.39$, $p < .05$) was significant, indicating the older the respondent the greater their perception of general policy control. Education ($\beta = .402$, $t (92) = 3.97$, $p < .001$) was also significant, indicating the more educated the respondent the greater their perception of general policy control.

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to general policy control. For this analysis, $R = .58$, $R^2_{adj} = .23$, $F (12, 82) = 3.40$, $p < .001$. Although the overall organizational effectiveness scale was a significant individual predictor to general policy control in the above analysis, none of the subscales for organizational effectiveness were significant. This may be due to a loss of power [i.e., degrees of freedom went from (8, 92) to (12, 82)]. However, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales as a block significantly contributed to general policy control and the amount of variance explained by this block was 14%.

Neighborhood Policy Control: Table 14 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational variables predicting to perceived neighborhood policy control, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Table 14: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables and Perceived Neighborhood Policy Control

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.08*
Age	.01	.17	.01	1.63	
Education	.20	.07	.31	2.92**	
Race	-.08	.15	-.05	-.55	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	-.08	.20	-.06	-.35	
Central NS	.29	.32	.10	.90	
Homewood	-.06	.32	-.03	-.17	
Step 3					.23***
Organizational Characteristics	.06	.02	.40	3.38***	
Organizational Effectiveness	.02	.02	.14	1.11	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.08*
Age	.01	.01	.17	1.58	
Education	.20	.07	.31	2.83**	
Race	-.08	.15	-.05	-.53	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	-.08	.20	-.06	-.34	
Central NS	.29	.32	.10	.87	
Homewood	-.06	.32	-.03	-.17	
Step 3					.26***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.04	.02	.31	2.31*	
Structure/Climate	.05	.02	.38	2.51*	
Mission	-.02	.02	-.13	-.90	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.05	.14	.05	.37	
Leadership	-.03	.02	-.22	-1.33	
Community Improvements	.09	.11	.11	.42	

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

For this analysis, $R = .57$, $R^2_{adj} = .27$, $F(8, 92) = 5.54$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for neighborhood policy control. This model accounted for 27% of the variance in neighborhood policy control. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood policy control and the amount of variance explained by this block was 23%. Upon review of the coefficients for the model, organizational effectiveness was not a significant individual predictor to neighborhood policy control; however, organizational characteristics ($\beta = .400$, $t(92) = 3.38$, $p < .001$) were significant. Education ($\beta = .307$, $t(92) = 2.92$, $p < .01$) was also significant, indicating that the higher the respondents' education, the greater their perception of neighborhood policy control.

Because the organizational characteristics scale was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales to determine the specific area of organizational characteristics that predicted to neighborhood policy control. For this analysis, $R = .60$, $R^2_{adj} = .27$, $F(12, 82) = 3.86$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for neighborhood policy control. This model accounted for 27% of the variance in neighborhood policy control. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales as a block significantly contributed to general policy control and the amount of variance explained by this block was 26%. Upon review of the coefficients, the organizational characteristics subscales measuring structure/climate ($\beta = .375$, $t(82) = 2.51$, $p < .05$) and decision making process ($\beta = .309$, $t(82) = 2.31$, $p < .05$) were significant individual predictors to neighborhood policy control.

The bivariate results did not demonstrate a significant relationship between perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness and perceived leadership competence. These

results were also demonstrated in the multivariate analyses which showed that neither perceived organizational characteristics nor effectiveness individually or as a block predicted to perceived leadership competence. In the bivariate results there were significant relationships among perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness and general policy control. In the multivariate analyses, organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block contributed to general policy control. Furthermore, perceived organizational effectiveness individually predicted to perceived general policy control; however, in the analysis of the subscales, none of the subscales for organizational effectiveness were significant. Finally, the bivariate results demonstrated significant relationships among perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness and perceived neighborhood policy control. In the multivariate analyses, organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block contributed to neighborhood policy control. Perceived organizational effectiveness did not individually predict to perceived neighborhood policy control; however, perceived organizational characteristics, specifically the decision making process and structure/climate of the organization, were significant individual predictors to perceived neighborhood policy control.

Perceived Organizational Variables & Perceived Personal Competencies: Knowledge and Skills

   2(b) Research Question: What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics
   and effectiveness on perceived knowledge and skills?

   Table 15 presents the summary of the hierarchical multiple regression for the perceived organizational variables predicting to perceived knowledge and skills, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .48$, $R^2_{adj} = .16$, $F(8, 92) = 3.39$, $p < .01$, indicating that the model was significant for knowledge and skills. This model

accounted for 16% of the variance in knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to knowledge and skills, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 17%.

Table 15: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables and Perceived Knowledge and Skills

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R^2
Step 1					.06
Age	-.03	.03	-.11	-1.02	
Education	.54	.34	.17	1.60	
Race	-.43	.75	-.06	-.55	
Step 2					.01
Hazelwood	-.14	1.11	-.02	-.12	
Central NS	-.70	1.55	.05	-.45	
Homewood	-.90	1.60	.09	-.56	
Step 3					.17***
Organizational Characteristics	.13	.09	.18	1.45	
Organizational Effectiveness	.23	.10	.30	2.23*	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.06
Age	-.03	.03	-.11	-.99	
Education	.54	.34	.17	1.55	
Race	-.43	.75	-.06	-.53	
Step 2					.01
Hazelwood	-.14	1.11	-.02	-.12	
Central NS	-.70	1.55	.05	-.43	
Homewood	-.90	1.60	.09	-.55	
Step 3					.29***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.32	.09	.50	3.71***	
Structure/Climate	.05	.10	.07	.49	
Mission	-.11	.09	-.18	-1.30	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.84	.69	.17	1.23	
Leadership	-.18	.11	-.28	-1.71	
Community Improvements	1.32	.55	.32	2.40*	

*$p < .05$; ***$p < .001$

Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to knowledge and skills; however, organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills (β = .295, t (92) = 2.23, $p <$ .05). In contrast, significant relationships among perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness and perceived knowledge and skills were demonstrated in the bivariate results.

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to perceived knowledge and skills. For this analysis, R = .60, R^2_{adj} = .26, F (12, 82) = 3.74, $p <$ .001, indicating that the model was significant for knowledge and skills. This model accounted for 26% of the variance in knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood policy control and the amount of variance explained by this block was 29%. Surprisingly, the subscale measuring decision making process (β = .499, t (82) =3.71, $p <$ .001) was a significant individual predictor to knowledge and skills, even though the overall organizational characteristics scale was not a significant individual predictor. Furthermore, the organizational effectiveness scale measuring tangible community improvements was a significant individual predictor to knowledge and skills (β = .319, t (82) = 2.40, $p <$ .05).

Perceived Organizational Variables & Perceived Collective Competencies: Collective Efficacy

Perceived Neighborhood Collective Efficacy

2(c) Research Question: What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived neighborhood collective efficacy?

Table 16 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational variables predicting to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Table 16: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables and Perceived Neighborhood Collective Efficacy

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.00
Age	-.00	.01	-.01	-.04	
Education	-.04	.07	-.06	-.57	
Race	.01	.15	-.01	.08	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	.18	.22	.11	.81	
Central NS	.30	.30	.12	1.00	
Homewood	.37	.31	.21	1.92	
Step 3					.24***
Organizational Characteristics	-.07	.02	-.05	-.43	
Organizational Effectiveness	.08	.02	.57	4.40***	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.00
Age	-.00	.01	-.01	-.04	
Education	-.04	.07	-.06	-.55	
Race	.01	.15	-.01	.08	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	.18	.22	.11	.78	
Central NS	.30	.30	.12	.98	
Homewood	.37	.31	.21	1.15	
Step 3					.28***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.02	.02	.12	.88	
Structure/Climate	.01	.02	.10	.63	
Mission	-.03	.02	-.23	-1.59	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.14	.14	.14	1.00	
Leadership	-.00	.02	-.00	-.01	
Community Improvements	.37	.11	.47	3.41***	

***$p < .001$

For this analysis, $R = .51$, $R^2_{adj} = .20$, $F (8, 92) = 4.08$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for neighborhood collective efficacy. This model accounted for 20% of the variance in neighborhood collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 24%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to neighborhood collective efficacy; however, organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to neighborhood collective efficacy ($\beta = .570$, $t (92) = 4.40$, $p < .001$).

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy. For this analysis, $R = .55$, $R^2_{adj} = .20$, $F (12, 82) = 2.92$, $p < .01$, indicating that the model was significant for neighborhood collective efficacy. This model accounted for 20% of the variance in neighborhood collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 28%. Upon review of the coefficients, the organizational effectiveness subscale measuring tangible community improvements was significant a significant individual predictor to neighborhood collective efficacy ($\beta = .472$, $t (82) = 3.41$, $p < .001$).

Perceived Organizational Collective Efficacy

2(d) Research Question: What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived organizational collective efficacy?

Table 17 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational variables predicting to perceived organizational collective efficacy, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Table 17: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables and Perceived Organizational Collective Efficacy

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.04
Age	-.00	.04	-.01	-.11	
Education	.77	.46	.18	1.69	
Race	-.34	1.02	-.03	-.34	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	2.23	1.50	.21	1.48	
Central NS	2.37	2.08	.13	1.14	
Homewood	3.70	2.14	.29	1.72	
Step 3					.53***
Organizational Characteristics	.12	.09	.12	1.38	
Organizational Effectiveness	.73	.10	.71	7.42***	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.04
Age	-.00	.04	-.01	-.10	
Education	.77	.46	.18	1.64	
Race	-.34	1.02	-.03	-.33	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	2.23	1.50	.21	1.43	
Central NS	2.37	2.08	.13	1.10	
Homewood	3.70	2.14	.29	1.67	
Step 3					.51***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.12	.09	.13	1.22	
Structure/Climate	.18	.11	.20	1.61	
Mission	-.05	.10	-.05	-.48	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.94	.75	.14	1.25	
Leadership	.05	.12	.06	.46	
Community Improvements	2.63	.60	.47	4.37***	

*** $p < .001$

For this analysis, $R = .78$, $R^2_{adj} = .57$, $F (8, 92) = 17.38$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for organizational collective efficacy. This model accounted for 57% of the variance in organizational collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to organizational collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 53%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to organizational collective efficacy; however, organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to organizational collective efficacy ($\beta = .706$, $t (92) = 7.42$, $p < .001$).

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to organizational collective efficacy. For this analysis, $R = .76$; $R^2_{adj} = .52$, $F (12, 82) = 9.32$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for organizational collective efficacy. This model accounted for 52% of the variance in organizational collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to organizational collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 51%. Upon review of the coefficients for the model, the organizational effectiveness subscale measuring tangible community improvements was a significant individual predictor to ($\beta = .470$, $t (82) = 4.37$, $p < .001$).

In the bivariate results, there were significant relationships among perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness and perceived neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy. In the above multivariate analyses, organizational characteristics and

effectiveness as a block contributed to neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy. Perceived organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood or organizational collective efficacy; however, perceived organizational effectiveness, specifically effectiveness in achieving tangible community improvements, was a significant individual predictor to both measures of collective efficacy. In this study, perceived organizational effectiveness measures participants' perceptions of how successful their neighborhood organization has been in the past, while perceived organizational collective efficacy measures participants' perceptions of their organization's ability or capacity to accomplish goals and solve problems now and in the future. Neighborhood collective efficacy measures participants' perceptions of their neighborhood's ability to solve problems and maintain social control. The above results indicate that participant's perceptions of their neighborhood and organization's ability to solve problems now and in the future is associated with their perceptions of what their neighborhood organization has already done to make tangible improvements in their community. Furthermore, while organizational effectiveness was significantly associated neighborhood collective efficacy, it was more significantly associated with organizational collective efficacy, and the amount of explained variation was almost three times the amount explained for the neighborhood collective efficacy (56% versus 20%).

Perceived Organizational Variables & Perceived Sense of Community

> *2(e) Research Question:* What is the influence of perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness on perceived sense of community?

Table 18 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational variables predicting to perceived sense of community, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Table 18: HMR for Perceived Organizational Variables and Perceived Sense of Community

Variables	*B*	*SE B*	β	*t*	Δ R²
Step 1					.03
Age	.01	.01	.12	1.13	
Education	-.04	.06	-.07	-.65	
Race	.11	.13	.08	.84	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	.20	.19	.14	1.03	
Central NS	.47	.27	.21	1.77	
Homewood	.24	.27	.15	.90	
Step 3					.30***
Organizational Characteristics	.01	.01	.88	.76	
Organizational Effectiveness	.07	.02	.53	4.42**	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.03
Age	.01	.01	.12	1.10	
Education	-.04	.06	-.07	-.63	
Race	.11	.13	.08	.81	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	.20	.19	.14	1.00	
Central NS	.47	.27	.21	1.71	
Homewood	.24	.27	.15	.87	
Step 3					.34***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.02	.01	.17	.19	
Structure/Climate	.01	.02	.10	.50	
Mission	-.00	.02	-.01	.97	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.09	.11	.11	.42	
Leadership	-.02	.02	-.14	.38	
Community Improvements	.35	.09	.50	3.89***	

**P* < .01; ****p* < .001

For this analysis, R = .60; R^2_{adj} = .31, F (8, 92) = 6.49, p < .001, indicating that the model was significant for perceived sense of community. This model accounted for 31% of the variance in sense of community. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to sense of

community, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 30%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to sense of community; however, organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to sense of community ($\beta = .532$, t (92) = 4.42, $p < .001$). In contrast, the bivariate results demonstrated significant relationships among perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness and perceived sense of community.

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted perceived sense of community. For this analysis, $R = .63$, $R^2_{adj} = .31$, F (12, 82) = 4.54, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for sense of community. This model accounted for 31% of the variance in sense of community. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness as a block significantly contributed to sense of community, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 34%. Upon review of the coefficients for the model, the perceived organizational effectiveness subscale measuring tangible community improvements was significant a significant predictor to perceived sense of community ($\beta = .499$, t (82) = 3.89, $p < .001$).

4.3.3. Motivation and Participation Variables

Hypotheses 3(a) and 3(b) examined the relationships among initial and current motivation for participation and respondents' participation level and participation in decision making, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. The results from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses examining each of these hypotheses are presented in this section.

Motivation and Participation Level

3(a) Hypothesis: The stronger the initial and current motivation for participation, the greater the level of participation in the neighborhood organization.

Table 19 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for initial and current motivation predicting to participation level, controlling for demographics (i.e., age, race, education, and income) and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .53$, $R^2_{adj} = .21$, $F (9, 79) = 3.51$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for participation level. This model accounted for 21% of the variance in participation level. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that initial and current motivation as a block significantly contributed to participation level, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 22%. Upon review of the coefficients, initial motivation was not a significant individual predictor to participation level; however, current motivation for participation was a significant individual predictor to participation level ($\beta = .537$, $t (79) = 2.97$, $p < .01$).

Table 19: HMR for Motivation and Participation Level

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.03
Age	.02	.01	.04	.30	
Education	.14	.12	.15	1.22	
Race	-.10	.27	-.04	-.36	
Income	.04	.09	.06	.48	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.60	.37	-.24	-1.62	
Central NS	-.11	.51	.01	-.22	
Homewood	-.57	.53	-.17	-1.07	
Step 3					.22***
Initial Motivation	-.08	.34	-.04	-.22	
Current Motivation	.94	.32	.54	2.97**	

**p < .01; ***p < .001

117

Motivation and Participation in Decision Making

3(b) Hypothesis: The stronger the initial and current motivation for participation, the greater the level of participation in decision making.

Table 20 presents the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for initial and current motivation predicting to participation in decision making. For this analysis, $R = .56$, $R^2_{adj} = .23$, $F (9, 79) = 3.93$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for participation in decision making. This model accounted for 23% of the variance in participation in decision making. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that initial and current motivation as a block significantly contributed to participation in decision making, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 16%. Upon review of the coefficients, initial motivation was not a significant individual predictor to participation in decision making; however, current motivation ($\beta = .511$, $t (79) = 2.87$, $p < .01$) was a significant individual predictor to participation in decision making. Education was also significant ($\beta = .315$, $t (79) = 2.68$, $p < .01$), indicating that the more educated the respondent the more they participated in decision making.

Table 20: HMR for Motivation and Participation in Decision Making

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.11*
Age	.05	.01	.05	.43	
Education	.41	.15	.32	2.68**	
Race	.07	.35	.02	.19	
Income	.06	.12	.06	.50	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.77	.48	-.24	-1.61	
Central NS	.04	.66	.08	.06	
Homewood	-.68	.69	-.17	-1.00	
Step 3					.16***
Initial Motivation	-.26	.46	-.10	-.56	
Current Motivation	1.21	.42	.51	2.87**	

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

The bivariate results demonstrated significant relationships among initial motivation and participation level; however, in the multivariate results, initial motivation did not individual predict to participation level. In the bivariate results, current motivation was significantly associated with both participation variables, and these results were confirmed in the multivariate analyses. Furthermore, initial and current motivation as a block contributed to participation level and participation in decision making.

4.3.4. Participation Variables and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Hypotheses 4(a) through 4(e) examined the relationships among the participation variables and the perceived effects of citizen participation, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. The results from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses examining each of these hypotheses are presented in this section.

Participation Variables & Perceived Personal Competencies: Sociopolitical Control

4(a) Hypothesis: The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater the level of perceived sociopolitical control (i.e., leadership competence, general policy control, and neighborhood policy control).

Table 21 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the participation and the perceived sociopolitical variables, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Leadership Competence: The researcher examined whether or not participation level and participation in decision making predicted to perceived leadership competence. For this analysis, $R = .54$, $R^2_{adj} = .23$, $F(8, 96) = 4.86$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived leadership competence. This model accounted for 23% of the variance in leadership competence.

Table 21: HMR for Participation Variables and Perceived Sociopolitical Control Variables

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Leadership Competence:					
Step 1					.14**
Age	-.03	.01	-.06	-.57	
Education	.22	.07	.34	3.42***	
Race	-.18	.15	-.12	-1.25	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	-.01	.25	-.01	-1.20	
Central NS	-.24	.34	-.09	-.05	
Homewood	.27	.31	.13	-.72	
Step 3					.12***
Participation Level	.29	.09	.43	3.09**	
Participation in Decision Making	-.05	.07	-.10	-.70	
General Policy Control:					
Step 1					.14***
Age	.01	.01	.24	2.44*	
Education	.26	.07	.40	4.05***	
Race	-.04	.15	-.02	-.25	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.37	.21	-.22	-1.75	
Central NS	-.31	.29	-.12	-1.07	
Homewood	-.05	.30	-.03	-.02	
Step 3					.11***
Participation Level	.17	.10	.24	1.74	
Participation in Decision Making	.06	.07	.12	.82	
Neighborhood Policy Control:					
Step 1					.08*
Age	.01	.01	.17	1.66	
Education	.20	.07	.31	2.98**	
Race	-.08	.15	-.05	-.56	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	-.08	.22	-.05	- .36	
Central NS	.29	.31	.10	.92	
Homewood	-.06	.32	-.03	-.18	
Step 3					.22***
Participation Level	.23	.09	.34	2.52*	
Participation in Decision Making	.09	.07	.18	1.25	

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

Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that participation level and participation in decision making as a block significantly contributed to leadership competence, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 12%. Upon review of the coefficients, participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor; however, participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived leadership competence (β = .429, t (96) = 3.09, p < .01). Education was also significant (β = .342, t (96) = 3.42, p < .001), indicating that the higher the respondent's education, the greater the leadership competence.

General Policy Control: The researcher examined whether or not participation level and participation in decision making predicted to perceived general policy control. For this analysis, R = .54, R^2_{adj} = .24, F (8, 96) = 5.03, p < .001. However, the R^2 change was significant indicating that participation level and participation in decision making as a block significantly contributed to general policy control, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 11%. Upon review of the coefficients, participation in decision making and participation level were not significant individual predictors to perceived general policy control. Age (β = .240, t (96) = 2.44, p < .05) and education (β = .402, t (96) = 4.05, p < .001) were significant, indicating that the older and more educated the respondent, the greater the perceived general policy control.

Neighborhood Policy Control: The researcher examined whether or not participation level and participation in decision making predicted to perceived neighborhood policy control. For this analysis, R = .57, R^2_{adj} = .26, F (8, 96) = 5.62, p < .001, indicating that the model was significant for perceived neighborhood policy control. This model accounted for 26% of the variance in neighborhood policy control. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that participation level and participation in decision making as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood policy control, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 22%.

Upon review of the coefficients, participation in decision making was not significant; however, participation level ($\beta = .341$, t (96) = 2.52, $p < .05$) was a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control. Education was also significant ($\beta = .307$, t (96) = 2.98, $p < .01$), indicating that the more educated the respondent the greater perceived neighborhood policy control.

The bivariate results demonstrated significant relationships among participation level and participation in decision making, and perceived leadership competence, general policy control, and neighborhood policy control. In the multivariate results, participation in decision making did not individually predict to any of the perceived sociopolitical variables; however, participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived leadership competence, and perceived neighborhood policy control. Furthermore, participation level and participation in decision making as a block contributed to leadership competence and general and neighborhood policy control. Participation level was not a significant individual predictor to general policy control; however, participation level accounted for 26% of the variance in neighborhood policy control.

Participation Variables & Perceived Personal Competencies: Knowledge and Skills

> *4(b) Hypothesis:* The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater the level of perceived knowledge and skills.

Table 22 presents the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for participation level and participation in decision making predicting to perceived knowledge and skills, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .60$, $R^2_{adj} = .30$, F (8, 92) = 6.34, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived knowledge and skills. This model accounted for 30% of the variance in knowledge and skills.

Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that participation level and participation in decision making as a block significantly contributed to knowledge and skills, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 30%. Upon review of the coefficients, participation in decision making was not significant; however, participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills ($\beta = .418$, $t (92) = 3.10$, $p < .01$). In contrast, the bivariate results demonstrated significant relationships among participation level and participation in decision making and perceived knowledge and skills.

Table 22: HMR for Participation Variables and Perceived Knowledge and Skills

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.06
Age	-.03	.03	-.11	-1.03	
Education	.54	.34	.17	1.60	
Race	-.43	.75	-.06	-.55	
Step 2					.01
Hazelwood	-.14	1.11	-.02	-.12	
Central NS	-.69	1.55	-.05	-.45	
Homewood	-.90	1.59	-.10	-.56	
Step 3					.30***
Participation Level	1.37	.44	.42	3.10**	
Participation in Decision Making	.44	.34	.18	1.28	

$**p < .01$; $***p < .001$

Participation Variables & Perceived Collective Competencies: Collective Efficacy

Table 23 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the participation variables and perceived neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy.

Perceived Neighborhood Collective Efficacy

4(c) Hypothesis: The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater perceived neighborhood collective efficacy.

The researcher examined whether or not participation level and participation in decision making predicted to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .24$, $R^2_{adj} = -.02$, $F(8, 96) = .724$, $p = .67$, indicating that the model was not significant for perceived neighborhood collective efficacy.

Table 23: HMR for Participation Variables & Perceived Neighborhood & Organizational Collective Efficacy

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Neighborhood Collective Efficacy:					
Step 1					.00
Age	-.02	.01	-.01	-.04	
Education	-.04	.07	-.06	-.58	
Race	.01	.14	.01	.08	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	.18	.21	.12	.83	
Central NS	.30	.29	.12	.12	
Homewood	.37	.30	.21	.21	
Step 3					.04
Participation Level	.11	.10	.18	1.14	
Participation in Decision Making	.01	.08	.01	.08	
Organizational Collective Efficacy:					
Step 1					.04
Age	-00	.01	-.01	-.11	
Education	.77	.45	.18	1.72	
Race	-.34	1.00	-.03	-34	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	2.25	1.47	.21	1.51	
Central NS	2.37	2.04	.13	1.16	
Homewood	3.70	2.10	.29	1.76	
Step 3					.10**
Participation Level	1.43	.66	.32	2.15*	
Participation in Decision Making	- .02	.51	-.00	-.00	

*p < .05; **p < .01*

Perceived Organizational Collective Efficacy

4(d) Hypothesis: The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater perceived organizational collective efficacy.

The researcher examined whether or not participation level and participation in decision making predicted to perceived organizational collective efficacy, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .41$, $R^2_{adj} = .10$, $F(8, 96) = 2.39$, $p < .05$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived organizational collective efficacy. This model accounted for 10% of the variance in organizational collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that participation level and participation in decision making as a block significantly contributed to organizational collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 10%. Upon review of the coefficients, participation in decision making was not significant; however, participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived organizational collective efficacy ($\beta = .323$, $t(96) = 2.15$, $p < .05$).

The bivariate results did not demonstrate significant relationships among participation level and participation in decision making and perceived neighborhood collective efficacy. In the multivariate results, participation level and participation in decision making did not individually or as a block predict to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy. The bivariate results demonstrated significant relationships among participation level and participation in decision making and perceived organizational collective efficacy. The multivariate results demonstrated that participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived organizational collective efficacy, but not participation in decision making. Furthermore, participation level and participation in decision making as a block contributed to organizational collective efficacy.

Participation Variables & Perceived Sense of Community

> *4(e) Hypothesis:* The greater the level of participation and participation in decision making, the greater perceived sense of community.

Table 24 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the participation level and participation in decision making predicting to perceived sense of community, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .38$; $R^2_{adj} = .07$, $F (8, 96) = 1.97$, $p = .06$, indicating that the model was not significant for perceived sense of community. However, the R^2 change was significant indicating that participation level and participation in decision making as a block significantly contributed to sense of community, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 10%. The bivariate results also demonstrated significant relationships among participation level and participation in decision making and perceived sense of community.

Table 24: HMR for Participation Variables and Perceived Sense of Community

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.03
Age	.01	.01	.12	1.16	
Education	-.04	.06	-.07	-.66	
Race	.11	.13	.08	.85	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	.19	.19	.14	1.05	
Central NS	.47	.26	.21	1.81	
Homewood	.24	.27	.15	.91	
Step 3					.08*
Participation Level	.13	.09	.23	1.53	
Participation in Decision Making	.03	.07	.07	.45	

*p < .05

126

4.3.5.   Perceived Organizational and Participation Variables and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Research questions 5(a) through 5(e) examine the relationships among the perceived organizational and participation variables and the perceived effects of citizen participation, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. For these analyses, organizational characteristics, organizational effectiveness, participation level, and participation in decision making were entered into the third block of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis. When organizational characteristics and/or effectiveness were significant, the researcher entered the subscales for organizational characteristics (decision making, structure/climate and mission) and organizational effectiveness (influence, leadership and tangible community improvements) into the third block along with the participation variables. Similar to the previous analyses, the demographic variables were entered into the first block, and the neighborhood organization variables were entered into the second block. The results from the hierarchical multiple regression analyses examining these research questions are presented in this section.

Perceived Organizational and Participation Variables & Perceived Personal Competencies:

Sociopolitical Control

5(a) Research Question: What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived sociopolitical control (i.e., leadership competence, general policy control, and neighborhood policy control)?

Leadership Competence: Table 25 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational and participation variables predicting to perceived leadership competence, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. For this analysis, $R = .54$, $R^2_{adj} = .22$, $F (10, 90) = 3.76$, $p < .001$,

indicating that the model was significant for perceived leadership competence. This model accounted for 22% of the variance in leadership competence. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation and organizational variables as a block significantly contributed to leadership competence, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 22%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics, organizational effectiveness, and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to leadership competence; however, participation level was a significant individual predictor to leadership competence (β = .411, t (90) = 2.85, p < .01). Education was also significant (β = .342, t (90) = 3.35, p < .001), indicating that the higher the respondents' education, the greater the perceived leadership competence.

Table 25: HMR for Perceived Organizational & Participation Variables & Perceived Leadership Competence

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.11**
Age	-.00	.01	-.06	-.56	
Education	.22	.07	.34	3.35**	
Race	-.18	.15	-.12	-1.23	
Step 2					.11
Hazelwood	-.29	.22	-.16	-1.31	
Central NS	-.52	.30	-.19	-1.71	
Homewood	-.27	.31	-.14	-.87	
Step 3					.22**
Organizational Characteristics	.01	.02	.07	.19	
Organizational Effectiveness	.00	.02	.02	.54	
Participation Level	.28	.01	.41	2.85**	
Participation in Decision Making	-.06	.08	-.11	-.74	

**p < .01

General Policy Control: Table 26 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational and participation variables predicting to perceived general policy control, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization For this analysis, $R = .60$, $R^2_{adj} = .29$, $F(10, 90) = 5.16$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation and organizational variables as a block significantly contributed to general policy control, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 18%. Upon review of the coefficients, none of the perceived organizational or participation variables were significant individual predictors to perceived general policy control. Age ($\beta = .240$, $t(90) = 2.39$, $p < .05$), and education ($\beta = .402$, $t(90) = 3.97$, $p < .001$) were significant, indicating that the older and more educated the respondent, the greater the perceived general policy control.

Table 26: HMR for Perceived Organizational & Participation Variables & Perceived General Policy Control

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.15***
Age	.01	.01	.24	2.39*	
Education	.26	.07	.40	3.97**	
Race	-.04	.15	-.02	-.25	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.37	.22	-.22	-1.72	
Central NS	-.31	.30	-.12	-1.04	
Homewood	-.01	.31	-.00	-.02	
Step 3					.18***
Organizational Characteristics	.01	.02	.09	.73	
Organizational Effectiveness	.04	.02	.23	1.93	
Participation Level	.12	.09	.18	1.32	
Participation in Decision Making	.05	.07	.10	.69	

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

Neighborhood Policy Control: Table 27 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational and participation variables predicting to perceived neighborhood policy control.

Table 27: HMR for Perceived Organizational & Participation Variables & Perceived Neighborhood Policy Control

Variables	B	$SE\ B$	β	t	ΔR^2
Step 1					.06*
Age	.01	.01	.17	1.63	
Education	.20	.07	.31	2.92**	
Race	-.08	.15	-.05	-.55	
Step 2					.04
Hazelwood	-.08	.20	-.06	-.35	
Central NS	.29	.32	.10	.90	
Homewood	-.05	.32	-.03	-.17	
Step 3					.38***
Organizational Characteristics	.05	.02	.31	2.78**	
Organizational Effectiveness	.02	.02	.11	.97	
Participation Level	.17	.09	.25	1.97*	
Participation in Decision Making	.07	.07	.14	1.11	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.08*
Age	.01	.01	.17	1.58	
Education	.20	.07	.31	2.83**	
Race	-.08	.15	-.05	-.53	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	-.08	.20	-.06	-.34	
Central NS	.29	.32	.10	.87	
Homewood	-.05	.32	-.03	-.17	
Step 3					.38***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.02	.02	.18	1.39	
Structure/Climate	.05	.02	.36	2.57*	
Mission	-.06	.02	-.04	-.34	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.04	.13	.04	.34	
Leadership	-.02	.02	-.12	-.77	
Community Improvements	.05	.11	.06	.51	
Participation Level	.18	.09	.26	1.96*	
Participation in Decision Making	.06	.07	.13	.88	

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

For this analysis, $R = .67$, $R^2_{adj} = .38$, $F (10, 90) = 7.15$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived neighborhood policy control. This model accounted for 38% of the variance in neighborhood policy control. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation and organizational variables as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood policy control, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 37%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational effectiveness and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to neighborhood policy control; however, organizational characteristics ($\beta = .307$, $t (90) = 2.78$, $p < .01$) and participation level ($\beta = .253$, $t (90) = 1.97$, $p < .05$) were significant individual predictors to perceived neighborhood policy control. Age ($\beta = .307$, $t (9) = 2.92$, $p < .01$) was also significant, indicating that the older the respondent, the greater the perceived neighborhood policy control.

Because organizational characteristics were significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales and the participation variables to determine the specific area of organizational characteristics that predicted to perceived neighborhood policy control. For this analysis, $R = .68$, $R^2_{adj} = .38$, $F (14, 80) = 5.03$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived neighborhood policy control. This model accounted for 38% of the variance in neighborhood policy control. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to general policy control, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 38%. Upon review of the coefficients, the perceived organizational characteristics subscale measuring structure/climate ($\beta = .355$, $t (80) = 2.57$, $p < .05$), and participation level ($\beta = .263$, $t (80) = 1.96$, $p < .05$) were significant individual predictors to neighborhood policy control.

In summary, participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor to any of the perceived sociopolitical control measures. Perceived organizational characteristics and organizational effectiveness were not significant individual predictors to perceived leadership competence; however, participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived leadership competence. None of the perceived organizational or participation variables were significant individual predictors to general policy control. Organizational effectiveness was not a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control; however, participation level and organizational characteristics, specifically the structure/climate of the organization, were significant individual predictors to neighborhood policy control. Finally, the participation and organizational variables as a block contributed to perceived leadership competence, general policy control, and neighborhood policy control.

Perceived Organizational and Participation Variables & Perceived Personal Competencies: Knowledge and Skills

5(b) Research Question: What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived knowledge and skills?

Table 28 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational and participation variables predicting to perceived knowledge and skills. For this analysis, $R = .66$, $R^2_{adj} = .37$, $F (10, 90) = 6.77$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived knowledge and skills. This model accounted for 37% of the variance in knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to knowledge and skills, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 37%. Upon review of the coefficients, perceived organizational characteristics and

participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to knowledge and skills; however, perceived organizational effectiveness ($\beta = .259$ $t(90) = 2.25$, $p < .05$) and participation level ($\beta = .358$, $t(90) = 2.76$, $p < .01$) were significant individual predictors.

Table 28: HMR for Perceived Organizational & Participation Variables & Perceived Knowledge and Skills

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.06
Age	-.03	.03	-.11	-1.02	
Education	.54	.34	.17	1.60	
Race	-.41	.75	-.06	-.55	
Step 2					.01
Hazelwood	-.14	1.11	-.02	-.12	
Central NS	-.70	1.55	.05	-.45	
Homewood	-.90	1.60	.09	-.56	
Step 3					.37***
Organizational Characteristics	.05	.08	.07	.58	
Organizational Effectiveness	.20	.09	.26	2.25*	
Participation Level	1.17	.43	.36	2.76**	
Participation in Decision Making	.39	.33	.16	1.19	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.06
Age	-.03	.03	-.11	-.99	
Education	.54	.34	.17	1.55	
Race	-.41	.75	-.06	-.53	
Step 2					.01
Hazelwood	-.14	1.11	-.02	-.12	
Central NS	-.70	1.55	.05	-.43	
Homewood	-.90	1.60	.09	-.55	
Step 3					.45***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.23	.08	.35	2.87**	
Structure/Climate	.04	.09	.05	.39	
Mission	-.14	.08	-.22	-1.80	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.82	.61	.16	1.35	
Leadership	-.12	.10	-.18	-1.21	
Community Improvements	1.30	.49	.27	2.32*	
Participation Level	1.35	.42	.40	3.10**	
Participation in Decision Making	.13	.33	.05	.39	

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

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales and the participation variables to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to perceived knowledge and skills. For this analysis, $R = .72$, $R^2_{adj} = .43$, $F(14, 80) = 5.99$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for knowledge and skills. This model accounted for 43% of the variance in knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to knowledge and skills, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 45%. Upon review of the coefficients, the perceived organizational effectiveness scale measuring tangible community improvements ($\beta = .273$, $t(80) = 2.32$, $p < .05$), and participation level ($\beta = .398$, $t(80) = 3.10$, $p < .01$) were significant individual predictors to perceived knowledge and skills. Surprisingly, the perceived organizational characteristic's subscale measuring decision making process ($\beta = .354$, $t(80) = 2.87$, $p < .01$) was also a significant individual predictor to knowledge and skills, even though the overall organizational characteristics scale was not a significant individual predictor in the above analysis.

Perceived Organizational and Participation Variables & Perceived Collective Competencies: Collective Efficacy

Neighborhood Collective Efficacy

5(c) Research Question: What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived neighborhood collective efficacy?

Table 29 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational and participation variables predicting to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy. For this analysis, $R = .52$, $R^2_{adj} = .19$, $F(10, 90) = 3.32$, $p <$

.01, indicating that the model was significant for perceived neighborhood collective efficacy.

This model accounted for 19% of the variance in neighborhood collective efficacy. .

Table 29: HMR for Perceived Organizational & Participation Variables & Perceived Neighborhood Collective Efficacy

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.00
Age	-.02	.01	-.01	-.04	
Education	-.04	.07	-.06	-.57	
Race	.01	.15	-.01	.08	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	.18	.22	.11	.81	
Central NS	.30	.30	.12	1.00	
Homewood	.37	.31	.21	1.92	
Step 3					.25***
Organizational Characteristics	- .01	.02	-.08	-.60	
Organizational Effectiveness	.08	.02	.56	4.32**	
Participation Level	.06	.09	.10	.70	
Participation in Decision Making	-.01	.07	-.01	-.09	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.00
Age	-.02	.01	-.01	-.04	
Education	-.04	.07	-.06	-.57	
Race	.01	.15	-.01	.08	
Step 2					.02
Hazelwood	.18	.22	.11	.81	
Central NS	.30	.30	.12	1.00	
Homewood	.37	.31	.21	1.92	
Step 3					.29***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.01	.02	.10	.71	
Structure/Climate	.01	.02	.10	.62	
Mission	-.03	.02	-.24	-1.68	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.14	.14	.15	1.02	
Leadership	.02	.02	-.00	.01	
Community Improvements	.37	.11	.47	3.35***	
Participation Level	.09	.10	.15	1.00	
Participation in Decision Making	-.04	.08	-.08	-.48	

**$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

135

Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 25%. Upon review of the coefficients, perceived organizational characteristics, participation level and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to neighborhood collective efficacy; however, perceived organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy ($\beta = .564$, $t(90) = 4.32$, $p < .001$).

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales and the participation variables to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to neighborhood collective efficacy. For this analysis, $R = .56$, $R^2_{adj} = .19$, $F(14, 80) = 2.55$, $p < .01$, indicating that the model was significant for neighborhood collective efficacy. This model accounted for 19% of the variance in neighborhood collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to neighborhood collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 29%. Upon review of the coefficients, the perceived organizational effectiveness subscale measuring tangible community improvements was a significant individual predictor for perceived neighborhood collective efficacy ($\beta = .470$, $t(80) = 3.35$, $p < .001$).

Organizational Collective Efficacy

5(d) Research Question: What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived organizational collective efficacy?

Table 30 presents the results for the organizational and participation variables predicting to perceived organizational collective efficacy. For this analysis, $R = .79$, $R^2_{adj} = .58$, $F (10, 90) = 14.76$, $p < .001$, the model was significant for perceived organizational collective efficacy.

Table 30: HMR for Organizational and Participation Variables and Organizational Collective Efficacy

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.04
Age	-.00	.04	-.01	-.11	
Education	.77	.46	.18	1.69	
Race	-.34	1.02	-.03	-.34	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	2.23	1.50	.21	1.48	
Central NS	2.37	2.08	.13	1.14	
Homewood	3.70	2.14	.29	1.72	
Step 3					.55***
Organizational Characteristics	.09	.09	.09	1.00	
Organizational Effectiveness	.72	.10	.70	7.40***	
Participation Level	.81	.47	.18	1.72	
Participation in Decision Making	-.16	.36	-.05	-.45	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.04
Age	-.00	.04	-.01	-.10	
Education	.77	.46	.18	1.64	
Race	-.34	1.02	-.03	-.33	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	2.23	1.50	.21	1.43	
Central NS	2.37	2.08	.13	1.10	
Homewood	3.70	2.14	.29	1.67	
Step 3					.53***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.08	.10	.09	.83	
Structure/Climate	.18	.11	.19	1.60	
Mission	-.07	.10	-.07	-.68	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.96	.74	.14	1.30	
Leadership	.07	.12	.08	.60	
Community Improvements	2.58	.60	.46	4.33***	
Participation Level	.93	.52	.21	1.80	
Participation in Decision Making	-.22	.40	-.07	-.55	

***$p < .001$

This model accounted for 58% of the variance in organizational collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to organizational collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 55%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to organizational collective efficacy; however, organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived organizational collective efficacy (β = .696, t (90) = 7.40, p < .001).

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales and the participation variables to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to perceived organizational collective efficacy. For this analysis, R = .78; R^2_{adj} = .53, F (14, 80) = 8.58, p < .001, indicating that the model was significant for organizational collective efficacy. This model accounted for 53% of the variance in organizational collective efficacy. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to organizational collective efficacy, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 53%. Upon review of the coefficients for the model, the perceived organizational effectiveness subscale measuring tangible community improvements (β = .462 t (80) = 4.33, p < .001) was a significant individual predictor to perceived organizational collective efficacy.

In summary, organizational characteristics and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to perceived neighborhood or organizational collective efficacy; however, perceived organizational effectiveness, specifically effectiveness in achieving tangible

community improvements, was a significant individual predictor to both measures of perceived collective efficacy. Furthermore, the participation and organizational variables as a block contributed to neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy.

Perceived Organizational and Participation Variables & Sense of Community

5(e) *Research Question:* What is the influence of the perceived organizational and participation variables on perceived sense of community?

Table 31 presents a summary of the results from the hierarchical multiple regression analysis for the perceived organizational and participation variables predicting to perceived sense of community. For this analysis, $R = .62$; $R^2_{adj} = .31$, $F (10, 90) = 5.59$, $p < .001$, indicating that the model was significant for perceived sense of community. This model accounted for 31% of the variance in sense of community. Furthermore, the R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational subscales as a block significantly contributed to sense of community, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 32%. Upon review of the coefficients, organizational characteristics, participation level, and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to sense of community; however, organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived sense of community ($\beta = .520$, $t (90) = 4.34$, $p < .001$.

Because organizational effectiveness was significant for this model, the researcher examined each of the organizational characteristics and effectiveness subscales and the participation variables to determine the specific area of organizational effectiveness that predicted to sense of community. For this analysis, $R = .65$, $R^2_{adj} = .32$, $F (14, 80) = 4.10$, $p < .001$; the model was significant, accounting for 36% of the variance in sense of community. The R^2 change was significant indicating that the participation variables and the organizational

subscales as a block significantly contributed to sense of community, and the amount of variance explained by this block was 36%. Upon review of the coefficients, the perceived organizational effectiveness subscale measuring tangible community improvements was a significant individual predictor to perceived sense of community ($\beta = .487$, $t (80) = 3.78$, $p < .001$).

Table 31: HMR for Organizational and Participation Variables and Sense of Community

Variables	B	SE B	β	t	Δ R²
Step 1					.03
Age	.01	.01	.12	1.13	
Education	-.04	.06	-.07	-.65	
Race	.11	.13	.08	.84	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	.20	.19	.14	1.03	
Central NS	.47	.27	.21	1.77	
Homewood	.24	.27	.15	.90	
Step 3					.32***
Organizational Characteristics	.01	.02	.05	.41	
Organizational Effectiveness	.06	.02	.52	4.34***	
Participation Level	.07	.08	.13	.98	
Participation in Decision Making	.01	.06	.04	.27	
(with Organizational Subscales)					
Step 1					.03
Age	.01	.01	.12	1.10	
Education	-.04	.06	-.07	-.63	
Race	.11	.13	.08	.81	
Step 2					.03
Hazelwood	.20	.19	.14	1.00	
Central NS	.47	.27	.21	1.71	
Homewood	.24	.27	.15	.87	
Step 3					.36***
Organizational Characteristics:					
Decision Making Process	.01	.02	.13	.95	
Structure/Climate	.01	.02	.09	.64	
Mission	-.00	.02	-.02	-.17	
Organizational Effectiveness:					
Influence	.09	.11	.11	.81	
Leadership	-.01	.02	-.12	-.71	
Community Improvements	.35	.09	.49	3.78***	
Participation Level	.09	.08	.16	1.16	
Participation in Decision Making	-.01	.06	-.02	-.14	

***$p < .001$

4.3.6.   Summary of the Multivariate Results

This section summarizes the results of the preceding multivariate analyses for the current study's research questions and hypotheses, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. Figures 2 through 6 in this section indicate the significant individual predictors to each of the dependent variables for each of the research questions and hypotheses. Furthermore, the conceptual model for the current study (see Figure 1, p. 42) is repeated in Figure 7 indicating the variables and relationships which were retained in the analyses.

Perceived Organizational Variables and Participation Variables

Hypotheses 1(a) and 1(b) were partially supported: Perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness did not individually predict to participation level or participation in decision making. As a block organizational characteristics and effectiveness contributed to participation level and participation in decision making; however, their overall effect was relatively weak, with organizational characteristics having a stronger effect than organizational effectiveness. This result was similar in the bivariate results, where there was a significant relationship only between perceived organizational characteristics and participation level.

Perceived Organizational Variables and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Figures 2 and 3 display the significant individual predictors for each of the effects of citizen participation for **Research questions 2(a) through 2(e),** which examined the relationships among the perceived organizational variables and respondents' perceptions of the effects of citizen participation, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.
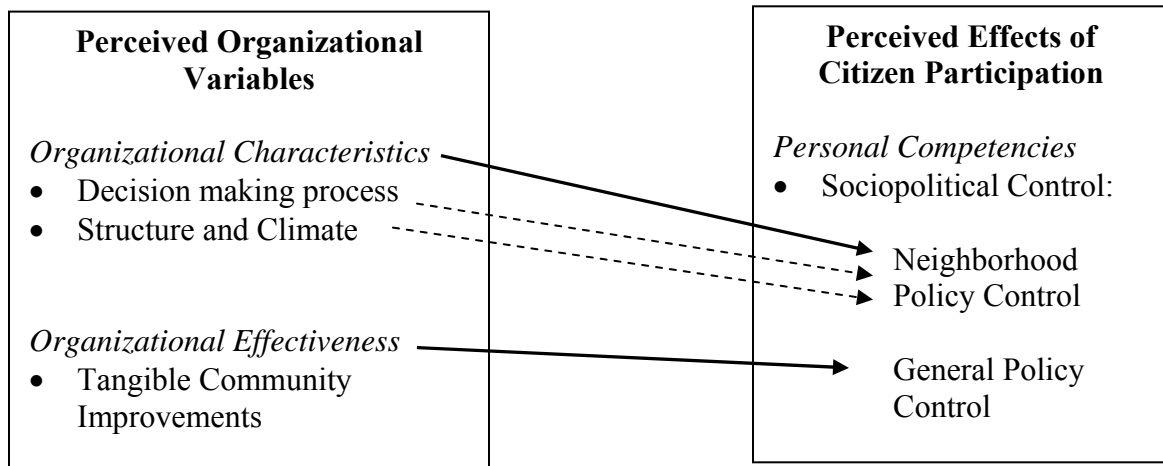
Figure 2: Significant Individual Predictors: Perceived Organizational Variables and Sociopolitical Control

- **Research Questions 2(a)-Perceived sociopolitical control**: Perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness were not significant predictors individually or as a block to perceived leadership competence. Perceived organizational characteristics were a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control, specifically the decision making process and structure/climate of the organization. Perceived organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived general policy control; however, none of the organizational effectiveness subscales were significant. As a block, organizational characteristics and effectiveness contributed to general policy control and neighborhood policy control.
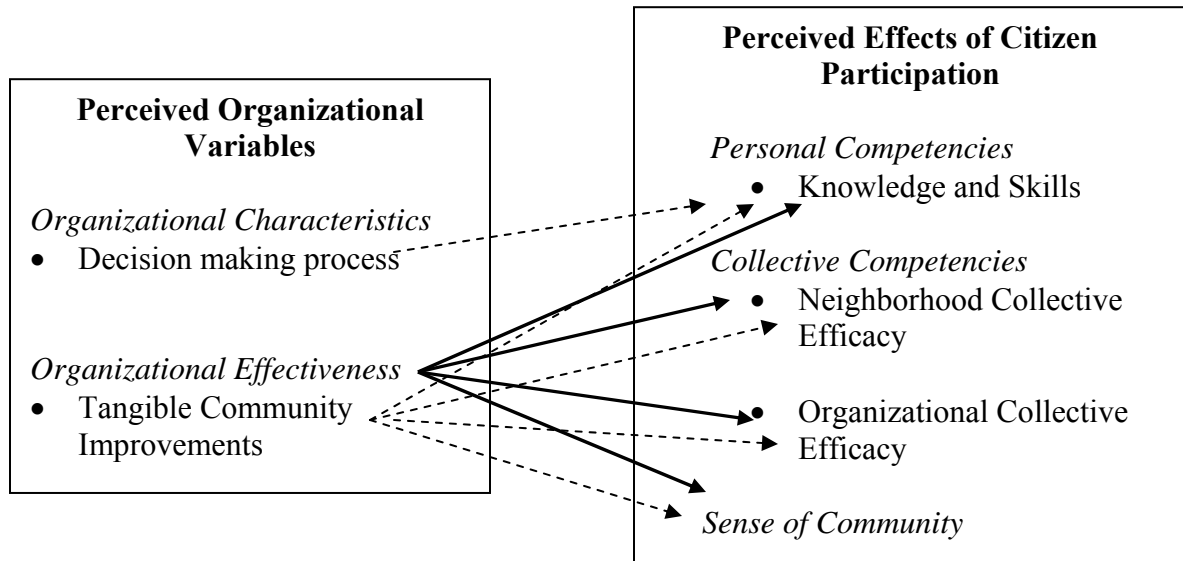
Figure 3: Significant Individual Predictors: Perceived Organizational Variables and Knowledge and Skills, Neighborhood and Organizational Collective Efficacy and Sense of Community

- **Research Question 2(b)-Perceived knowledge and skills**: Perceived organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills, specifically tangible community improvements. Furthermore, while the overall scale for organizational characteristics did not predict to knowledge and skills, the decision making subscale was the most significant individual predictor to knowledge and skills. As a block, organizational characteristics and effectiveness contributed to knowledge and skills.

- **Research Question 2(c)–Perceived neighborhood collective efficacy:** Perceived organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy, specifically tangible community improvements. Perceived organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to

neighborhood collective efficacy. As a block, organizational characteristics and effectiveness contributed to neighborhood collective efficacy.

- **Research Question 2(d)-Perceived organizational collective efficacy**: Perceived organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived organizational collective efficacy, specifically tangible community improvements. Perceived organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to organizational collective efficacy. As a block, organizational characteristics and effectiveness contributed to organizational collective efficacy.

- **Research Question 2(e)-Perceived sense of community:** Perceived organizational effectiveness was a significant individual predictor to perceived sense of community, specifically tangible community improvements. Perceived organizational characteristics were not a significant individual predictor to sense of community. As a block, organizational characteristics and effectiveness contributed to sense of community.

Motivation and Participation Variables

Figure 4 presents the significant individual predictors to the participation variables for **Hypotheses 3(a) and 3(b),** which examined the relationships among initial and current motivation for participation and respondent's participation level and participation in decision making, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Motivation for Participation	Participation Variables
Current Motivation For Participation	*Participation Level* *Participation in Decision Making*
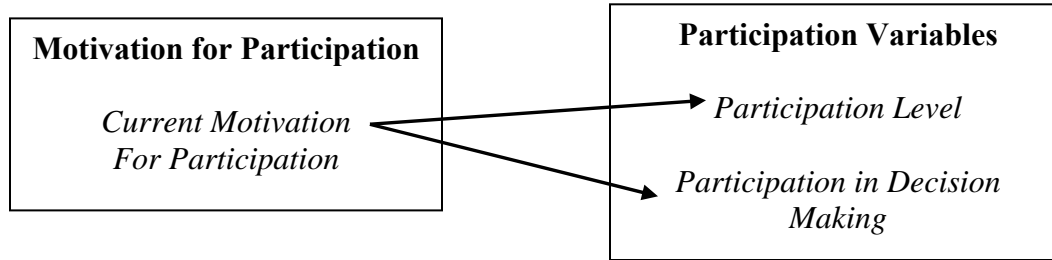
Figure 4: Significant Individual Predictors: Motivation and Participation Variables

- **Hypothesis 3(a) was partially supported (Participation Level):** Current motivation was a significant individual predictor to participation level, but initial motivation was not significant. As a block, initial and current motivation contributed to participation level.

- **Hypothesis 3(b) was partially supported (Participation in Decision Making):** Current motivation was a significant individual predictor to participation in decision making, but initial motivation was not significant. As a block, initial and current motivation contributed to participation in decision making.

Participation Variables and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Figure 5 displays the significant individual predictors to the perceived effects of citizen participation for **Hypotheses 4(a) through 4(e),** which examined the relationships among the participation variables and the perceived effects of citizen participation, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.
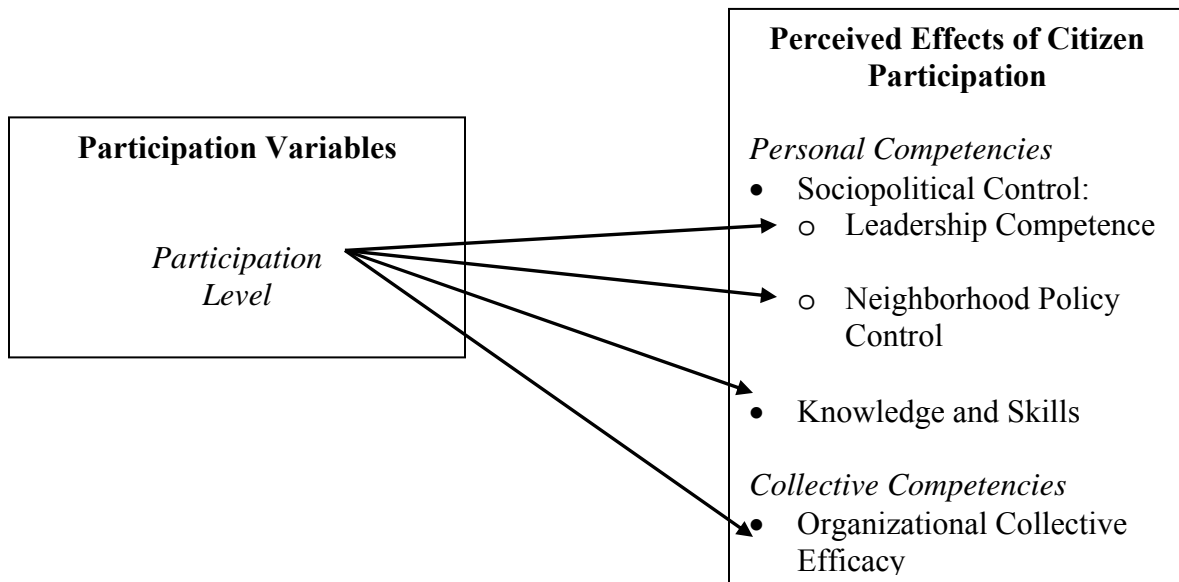
Figure 5: Significant Individual Predictors: Participation and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

- **Hypothesis 4(a) was partially supported (Perceived Sociopolitical Control):** Participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived leadership competence and neighborhood policy control, but not general policy control. Participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor to any of the perceived sociopolitical variables. As a block, participation level and participation in decision making contributed to all three sociopolitical control variables.

- **Hypothesis 4(b) was partially supported (Perceived Knowledge and Skills):** Participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills, but participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor

to knowledge and skills. As a block, participation level and participation in decision making contributed to knowledge and skills.

- **Hypothesis 4(c) was not supported (Perceived Neighborhood Collective Efficacy):** Participation level and participation in decision making did not contribute individually or as a block to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy.

- **Hypothesis 4(d) was partially supported (Perceived Organizational Collective Efficacy):** Participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived organizational collective efficacy, but participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor to organizational collective efficacy. As a block, participation level and participation in decision making contributed to organizational collective efficacy.

- **Hypothesis 4(e) was not supported (Sense of Community):** Participation level and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to perceived sense of community. As a block, participation level and participation in decision making contributed to sense of community.

Participation and Perceived Organizational Variables & the Effects of Citizen Participation

Figure 6 displays the significant individual predictors to the perceived effects of citizen participation for **Research questions 5(a) through 5(e),** which examined the relationships among the participation and perceived organizational variables and the perceived effects of citizen participation, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. Overall, participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor to any of dependent variables measuring the perceived effects of citizen participation.
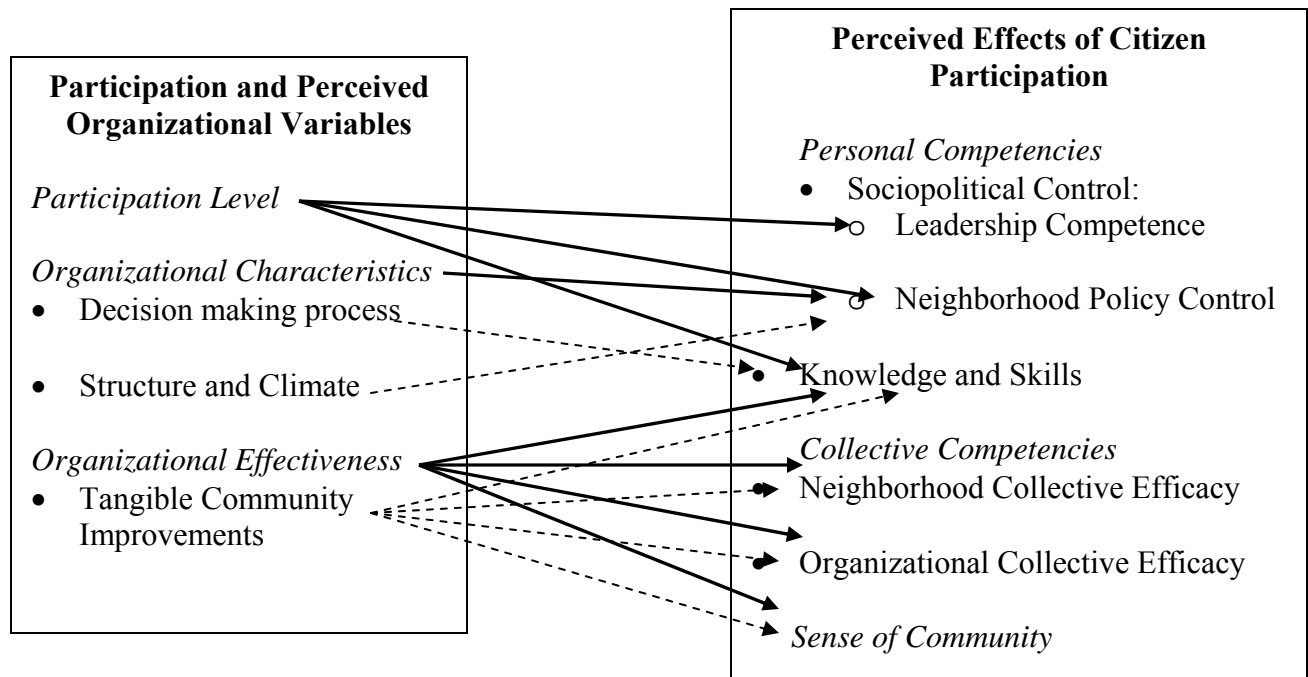
Figure 6: Significant Individual Predictors: Participation and Perceived Organizational Variables, and the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

- **Research question 5(a)-Sociopolitical Control:**

  o For perceived **leadership competence**, participation level was the only significant

  individual predictor. As a block, the participation and organizational variables

  contributed to leadership competence.

  o For perceived **general policy control**, none of the perceived organizational or

  participation variables were significant individual predictors. However, as a block

  the participation and organizational variables contributed to general policy

  control.

o For perceived **neighborhood policy control**, the strongest individual predictor was perceived organizational characteristics, followed by participation level. When analyzing the organizational subscales, the structure/climate of the organization (part of the perceived organizational characteristics scale) was the strongest individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control, then participation level. As a block, the participation and organizational variables contributed to neighborhood policy control.

- **Research question 5(b)-Perceived Knowledge and Skills:** Participation level was the strongest individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills, followed by perceived organizational effectiveness. When analyzing the subscales for the perceived organizational variables, participation level remained the strongest individual predictor. While the overall perceived organizational characteristics scale was not significant in the first analysis, the decision making process subscale was the second strongest individual predictor in the second analysis, followed by tangible community improvements (part of the organizational effectiveness subscale). As a block, the participation and organizational variables contributed to knowledge and skills.

- **Research question 5(c)-Perceived Neighborhood Collective Efficacy:** Organizational effectiveness was the only significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy. When analyzing the perceived organizational subscales, the organization's effectiveness in achieving tangible community improvements was the only significant individual predictor. As a block,

the participation and organizational variables contributed to neighborhood collective efficacy.

- **Research question 5(d)-Perceived Organizational Collective Efficacy:** Organizational effectiveness was the only significant individual predictor to perceived organizational collective efficacy. When analyzing the subscales for the organizational variables, the organization's effectiveness in achieving tangible community improvements was the only significant individual predictor. As a block, the participation and organizational variables contributed to organizational collective efficacy.

- **Research question 5(e)-Perceived Sense of Community:** Organizational effectiveness was the only significant individual predictor to perceived sense of community. When analyzing the subscales for the organizational variables, the organization's effectiveness in achieving tangible community improvements was the only significant individual predictor. As a block, the participation and organizational variables contributed to sense of community.

Overall Summary

Figure 7 on the next page presents the conceptual model and key study variables indicating the variables and relationships which were retained from the original model (i.e., see Figure 1, p. 42). The variables that were individually predictive to each of the key study variables are indicated in bold inside each box, with arrows 1 through 5 demonstrating the relationships which were retained from the original model (i.e., the blocks of variables that contributed to each of the dependent variables).
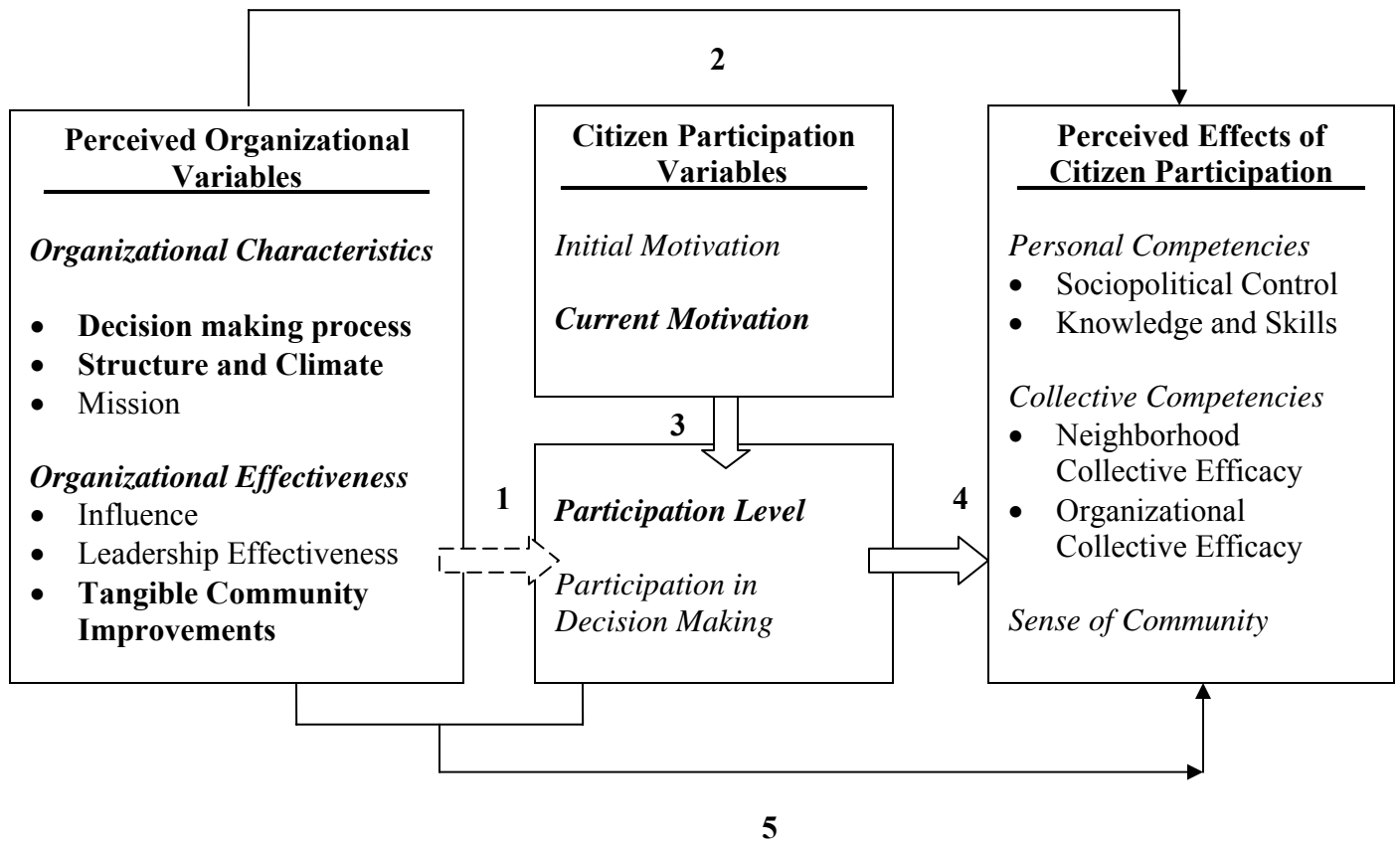
Figure 7: Variables and Relationships Retained in Conceptual Model

Hypotheses 1(a) and 1(b) were partially supported; respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness as a block affected their level of participation and their participation in decision making, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. Therefore, arrow number 1 from Figure 1 was retained in Figure 7, however, arrow 1 is represented by a dotted line because the association was weak and organizational characteristics and effectiveness were not individually predictive to participation level or participation in decision making.

The results from research questions 2(a) through 2(e) demonstrated that respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness as a block

contributed to all of the perceived effects of citizen participation except for perceived leadership competence; therefore, arrow 2 from Figure 1 is retained in Figure 7. Furthermore, respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's effectiveness were a significant individual predictor of most of the perceived effects of citizen participation, except for perceived leadership competence and neighborhood policy control, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. Specifically, participants' views of their neighborhood organization's effectiveness in achieving tangible community improvements was a significant individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills, neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy, and sense of community. Participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics were a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control. When analyzing the subscales for perceived organizational characteristics, participants' perceptions of their organization's decision making process were a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control, and knowledge and skills. In addition, participants' perceptions of their organization's structure and climate were a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control.

Hypotheses 3(a) and 3(b) were partially supported. As a block, participants' initial and current motivation contributed to participation level and participation in decision making; therefore, arrow 3 from Figure 1 is retained in Figure 7. Furthermore, participants' current motivation was a significant individual predictor to participation level and participation in decision making, but initial motivation was not a significant individual predictor to participation level, or participation in decision making, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization.

Hypotheses 4(a) through 4(e) were partially supported. As a block, participation level and participation in decision making contributed to all of the perceived effects of citizen participation except for neighborhood collective efficacy; therefore, arrow 4 from Figure 1 is retained in Figure 7. Furthermore, participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived leadership competence, neighborhood policy control, knowledge and skills, and organizational collective efficacy, but not perceived general policy control, neighborhood collective efficacy, or sense of community, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. Participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor to any of the perceived effects of citizen participation.

Finally research questions 5(a) through 5(e) examined the influence of both the participation and perceived organizational variables on the perceived effects of citizen participation, controlling for demographics and neighborhood organization. As a block, the participation and organizational variables contributed to all of the perceived effects of citizen participation; therefore, arrow 5 from Figure 1 is retained in Figure 7. Similar to the results from research questions 2(a) through 2(b), participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's effectiveness, specifically the organization's effectiveness in achieving tangible improvements in their communities, was a significant individual predictor to several of the perceived effects of citizen participation, including knowledge and skills, neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy and sense of community. However, the results from research question 5(a) indicated that perceived organizational effectiveness was a not significant individual predictor to perceived general policy control, while in the analysis for research question 2(a) it was a significant individual predictor.

Similar to the results from research question 2(a), the results from research question 5(a) indicated that participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics were a significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control. However, the results from research questions 5(a) indicated that perceived organizational structure and climate was the only significant individual predictor to perceived neighborhood policy control, while in the analysis for research question 2(a) both structure/climate and decision making process were significant individual predictors to neighborhood policy control. Decision making process remained a significant individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills for research question 5(a).

While hypotheses 4(a) through 4(e) found that participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived leadership competence, neighborhood policy control, knowledge and skills, and organizational collective efficacy; the results from research questions 5(a) through 5(e) indicated that participation level remained a significant individual predictor to only two of the perceived effects of citizen participation, perceived leadership competence, and knowledge and skills.

The next chapter discusses the results of the current study in the context of theory and prior research, and provides implications for social work practice in poor communities. In addition, the strengths and weaknesses of the current study and implications for future research are discussed.

5.   DISCUSSION

The results from the current study demonstrated that participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness had a weak effect on their participation level and their participation in decision making; however, their perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness had strong effect on several of the perceived effects of citizen participation.   In other words, residents' perceptions of the organization mattered most in terms of the benefits they perceived to gain through participation; the more positive they viewed the characteristics and effectiveness of their neighborhood organization, the greater their perceived effects of participation.   While respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics had the most influence on their participation in the organization, their perceptions of their organization's effectiveness had the most influence on their perceptions of the benefits they received through participation.   It is also possible that individuals who participate more and that have greater personal and collective competencies and sense of community have more positive perceptions of their neighborhood organization.   Given the cross sectional design used, the results from this study do not indicate causality.

This study also demonstrated that the level of respondents' participation in the organization was also an important individual predictor to their perceived effects of participation. Furthermore, participation level and participation in decision making as a block contributed to several of the perceived effects of citizen participation.   In other words, the more respondents participated in various activities and functions of their neighborhood organization, the greater

their perceived effects of participation. However, it is possible that individuals with greater personal and collective competencies participate more in the organization because they possess these characteristics. Again, the results from this study do not indicate a causal relationship.

Finally, respondents' current motivation for participation influenced their participation level and their participation in decision making. Furthermore, initial and current motivation as a block contributed to their participation in the organization. In other words, respondents' desire to improve their neighborhoods, influence government policies, serve and contribute to their neighborhood organization, and gain new skills and abilities, influenced their level of participation in various organizational activities and functions, and their participation in decision making. The more important they viewed these motivating factors; the more involved they were in the organization. However, it is possible that greater levels of participation increase motivation. Again, the results from this study do not indicate a causal relationship.

The following sections discuss the results of the current study in the context and theory and prior research, implications for social work practice in poor communities, the strengths and weaknesses of the current study, and implications for future research.

5.1.   DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THEORY AND PRIOR RESEARCH

The researcher used Wandersman and Florin's (2000) framework for the analysis of citizen participation to guide the current study, which includes the following key areas: the characteristics and motivations of people who participate; the characteristics of organizations or environments that facilitate or inhibit effective participation; and the effects of different forms of participation in three areas (i.e., effects on physical, social and/or economic conditions, effects on individual participants' attitudes, beliefs and/or skills, and effects on interpersonal

relationships). The current study focused on these areas for the analysis of citizen participation by examining the relationships among citizen participation in neighborhood organizations, perceived organizational characteristics and effectiveness, and residents' personal, political and collective competencies, and sense of community. The researcher also used the ecological perspective to understand how citizen participation in neighborhood organizations can provide a vehicle through which residents influence the external social system to reduce destructive forces in their neighborhoods, and work with systems outside the family, such as churches, businesses or schools, to improve their environment.

Several theories were used in the current study to explain why people participate in community organizations, as well as the effects of participation on participant's personal and collective competencies and sense of community. Engaging residents in neighborhood organizations helps to their reduce powerlessness by increasing their personal competencies (sociopolitical control and specific knowledge and skills), collective competencies (neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy), and their sense of community. As Rothman (1995) explains, community participation signifies the gaining of community competence, or the skills to make decisions that people can agree on and enact together, and the development of a sense of personal mastery among residents.

Theories of perceived control, self efficacy, locus of control, collective efficacy, and sense of community help to explain the association between citizen participation in neighborhood organizations, and personal, political and collective competencies and sense of community. Perceived control, the belief that one can influence outcomes, encompasses theories of self efficacy and locus of control (Zimmerman, 2000). Bandura's (1982) theory of perceived self-efficacy explains how participation is related to participants' personal beliefs about their

own competencies, while Rotter's (1966) theory of locus of control explains how participation is related to participants' sense of control over their environment. Sociopolitical control, a sphere-specific form of perceived control relevant to citizen participation, refers to beliefs about one's capabilities, efficacy, and sense of control in social and political systems (Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). Sampson & Raudenbush's (1999) theory of collective efficacy explains the shared willingness of residents to intervene for the common good, which depends on conditions of mutual trust and cohesion. McMillan and Chavis' (1986) theory of psychological sense of community explains the effects of neighborhood participation on residents' sense of belonging to their communities.

In the current study, the relationship between organizational characteristics and effectiveness and citizen participation can be explained by empowerment theory, which describes the influence of empowering and empowered organizations on citizen participation (Zimmerman, 2000). Empowering organizations provide a structure for people to gain control over their lives, participate in decision making, and provide opportunities for shared responsibility and leadership; and empowered organizations effectively compete for resources, network with other organizations, influence policy decisions, or offer effective alternatives for service provision. Zimmerman's theory helps explain how empowering and empowered organizations affect citizen participation and its effects on participants.

5.1.1. The Influence of Motivation on Participation in Neighborhood Organizations

Hypotheses 3(a) and 3(b) were based on theories of perceived control (encompassing theories of self efficacy and locus of control) and prior research indicating a relationship between motivation and citizen participation (Florin, et al., 1989; Kerman, 1996; Prestby, et al., 1990; Wandersman, et al., 1985; Wandersman, et al., 1987; Whitworth, 1993). Hypotheses 3(a) and

3(b) in the current study were partially supported: participants' current motivation individually influenced their level of participation in their neighborhood organization, and their participation in decision making, but their initial motivation for participation was not a significant individual predictor to either of the participation variables. In other words, the stronger their current motivation, the more they participated in various functions and activities and in decision making in the organization. The findings from the current study confirm theories of perceived control, which argue that one's desire to influence their external environment (i.e., poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods) is related to behavior that is directed, selective and persistent, such as participating in neighborhood organizations. The findings from the current study also confirm prior research that found that current motivation predicted participation level in community settings (Whitworth, 1993; Kerman, 1996; Wandersman, et al., 1985). It is also important to note that previous studies did not analyze initial motivation for participation, and this study's findings did not support initial motivation as a predictor to citizen participation. The results from the current study contribute to existing research by demonstrating that current motivation was also a significant individual predictor to participation in decision making.

5.1.2. The Influence of Perceived Organizational Characteristics and Effectiveness on Participation

Hypotheses 1(a) and 1(b) were based on Zimmerman's empowerment theory and prior research demonstrating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness influence citizen participation. The researcher hypothesized that the more positive participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness, the more they will participate in the organization, and the more they will participate in decision making. Several studies found greater levels of participation in neighborhood organizations that had more formal

structures, cohesiveness, order and organization, efficiency, and democratic decision making processes (Florin, et al., 1990; Knoke & Wood, 1981; Milburn & Barbarin, 1987; Prestby & Wandersman, 1985; Yates, 1973). However, a study in a low income urban neighborhood indicated that the average activity level of participants in block organizations was not related to organizational characteristics (Giamartino & Wandersman, 1983). Furthermore, only one prior study found that higher levels of participation were generated in successful community coalitions (McMillan, et al., 1995).

The results from the current study partially support Zimmerman's theory of empowering and empowered organizations and prior research. The current study found that respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness taken together weakly influenced their level of participation and their participation in decision making. This result supports Zimmerman's theory of empowering and empowered organizations. However, none of the prior studies examine the influence of both organizational characteristics and effectiveness on participation level and participation in decision making; therefore, comparisons between the results from the current study and prior studies are not possible. Contrary to the majority of prior research indicated above, the current study found that organizational characteristics did not individually influence citizen participation. However, these results support Giamartino and Wandersman's study (1983) which found that organizational characteristics were not associated with participation in block associations in low income neighborhoods. Furthermore, contrary the McMillan and colleagues (1995) study, the current study found that organizational effectiveness did not individually predict to participation level.

5.1.3. The Influence of Organizational Characteristics and Effectiveness on the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Research Questions 2(a) through 2(e) were based on Zimmerman's theory of empowering and empowered organizations and limited prior research demonstrating that organizational characteristics and effectiveness influenced the effects of citizen participation (Dougherty, 1988; Maton, 1988, McMillan, et al., 1995). These studies indicated that positive perceptions of organizational characteristics and effectiveness were related to increases in participants' self-esteem, well-being, knowledge and skills, and participatory competencies.

The findings from the current study partially confirm Zimmerman's theory of empowering and empowered organizations and findings from prior research. The current study found that participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics (i.e., the decision making process, and structure/climate) influenced two of the perceived effects of participation (i.e., perceived neighborhood policy control, and knowledge and skills). In other words, the more participants viewed their neighborhood organization's decision making process as democratic, the greater their perceived knowledge and skills, and ability to influence neighborhood policies and their neighborhood organization (neighborhood policy control). Furthermore, the more participants viewed their neighborhood organization's structure and climate to be orderly and efficient, able to utilize and develop their skills, and open to diverse populations, the greater their perceived neighborhood policy control.

The results from the current study support Zimmerman's argument that empowering organizations provide an opportunity for their members to develop their skills and abilities and sense of control. In the current study, participants in organizations perceived as more democratic and well-run viewed themselves as more empowered in terms of their own knowledge and skills,

and sense of control over neighborhood policies and their neighborhood organization (neighborhood policy control). These results also confirm the results from prior research. For example, Dougherty found that high levels of task orientation increased neighborhood association members' perception of control over neighborhood and local government policy; and McMillan and his colleagues found that organizational climate and structure influenced psychological empowerment, which included increased knowledge and skills.

In addition, the current study's findings indicated that the respondents' perception of their organization's mission did not influence any of the perceived effects of participation. In other words, clarity of mission, goals and purpose did not influence the benefits perceived by participants. Furthermore, no prior studies have indicated that participants' perception of their organization's mission influenced their participation in community organizations.

The results from the current study also demonstrated that respondents' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's effectiveness, specifically the effectiveness of the organization in achieving tangible improvements in their communities, influenced several of the perceived effects or benefits of their participation, including perceived knowledge and skills, neighborhood and organizational collective efficacy, and sense of community. The more positive participants' views of the effectiveness of their neighborhood organization in achieving tangible community improvements (i.e., improvements in overall life conditions, affordable housing, safety, attractiveness, opportunities for youth, and better information and resources), the more they perceived positive effects from their participation.

The above findings reinforce Zimmerman's theory of empowered organizations as those that effectively meet their goals. These findings also contribute to existing research because no prior studies have examined the influence of organizational effectiveness in achieving tangible

community improvements on the effects of citizen participation. In contrast to the study by McMillan and his colleagues, the current study found that respondents' perceptions of their organization's influence in the wider community did not predict to the perceived effects of participation. Furthermore, participants' views of the effectiveness of the organization's leadership did not influence any of the perceived effects of participation.

5.1.4. The Influence of Participation on the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Hypotheses 4(a) through 4(e) were based on theories of perceived control (encompassing theories of self efficacy and locus of control), collective efficacy and sense of community, and previous research demonstrating a fairly strong relationship between community participation and personal competencies and sense of community (Brodsky, et al., 1999; Itzhaky & York, 2002; Perkins, et al., 1996; Perkins, et al., 1990; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Schulz, et al., 1995; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991), and limited research indicating a relationship between community participation and collective efficacy (Chavis, et al., 1987; Perkins, et al., 1996).

Hypothesis 4(a) was partially supported; participation level individually influenced two aspects of perceived sociopolitical control, i.e., leadership competence, and neighborhood policy control, but not general policy control. Furthermore, the participation variables as a block contributed to sociopolitical control. These results support theories of perceived control, which expect involvement in community organizations to be associated with higher levels of sociopolitical control. Similar to previous research, the current study found that participation level was related to increased leadership competence (Itzhaky & York, 2002; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Zimmerman & Zahniser, 1991). Contrary to theory and previous studies, the current study did not find that participation was related to perceived general policy control.

Similar to Smith and Propst (2001), the current study demonstrated the utility of a sphere specific measure of policy control. Smith and Propst found that participation in natural resource organizations was more significantly associated with their measure of natural resource policy control than with Zimmerman & Zahniser's measure of general policy control. In the current study, the level of participation in neighborhood organizations was only associated with neighborhood policy control, but not with Zimmerman and Zahniser's measure of general policy control.

Finally, the current study found that participation in decision making did not individually predict to any of the perceived sociopolitical variables. There were no prior studies that examined the relationship between participation in decision making and sociopolitical control; therefore, comparisons between the current study and prior research are not possible.

Hypothesis 4(b) was partially supported; participation level was a significant individual predictor to perceived knowledge and skills, but participation in decision making was not a significant individual predictor to knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the participation variables as a block contributed to knowledge and skills. The results support theories of perceived self efficacy, indicating that individuals who participate in neighborhood organizations have the opportunity to develop their capabilities, including their knowledge and skills (Bandura, 1982). The results from the current study also confirm the results from McMillan and Chavis' study indicating that individuals who spent more time in community organizations reported higher levels of psychological empowerment, including increased knowledge and skills.

Hypothesis 4(c) was not supported; participation level and participation in decision making did not predict as a block or individually to perceived neighborhood collective efficacy. However, hypothesis 4(d) was supported; participation level predicted to perceived

organizational collective efficacy, and the participation variables as a block contributed to organizational collective efficacy. Pecukonis and Wenocur's (1984) theory of collective efficacy was confirmed in that participants' involvement in their neighborhood organization was associated with their perception of their neighborhood organization's problem solving skills and ability to improve their neighborhood (organizational collective efficacy). These results also confirm results from the study by Perkins & his colleagues (1996) that demonstrated that participation was related to organizational collective efficacy. However, the results of the current study do not confirm the results from a study by Chavis and his colleagues (1987) demonstrating that block association members were more likely than nonmembers to have expectations of collective efficacy, defined as thinking they could solve problems by working together and expecting residents to intervene to maintain social control (which is similar to Sampson and Raudenbush's definition of neighborhood collective efficacy).

Hypothesis 4(e) was partially supported by the results from the current study. The participation variables as a block contributed to sense of community; however, participation level and participation in decision making were not significant individual predictors to sense of community. The results from the current study partially support sense of community theory, and research indicating that participation is associated with increased sense of community. According to sense of community theory, increased participation in neighborhood organizations is associated with increased connections to one's neighborhood; and prior research has indicated that participation in neighborhood and community organizations leads to increased sense of community (Brodsky, 1999; Chavis & Wandersman, 1990; Prezza, et al., 2001).

5.1.5.　The Influence of Participation and Perceived Organizational Characteristics and Effectiveness on the Perceived Effects of Citizen Participation

Research Questions 5(a) through 5(e) were based on empowerment theory, theories of perceived control (encompassing locus of control and self efficacy), collective efficacy and sense of community, and the study by McMillan and his colleagues (1995) examining the influence of organizational and participation variables on the effects of participation (i.e., measured as psychological empowerment). In the current study, the participation and organizational variables as a block contributed to the perceived effects of citizen participation, supporting the above theories and the McMillan study.

Furthermore, perceived organizational characteristics, specifically the structure/climate of the organization, were the strongest individual predictor to one of the perceived effects of citizen participation over and above all of the other predictors: neighborhood policy control. Participation level was the second strongest individual predictor to neighborhood policy control, but organizational effectiveness was not significant. These results are similar to the findings from the study by McMillan and his colleagues demonstrating that organizational climate (i.e., involvement/inclusion, satisfaction, and perceptions of order and efficiency) was the strongest predictor to psychological empowerment, followed by participation level.

In contrast to the findings by McMillan and his colleagues, in the current study participation level was the strongest individual predictor to two of the perceived effects of participation over and above the perceived organizational variables: perceived leadership competence, and perceived knowledge and skills. For perceived leadership competence, participation level was the only significant individual predictor. In other words, the more respondents participated in various activities and functions of their neighborhood organization,

the more their perceived leadership abilities, including their ability to try new things, lead groups, organize people to get things done, and talk in front of groups. For perceived knowledge and skills, participation level was the strongest individual predictor, followed by perceived organizational characteristics, specifically the decision making process of the organization, and then perceived organizational effectiveness, specifically the effectiveness of the organization in achieving tangible community improvements. These results confirm Zimmerman's theory of empowering and empowered organizations, and self efficacy theory, and add to existing research on the influence of organizational variables on citizen participation.

In the current study, organizational effectiveness, specifically the effectiveness of the organization in achieving tangible community improvements, was the only individual predictor to the several of the effects of citizen participation: perceived neighborhood collective efficacy, organizational collective efficacy, and sense of community. These results contribute to existing research because no prior studies have examined how participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's effectiveness in achieving tangible community improvements influence the benefits or effects of their participation. These findings also support Zimmerman's theory of empowered organizations, and theories of collective efficacy and sense of community.

While McMillan and his colleagues found greater levels of participation in community coalitions that successfully influenced key community decision makers, the results from research questions 5(a) through 5(e) found that respondents' perceptions of their organization's influence in the wider community (including influence on key community decision makers) did not individually predict to the perceived effects of participation. Furthermore, participants' views of the effectiveness of the organization's leadership were individually predictive to any of the perceived effects of participation.

The overall results from the current study partially confirm Zimmerman's theory of empowering and empowered organizations, and theories of perceived control (encompassing theories of locus of control and self efficacy), collective efficacy, and sense of community. Zimmerman argues that individuals participating in empowering and empowered organizations will participate more and receive more benefits from their participation. The current study found the participants' perceptions of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness had the most influence on their perceptions of the benefits they received from participation, and they had a weak effect on their involvement in the organization. In other words, participants were involved more in their organization and experienced greater levels of perceived personal competencies and collective competencies and sense of community, if they perceived their neighborhood organization to be democratic, open, orderly, efficient, and effective in improving their communities.

Theories of perceived control (encompassing theories of locus of control, and self efficacy), and collective efficacy were also partially confirmed by the results from the current study. When individuals have the opportunity to develop and use their personal resources to exert control over their environment this results in learned hopefulness, which translates into feelings that one can exert control over the policies and programs that affect outcomes and conditions in one's neighborhood (Zimmerman, 2000). Bandura (1986) argues that experiences that produce knowledge and skills and build one's confidence in using one's capabilities can result in higher efficacy expectations. Furthermore, perceived collective efficacy influences what people in groups may choose to do, the amount of effort they exert, and their staying power when their efforts fail to produce intended results (Bandura, 1989). In the current study, participants had fairly high perceptions of their own personal competencies (i.e., sociopolitical

control, knowledge and skills) and collective competencies (i.e., organizational collective efficacy), and the more residents participated in their neighborhood organization, the greater the level of these outcomes. Participants' personal and collective efficacy expectations and sense of hopefulness may have resulted from their participation, but may have also been important for maintaining and initiating their participation in their neighborhood organization (Perkins & Long, 2002).

Furthermore, participating in neighborhood organizations provides residents an opportunity to satisfy their intrinsic need to exert control over the negative conditions in their neighborhood. The results from the current study demonstrated that residents' motivation for participation, including the desire to improve their community, influenced their participation. In other words, participants in the current study were intrinsically motivated to improve their communities, which in turn influenced their participation.

Participants' high efficacy expectations for their organization and their high motivation for participation may explain why they their views of their neighborhood organization's characteristics and effectiveness had a weak influence on their participation level and their participation in decision making. In other words, despite what they thought about the current state of their organization, they continued to participate because they had hope in the ability of their organization to improve their communities now and in the future (organizational collective efficacy), and they were highly motivated to improve their communities through their participation in the organization.

Finally, education and age were also significant individual predictors to several of the variables in the current study. Education was associated with participation in decision making, perceived leadership competence, general policy control, and neighborhood policy control.

These findings confirm theories of self efficacy, which explain how experiences that produce knowledge and skills can build one's confidence in using one's capabilities and can result in higher self efficacy (Bandura, 1986). In the current study, respondents with more educational experiences were more fully engaged in making decisions in the organization utilized their capabilities, and they had higher self efficacy in terms of their own leadership abilities, and ability to influence government and neighborhood policies and programs. Age was associated with general policy control, indicating that the older the respondent, the greater their perceived ability to affect government policies and programs. Older persons also have more life experiences, which may in turn result in higher self efficacy.

The results of the current study demonstrate that engaging and building the capacity of residents and their neighborhood organizations to solve community problems is critically important to social work practice in poor communities. The next section describes the implications of the current study for social work practice.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN POOR COMMUNITIES

Sampson and his colleagues (2002) found that neighborhood social ties and interaction, norms and collective efficacy and participation in community organizations affect individual and community level outcomes in poor communities. Weil (1996) argues that social workers should emphasize and expand skills in community-focused practice that connect empowerment strategies with social and economic development. Pinderhughes (1983) uses the ecological framework to suggest that the powerlessness of individuals living in poor communities can only be addressed through empowerment strategies whereby people can influence the external environment to reduce destructive forces and work with systems outside the family, including

community organizations, to improve their difficult and poor environments. The results from the current study demonstrate the importance of social work strategies that focus on engaging and building the capacity of residents and their neighborhood organizations to address difficult social and economic problems in their communities. Contemporary social workers (Baily, et al., 1996; Berger & Neuhaus, 1991; Gardner, 1994; Johnson, 1998; Nisbett, 1980; Schorr, 1997; Weil, 1996) argue that mediating institutions, such as neighborhood organizations, are important vehicles for addressing the challenges brought about by current economic, social and political changes. The current study demonstrates that grassroots neighborhood organizations are important vehicles for facilitating community capacity, volunteerism, and democratic participation in poor communities.

Citizen participation and engagement strategies must be accompanied by community and organizational capacity building strategies so that residents engaged in community building efforts are able to successfully accomplish their overall goal to improve their communities. The results from the current study demonstrated that participants who viewed their neighborhood organization as well run and effective in solving community problems perceived more benefits from participation. Therefore, social work strategies should focus on facilitating participation in community organizations, but also strategies that build the capacity of neighborhood organizations to achieve real, tangible changes in the poor communities they serve.

It is also important to analyze and understand what motivates people to participate in community and neighborhood organizations. In the current study, more highly motivated individuals were more involved in their organizations and participated more in decision making in the organization. In order to effectively engage residents in community and neighborhood

based initiatives, it is important for social workers to understand what residents care about and why they participate in community based efforts.

The results from the current study have several implications for social work practice in poor communities. The researcher for the current study recommends that social workers working in poor communities incorporate the following strategies in their work:

- Analyze the motivations (i.e., self interest) of existing and potential participants in order to actively engage them in neighborhood and community initiatives.

- Develop and implement community and organizational capacity building strategies that simultaneously facilitate democratic participation in neighborhood and community organizations, and build organizational capacity to help residents solve the difficult problems they face in their communities.

- Facilitate connections to external resources so that neighborhood organizations are successful in making tangible improvements in their communities, and in improving their lives and the lives of other residents.

Suggestions for how social workers can implement the above strategies are described below.

5.2.1. Analyzing and Understanding Participants' Motivations and Self Interest

One of the earliest and most important steps in the social work intervention model is client engagement, which is concerned with the process of establishing the client-worker relationship upon which subsequent steps in the planned change process depend (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 2002). Reaching out to residents in their own environments, including their homes, churches, schools and community organizations, is an important step for establishing relationships and building trust between social workers and residents. Meeting with residents in

their own environments and one-on-one helps the social worker understand residents' self interest (i.e., what they care about, what motivates them), gather information about their environment, and reach out to segments of the community that may not be currently participating. These strategies are important for engaging residents in poor communities in community based initiatives and organizations.

The researcher for the current study worked for a community capacity building initiative called the Consensus Organizing Demonstration Program, which was a multi-site organizing effort spearheaded by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation in 1991 to identify and train local leaders and to develop capable community development corporations (Chaskin, et al., 2001). The program was based on a model of organizing called consensus organizing, which focuses on engaging individuals experiencing or affected by specific problems or issues so that they can take the lead in shaping and implementing practical solutions to those problems (Consensus Organizing Institute, n.d.). In consensus organizing, one of the most important tasks of community organizers is identifying the individual self interest and motivation of community residents (Consensus Organizing Institute, n.d.). Saul Alinsky (1972) was one of the first community organizing theorists and practitioners to incorporate the idea of self interest as a motivating factor for community involvement. Similar to Saul Alinsky, consensus organizing incorporates the concept of individual self-interest as motivator for change; however, consensus organizers harness individual self interest for the mutual gain of the community (Beck & Eichler, 2000).

The Hazelwood Initiative, one the neighborhood groups in the current study, is using the study results to develop strategies to engage members of the community they have not been able to engage so far in their organization. The researcher for the current study conducted a training

session for the Hazelwood Initiative's membership committee using the results of the study to inform their membership recruitment strategy. First, the study sample's demographic characteristics were compared with the demographic characteristics of the Hazelwood community, which indicated that the organization was underrepresented in several area (i.e., smaller percentages of African Americans, males, and young people participated in the organization than existed in the Hazelwood community). Second, the study results were used to help the recruitment committee understand why (motivation) and how (participation level and participation in decision making) people participated in the Hazelwood Initiative. The results were also used to help the committee assess the potential benefits (effects of citizen participation) of membership in the organization, and what current members and participants thought about the organization (organizational characteristics and effectiveness). The researcher then discussed several strategies for how the committee could asses the self interest/motivation of potential participants, and helped them develop a plan for reaching out to the segments of the community they felt were missing in the organization. The Hazelwood Initiative is using the results from the study to diversify and strengthen their membership so that community residents can take the lead in developing and implementing solutions to local problems and issues.

The researcher recommends that other neighborhood organizations take similar steps to engage members of their community in their efforts, taking the time to understand what people care about and reaching out to residents who may not currently be represented in their organization.

5.2.2. Building Community and Organizational Capacity to Improve Poor Communities

Chaskin and his colleagues (2001) argue that community and capacity building efforts should consist of actions to strengthen the capacity of communities to identify priorities and opportunities and to foster and sustain positive neighborhood change. The results from the current study confirm that these strategies are critical for helping residents to successfully tackle difficult community problems. Chaskin and his colleagues define community capacity as the "interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve and maintain the well being of that community" (p. 7). They emphasize that community capacity consists of the individual capabilities of community residents, as well as the connections to and commerce with external systems of which the community is apart. Their overall framework suggests that community capacity is exemplified by a set of core characteristics and operates through the agency of individuals, organizations and networks of relations to perform particular functions that enable a community to perform successfully. Chaskin and his colleagues (2001) describe four key strategies for building community and organizational capacity, including leadership development, organizational development, community organizing, and collaboration among community organizations. These strategies are described in more detail below.

Leadership development strategies facilitate the skills, commitment, engagement, and effectiveness of individuals in the community building process (Chaskin, et al., 2001). Leadership development strategies focus on developing the capacity of individual residents, providing them with opportunities to build their knowledge and skills, connect to new information and resources and enlarge their perspectives on their communities. Leadership development can occur through formal training programs, or through engagement strategies that

involve advocating for policy changes in a neighborhood, and/or participation in neighborhood organizations. The results from the current study demonstrate the importance of active participation in neighborhood organizations as vehicle for leadership development. Those respondents who participated more in their neighborhood organizations, also perceived themselves to have more leadership abilities.

An example of a formal training program described by Chaskin and his colleagues (2001) is the Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance's nine month leadership training program that works to develop a "critical mass" of trained neighborhood leaders who can effectively plan and implement projects that will strengthen their neighborhoods. The Consensus Organizing Demonstration Program is an example of a hands-on leadership development program focusing on engaging volunteer board members of community development corporations in the day to day work of their organization (Chaskin, et al., 2001). In this program, volunteers were actively involved in organizational development activities, neighborhood planning and real estate development, working side by side with professional planners, architects and lawyers (Chaskin, et al., 2001). Furthermore, the program also engaged external leaders to develop their leadership skills in community development and capacity building so that they could become more effective partners with neighborhood residents. Finally, one of the neighborhood organizations in the current study, Operation Better Block, uses both a formal training program and active engagement strategies to build resident leadership. Operation Better Block's Leadership training program helps residents develop the leadership skills to identify and implement solutions to local problems, and their residential block organizing effort engages volunteers in affecting change at the community level through their active involvement in their block association (OBB, n.d.).

Organizational development consists of the creation of new organizations or the strengthening of existing ones so they can do their work better or take on new roles (Chaskin, et al.). Strategies for fostering organizational capacity include strengthening existing organizations through technical assistance, training, peer learning, small grants or core operating funds, and help in gaining access to new relationships and financing sources. Organizational capacity can also be accomplished by helping organizations expand their missions or implement them in an expanded manner, taking on new roles or functions that address unmet community needs. This strategy builds on the assets and strengths of community organizations to assume new responsibilities, including serving new populations, or sponsoring new programs and activities. In the current study, resident's perceptions of the capacity of their organization strongly influenced the benefits they received from participation. Organizational capacity building strategies are important for creating well-run and effective organizations that are influential in facilitating personal and collective capacities and sense of community among participations.

For example, the Consensus Organizing Demonstration Program created new community development corporations (CDCs) in neighborhoods where none had previously existed, and strengthened CDCs in other neighborhoods (Chaskin, et al., 2001). Consensus organizing was originally developed by Mike Eichler, a community organizer working in Pittsburgh in the 1980s (Consensus Organizing Institute, n.d.). Using the consensus organizing approach, Eichler worked with corporate and philanthropic leaders, and LISC to facilitate the development of fourteen local CDCs to help address economic and community decline after the collapse of the steel industry in Pittsburgh's Mon Valley communities (Consensus Organizing Institute). The Homestead Area Economic Revitalization Corporation, one of the groups participating in the current study, was one of these original fourteen CDCs. Following the success of consensus

organizing in the Mon Valley, both Eichler and LISC were ready to apply the model in other cities around the nation. LISC hired Eichler to lead its Consensus Organizing Demonstration Program, which planned and carried out pilot consensus organizing projects throughout the country (Consensus Organizing Institute, n.d.). The Demonstration Program combined technical assistance, small grants or core operating funds, and help in gaining access to new relationships and financing sources. Technical assistance was provided by the community organizers, as well as national consultants and various attorneys, architects and neighborhood planners who offered their services at a reduced rate, and small pre-development grants were provided for the CDC real estate projects through the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). Finally, connections to external resources were developed so that the CDCs could access new relationships with key government and private sector stakeholders and financing resources from both the public and private sectors, including funds for real estate development, youth and social service initiatives, and core operating support for the CDCs once the program ended.

Community organizing targets the associational aspects of community functioning and the mobilization of individual stakeholders for particular collective ends (Chaskin, et al., 2001). Chaskin and his colleagues define community organizing broadly as the process of bringing people together to solve community problems and address collective goals. They discuss two approaches to community organizing, conflict strategies which employ oppositional tactics to bring about desired ends, and consensus strategies which seek to identify and work with people in influential positions who would welcome change or at least be open to it (Chaskin, et al.). Social workers categorize community organizing three main models and/or approaches, including locality/community development, social planning, and social action (Rothman, 1995). Neighborhood and community organizing falls mainly under the category of locality/community

development, which is similar to consensus based approaches. Locality/community development involves a broad spectrum of people at the community level in determining goals and taking civic action (Rothman, Erlich & Tropman, 2001). The goals of locality/community development are to build the capacity of community residents to solve problems and foster social integration, including the development of harmonious relationships among diverse people.

Social planning is a technical process of problem solving regarding a substantive social problem that is data driven, technocratic, and rational (Rothman, et al., 2001). Expert planners are used to help resident improve social conditions using needs assessments, decision analyses, and evaluation research. The goals of social planning include the design of formal plans and policy frameworks for delivering goods and services to people who need them.

Social action is similar to the conflict approach described by Chaskin and his colleagues. Social action presupposes the existence of an aggrieved or disadvantaged segment of the population that needs to be organized in order to make demands on the larger community for increased resources or equal treatment (Rothman, et al., 2001). The goals of social action include making fundamental changes in the community, i.e., redistributing resources and gaining access to decision making for marginal groups, and changing legislative mandates, policies and practices of institutions. People power and confrontational tactics were traditionally emphasized in social action, including the use of demonstrations, picketing, strikes, boycotts, marches. Social action strategies today also incorporate a wider range of less ideological tactics.

Consensus organizing, the community organizing approach described in the above sections, has been used throughout the country to facilitate citizen participation and community improvement. Beck and Eichler (2001) define consensus organizing as a community organizing model that is closely aligned with Rothman's model of community intervention called

development/action, which was derived from his early three point typology of community organizing described above. In the development/action model, the "assumptions and goals of social action are joined with the method of locality development" (Rothman, 1995, p. 48). The Consensus Organizing Demonstration Program used a technique called parallel organizing, where community organizers mobilized residents in low income neighborhoods as well as key external stakeholders who could help and support the residents (Chaskin, et al., 2001). The effort began by identifying localities in which local philanthropies and corporate leaders were willing to support the organization of CDCs as a way to improve low income communities (Chaskin, et al., 2001). A major focus of the Consensus Organizing Demonstration Program was on locality/community development, but the community organizers also engaged residents and key stakeholders in discussions about and efforts aimed at social justice issues in their neighborhoods. For example, in one of the communities the director of the local economic council was engaged with residents to prevent a proposal to acquire land in their community and build a four lane road through it that would have bifurcated the community (Chaskin, et al.). The economic council director helped residents prepare testimony to the county commission supporting a two lane paved road but opposing the four lane road. Chaskin reports that "the volunteers won a very energizing and motivating victory that was possible, in part; because the council director appreciated the importance of having local residents take the lead on behalf of their community" (p. 57). This example also demonstrates how social justice goals were achieved through consensus organizing strategies.

Finally, interorganizational collaboration builds the organizational infrastructure of communities through the development of relationships and collaborative partnerships, focuses on the organizational infrastructure of a community setting, and seeks to change the ways individual

organizations relate to one another and to organizations and actors beyond the neighborhood (Chaskin, et al.). Chaskin and his colleagues conceptualize collaboration as a process of building social capital among organizations by fostering networks of positive relationships that increase access to resources, inform decision making within organizations, and structure relations. Interorganizational collaboration in poor communities helps residents and their neighborhood organizations access the resources and relationships necessary to make tangible community improvements.

Consensus organizers engage people external to the neighborhood who can collaborate with local residents and contribute to the development and implementation of solutions to local problems (Consensus Organizing Institute, n.d.). In order for residents to be effective in implementing solutions to local problems in poor communities, resources from external systems (i.e., government, foundations, corporations, etc.) are critically important. In consensus organizing, community organizers identify the self interest not only of community residents, but also external resources, in order to engage them in community building and development efforts. Consensus organizing focuses on strategies that develop leadership and build relationships within and between internal and external resources that important for successfully implementing solutions to local problems (Consensus Organizing Institute, n.d.). For example, in the Consensus Organizing Demonstration Program, resident volunteers from each of the neighborhood CDCs collaborated with private and public sector officials to gain access to government funds that were initially not accessible to the CDCs for the construction of new affordable housing.

In summary, the results from the current study demonstrate the importance of social work strategies that analyze and understand the motivations of current and potential participants, and

help to build community and organizational capacity to address the difficult conditions in poor communities. These strategies are important for facilitating citizen participation among residents in poor communities and helping them to build strong organizations that are effective at improving their lives and the lives of other residents.

5.3.   STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT STUDY DESIGN

5.3.1.   Analysis of the Measures Used in the Current Study

The measures used in the current study included scales from previous studies, or scales that were adapted/created using scales from prior studies. Several items were eliminated from the current study's measures based on missing data (i.e., over 26% of the respondents didn't answer the question or answered "don't know"), or based on the results of the factor and reliability analyses. Factor analyses were used to analyze the underlying structure of the measures in the current study, and as a method of data reduction. The internal consistency reliability of the measures was examined using the Cronbach's alpha. The factor analyses and reliability analyses resulted in measures that were both reliable and valid. Four measures in the current study had reliability coefficients between .70 and .79, seven had reliability coefficients between .80 and .89, and seven had reliability coefficients of .90 and higher.

Furthermore, the key variables in the study were analyzed for their validity using bivariate correlations to examine their relationship with related concepts. Validity refers to the extent to which a measure accurately reflects the meaning of the concept being analyzed (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). Empirical validity pertains to the "degree to which a measure is correlated with other indicators of the concept it intends to measure and with related concepts" (Rubin & Babbie, p. 194). The bivariate analyses demonstrated that the measures used in the existing study were

significantly correlated with related concepts, demonstrating their validity (i.e., see section 4.2, bivariate results).

The results of the current study also demonstrated the utility of two sphere specific measures that were adapted/created for the current study. The current study compared Zimmerman and Zahniser's (1991) measure of policy control (i.e., part of the sociopolitical control scale) with a sphere specific measure of neighborhood policy control created for the current study related to participation in neighborhood organizations. The reliability of both of these measures were adequate (general policy control = .76; neighborhood policy control = .73). However, the correlations among the sphere specific measure of neighborhood policy control and key study variables were higher than those among general policy control and the key study variables (i.e., see section 4.2, bivariate results). Furthermore, the multivariate results demonstrated that organizational characteristics were not a significant predictor to general policy control; however, organizational characteristics accounted for 27% of the variance in neighborhood policy control. The multivariate results also demonstrated that participation level was not a significant predictor to general policy control; however, participation level accounted for 26% of the variance in neighborhood policy control.

The utility of a sphere specific measure of collective efficacy was also demonstrated in the current study. The researcher compared Sampson and Raudenbush's (1999) measure of neighborhood collective efficacy with a measure of organizational collective efficacy adapted for the current study from Perkins and Long (2002). The reliability of the sphere specific measure of organizational collective efficacy was higher (Cronbach's alpha = .99) than the measure of neighborhood collective efficacy (Cronbach's alpha = .85). The correlations among the sphere specific measure of organizational collective efficacy and key study variables were higher than

those among neighborhood collective efficacy and the key study variables (see section 4.2, bivariate results). Furthermore, the multivariate results demonstrated that organizational effectiveness was a significant predictor to both measures of collective efficacy; however, organizational effectiveness accounted for 57% of the variance in organizational collective efficacy, and 20% of the variance in neighborhood collective efficacy. The multivariate results also demonstrated that participation level was not a significant predictor to neighborhood collective efficacy; however, participation level accounted for 10% of the variance in organizational collective efficacy.

One of the strengths of the current study was the study's reliable and valid measures. This study also demonstrated the utility of sphere specific measures of policy control and collective efficacy. The current study's measures can be used by researchers and social work practitioners conducting future research on citizen participation in poor communities. A weakness of the current study is that multiple methods for examining reliability and validity were not employed, i.e., test-retest reliability, criterion- related validity.

5.3.2. The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study Design

One of the weaknesses of the current study is that it used a cross sectional design. Cross sectional studies "examine a phenomenon by taking a cross section of it at one point in time" (Rubin & Babbie, p. 323). Cross sectional studies do not demonstrate the nature of causal relationships, and have limited internal validity. Internal validity refers to the "confidence we have that the results of a study accurately depict whether one variable is or is not a cause of another" (Rubin & Babbie, p. 296). One of the ways that researchers attempt to improve internal validity is by "attempting to rule out the plausibility of rival hypotheses by controlling for alternative variables through multivariate analyses" (Rubin & Babbie, p. 323). The researcher

controlled for several variables (i.e., demographics and neighborhood organization) in the multivariate analyses that could also have influenced the key study variables.

External validity is "the extent to which we can generalize the findings of a study to settings and populations beyond the study conditions," which is influenced by the representativeness of the study sample, setting and procedures (Rubin & Babbie, p. 296). To have external validity, a study must be generalizable to some, but not all, real world settings, and it must represent that which it intends to represent (Rubin & Babbie). The use of a survey design in the current study allowed for larger samples, which makes the findings more generalizable than experiments (Rubbin & Babbie). The survey design allowed the researcher to include the current members and participants of the four neighborhood organizations, which was a fairly large sample of 231 individuals, and use a variety of distributional methods (i.e., at organizational meetings, hand delivery and mail delivery) that helped to increase the response rate (i.e., which was 54%). The high response rate allows the participating organizations to generalize their findings to their entire membership. Furthermore, similar types of neighborhood organizations working in poor neighborhoods in metropolitan areas like Pittsburgh can use the results to better understand citizen participation in their own organizations. Specifically, other neighborhood groups can use the results as a benchmark for measuring citizen participation in their own organizations.

The current study measured perceptions of residents regarding their neighborhood organization and the perceived effects of citizen participation. This study did not collect independent sources of data to analyze these variables (i.e., information on property values, crime statistics, etc.). While some researchers argue that measuring respondents' perceptions are a weakness (i.e., Rubin & Babbie, 2000), others argue that respondents' perceptions of

organizations in which they participate are important because they make a difference in organizational behaviors (i.e., Schneider, 1975).

A weakness of survey designs is that once you design a survey, it typically remains unchanged throughout the course of the study (Rubin & Babbie). However, the current study pilot tested the survey and made appropriate changes based on feedback from participants. Furthermore, in comparison to observational research, the survey design in the current study helped to ensure reliability by presenting all subjects with a standardized stimulus (Rubin & Babbie).

Furthermore, the current study did not use a nested design, which would have allowed the researcher to correlate relationships at the individual level to the group or organizational level. In other words, the researcher could not use the data to make inferences for organizations. However, the researcher controlled for the influence of neighborhood organization in the multivariate analyses. Finally, the current study included a large number of multivariate analyses, which increases the probability that the significant relationships may be due to chance.

In summary, the current study's major strengths were the reliability and validity of the measures used to analyze the key variables, the flexibility and generalizability of using a self-report survey design, the generalizability of the findings to volunteers from similar types of neighborhood organizations, and the use of multivariate analyses to rule out rival hypotheses. The current study's major weaknesses were the cross sectional nature of the study design which could not demonstrate causal relationships, and the large number of multivariate analyses. Another weakness was that the researcher could not use the data to make inferences for organizations.

5.4.   IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The current study has several implications for future research. First, the study adds to existing quantitative research on community practice and citizen participation by examining the relationships among perceived organizational and participation variables and perceived personal and collective competencies and sense of community. Second, the study used, adapted and analyzed measures that future researchers can use to analyze citizen participation and its effects on participants. The findings from the current study also indicate several potential areas for future research.

First, the nature of the significant relationships among the key study variables indicate potential causal relationships that could be examined in future studies using causal path analysis methods, comparison studies, longitudinal studies, and quasi-experimental study designs. For example, examining the causal paths through which the key study variables interact is a potential direction for future research. Since current motivation for participation was significantly associated with participation level, and participation level was significantly associated with several of the effects of citizen participation, future research could examine the specific causal path that connects these three sets of variables.

Second, longitudinal and/or quasi-experimental research designs could examine the causal relationships among the key study variables. For example, researchers could examine whether or not current motivation causes increased participation level in neighborhood organizations. Researchers could also examine whether or not participation influences personal and collective competencies over time using a longitudinal study design, or differences in personal and collective competencies among a quasi-experimental group of participants, and control group of individuals who are not involved in their communities.

Third, future research is needed to more closely examine the influence of organizational characteristics and effectiveness on participation in community organizations since the results from the current study demonstrated a weak effect among these variables. Since the majority of prior research focuses exclusively on the influence of organizational characteristics on participation, future research is needed to further explore the influence of organizational effectiveness on participation level and participation in decision making, and how both organizational characteristics and effectiveness work together to influence citizen participation.

Future research could also explore the differences among participants in community based efforts and the demographic make-up of the community, examining diversity and representation issues, as well as the impact of various types of recruitment strategies. In other words, how effective are neighborhood organizations at engaging a broad spectrum of the communities which they represent, and what impact do their recruitment efforts have on who participates from the community. For example, are they using some of the strategies discussed in this study (i.e., examining motivation and self interest and reaching out one-on-one to residents), and how effective are these strategies in engaging residents from the community.

Finally, future researchers could use more sophisticated research designs to examine the key study variables in the current study, including the use of nested designs, hierarchical linear modeling, and ecometrics. Previously, the analysis of research models that used more than one level of data presented researchers with several challenges (Brodsky, et al., 1999). Some studies aggregated individuals up to the community level and performed regressions on this aggregated data; and others appended community data to the individual-level records and performed regressions on the individuals while ignoring the violation of regression assumptions (i.e., the

lack of independent observations) (Brodsky, et al.). These methods have been problematic for the estimation of parameters (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992).

One of the strategies for overcoming these challenges has been to analyze data using a nested design, where "individuals are nested within ecologically defined neighborhoods and structural characteristics (i.e. poverty) are expressed as aggregate-level measures" (Sampson, et al., 2002).   Furthermore, these strategies employ methods of multilevel modeling, known as hierarchical linear modeling, which are designed to deal with the use of multiple levels of data and nested models (Brodsky, et al.; Coulton, et al., 1996; Perkins, Brown & Taylor, 1996). Coulton and her colleagues explain that hierarchical linear modeling provides estimates that are pertinent to the purpose of this type of research, including "estimates of variance components both between and within neighborhoods" (p. 1026). They go on to explain that it also allows "explicit modeling of the variation between and within neighborhoods using factors at the individual and neighborhood levels,…allows for the effects of individual level factors to vary between neighborhoods, and can estimate the effects of neighborhoods net of individual factors" (Coulton, et al., p. 1026).

Future researchers could also use new methods to analyze the factor structure of community level measures. Ecometrics, which are statistical methods needed to evaluate the quality of ecological assessments of human ecological settings such as neighborhoods, could be utilized in future studies (Raudenbush & Sampson, 1999). Ecometrics borrows and adapts analytic strategies used in psychometrics, including item response modeling, generalizability theory and factor analysis (Raudenbush & Sampson).

In her paper presented at the Aaron Rosen Lecture at the Society for Social Work Research conference in 2004, Coulton (2004) argued that social workers and others who work

with and on behalf of communities "need a solid knowledge base of community change, built on convincing evidence" (p. 25). New methods are needed to enhance the quality and impact of community research, including more rigorous research designs, drawing upon matching, time series and other principles of experimentation, as well as statistical analyses to examine community influence in intervention studies that use multi-level and spatial statistics. Furthermore, Coulton argued that concerted efforts are needed to engage in more systematic and comparable methods of documenting community interventions and boundaries, and to analyze community level measures using ecometrics not just psychometrics.

Future studies examining citizen participation in poor neighborhoods could employ the strategies outlined above to analyze individual and community level variables in multiple poor communities. An important area for future research builds on the results from previous studies and the current study that demonstrate the importance of citizen participation in community organizations, and its effects on individual and community level outcomes. Sampson and his colleagues (2002) found that the negative effects of living in poor, disadvantaged neighborhoods are influenced by neighborhood social processes, including participation in community organizations, collective efficacy, neighborhood social ties and interaction, neighborhood satisfaction and bonding (Elliott, Wilson, Huizinga, Sampson, Elliott & Rankin, 1996; Gies & Ross, 1998; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997; Veysey & Messner, 1999). The current study indicated that participation in neighborhood organizations is also associated with personal and collective competencies. Using methods described above, future community level research could examine the connection among citizen participation, the personal and collective competencies and neighborhood relationships that result from it, and individual and community level outcomes, such as crime and delinquency. For example, future

research could analyze the participation of residents in community organizations as a vehicle for developing self and collective efficacy. It could also examine citizen participation and self and collective efficacy as neighborhood social processes or mechanisms through which neighborhood disadvantage affects community level outcomes such as crime and disorder.

5.5.   CONCLUSION

In her 2004 presentation, Coulton (2004) argued that:

> "Moving forward on a community research agenda will require more collaborative work across communities.… Moreover, community intervention research depends upon collaboration with community partners built on established relationships and deep knowledge of place...Social work has deep roots in community and, more than other profession, has given voice to the profound importance of local communities for human development and social justice. As such, social work should be the leader in advancing scientific knowledge about how and why communities can change (p. 24). "

The results from the current study demonstrate the importance of social work research that examines citizen participation in a community context, and interventions that focus on engaging citizens to improve their communities. Contemporary social workers (Johnson, 1998; Schorr, 1997; Weil, 1996) point to a revitalization of community based social work strategies over the past decade that promote the active engagement of residents in poor communities. However, social work researchers must work with practitioners to analyze interventions in ways that present clear measurable results and use more sophisticated research methodologies (Coulton, 2004; Itzhaky & York, 2002). Future social work research should focus on building a knowledge base upon which social work practitioners can guide their work in poor communities (Coulton).

Neighborhood organizations working in poor communities face many challenges as they attempt to change hostile and difficult environments. However, they should measure the results of their efforts by the tangible improvements they can make in their communities (i.e., reducing crime, improving housing, etc.), but also by the positive effects they have on the people who participate. The current study demonstrates that residents who participated in their neighborhood organizations experienced positive benefits in terms of their own knowledge, organizational, leadership and political skills, and they were more hopeful about the ability of their neighborhood organization to solve problems in the community. Social work strategies that engage residents in improving their lives and the lives of other residents are important not only to help residents develop strategies to make their neighborhoods a better place to live, but also because citizen participation can have a substantial personal impact on the residents who volunteer their time and energy to improving their communities.

APPENDIX A: Script for Neighborhood Organization Meetings

Hi, my name is Mary Ohmer. I am here tonight to conduct a survey about your neighborhood and your participation in (name of neighborhood organization). I am conducting this study for my graduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work. I dedicated the past 15 years to helping neighborhood volunteers improve their communities and build the capacity of their grassroots organizations. I believe your feedback about your neighborhood, and (name of neighborhood organization) will be helpful in engaging other residents to improve your community and in strengthening the work of (name of neighborhood organization).

The survey contains questions about your participation in the neighborhood organization, your perceptions about the neighborhood organization and your neighborhood, and questions about your skills, abilities and background. The survey will only take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. It is confidential, so your answers will not be identifiable in any way and you will not have to put your name on the survey. The survey is voluntary. However, you can help me very much by taking a few minutes to share your ideas about your neighborhood and your participation in (name of neighborhood organization).

It would be great if you could fill out a survey tonight. As a small token of appreciation, I will be raffling off door prizes tonight for people who are willing to fill out a survey, including gift certificates from local grocery and department stores. If you wish, you can take a survey home with you. I will give you a stamped return envelope for you to return your completed survey to me.

I will be sharing the summary of the results of the survey with your neighborhood organization and will happy to present the results to you at one of your meetings. I expect to complete my study by late spring or early summer. I am happy to answer any questions you might have. Thank you very much for your time.

APPENDIX B: Survey Cover Letter

(On University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work Letterhead)

Date

Dear member/participant of (name of neighborhood organization).

      I am writing to you request your participation in a survey about your neighborhood and (name of neighborhood organization).   It should only take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. (Name of neighborhood organization) has authorized me to conduct this survey in your neighborhood. I dedicated the past 15 years to helping neighborhood volunteers improve their communities and build the capacity of their grassroots organizations. I believe your feedback about your neighborhood, and (name of neighborhood organization) will be helpful in engaging other residents to improve your community and in strengthening the work of (name of neighborhood organization).

      The survey contains questions about your participation in the neighborhood organization, your perceptions about the neighborhood organization and your neighborhood, and questions about your skills, abilities and background. This is an entirely anonymous questionnaire, and so your answers will not be identifiable in any way. All responses are confidential and your answers will not be associated with your name. The survey is voluntary. However, you can help me very much by taking a few minutes to share your ideas about your neighborhood and (name of neighborhood organization). I have enclosed a stamped return envelope for you to return your completed survey. If for some reason you prefer not to respond, please let me know by returning the blank questionnaire in the enclosed stamped envelope.

      In addition, I have enclosed a separate stamped post card that all survey respondents can enter to win door prizes (i.e., gift certificates for local grocery and department stores) that will be raffled off at the next meeting of (name of neighborhood organization) on (date). Please fill it out and send it separately from the survey.

      I am conducting this study for my graduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me (412-244-7098), or email me (mlo24@peoplepc.com). Thank you very much for helping me with this important survey.

Sincerely,

Mary Ohmer, MSW, MPIA

Enclosures: 3

Last week a survey seeking your opinion about your neighborhood and your neighborhood organization was delivered to you. You were chosen to receive the survey because of your participation and interest in the (name of neighborhood organization).

If you have already completed and returned the survey to me, please accept my sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. I am especially grateful for your help because it is only by asking people like you to share your experiences and opinions that I can learn about the hard work volunteers like yourself do for your local neighborhood organization. Don't forget to also send in your separate post card to enter the raffle for door prizes that will be held at the next meeting of your neighborhood organization on (date).

If you did not receive a survey, or if it was misplaced, please call me at (412) 244-7098, or email me at mlo24@peoplepc.com and I will send you another survey today.

Sincerely,

Mary Ohmer, MSW, MPIA
University of Pittsburgh
School of Social Work

APPENDIX D: IRB Approval Letter

University of Pittsburgh
Institutional Review Board

Exempt and Expedited Reviews
Christopher M. Ryan, Ph.D., Vice Chair

Multiple Project Assurance: M-1259

3500 Fifth Avenue
Suite 105
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: 412.383.1480
Fax: 412.383.1146
e-mail: irbexempt@msx.upmc.edu

TO: Mary Ohmer

FROM: Christopher M. Ryan, Ph.D., Vice Chair

DATE: January 27, 2004

PROTOCOL: Citizen Participation and Its Effects in Neighborhood Organizations: The Influence of Organization Characteristics and Effectiveness

IRB Number: 0401051

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed by the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board. Based on the information provided in the IRB protocol, this project meets all the necessary criteria for an exemption, and is hereby designated as "exempt" under section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2).

The regulations of the University of Pittsburgh IRB require that exempt protocols be re-reviewed every three years. If you wish to continue the research after that time, a new application must be submitted.

- If any modifications are made to this project, please submit an 'exempt modification' form to the IRB.

- Please advise the IRB when your project has been completed so that it may be officially terminated in the IRB database.

- This research study may be audited by the University of Pittsburgh Research Conduct and Compliance Office.

Approval Date: 01/27/2004
Renewal Date: 01/27/2007

CR:ky

APPENDIX E: Copies of Authorization Letters

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

HAZELWOOD INITIATIVE INC.
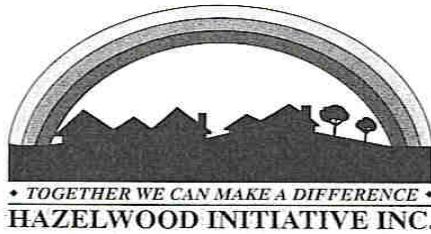
January 2, 2004

Institutional Review Board
University of Pittsburgh
Hieber Building
3500 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to authorize the research that will be conducted through the Hazelwood Initiative, Inc. by Mary Ohmer, Ph,D. student at the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ms. Ohmer will be assisting the Hazelwood Initiative in conducting an evaluation of the perceptions of and involvement in our agency by members and neighborhood residents. The evaluation will consist of a self-report survey that will be distributed to present and past participants in our community organization.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (412) 421-7234.

Sincerely,

James W. Richter
Coordinator

/JR

cc: M. Ohmer

The Carbarn ◆ 5344 Second Avenue ◆ Pittsburgh, PA 15207
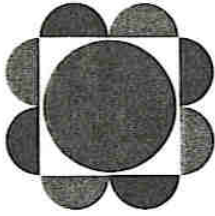
OPERATION BETTER BLOCK, INC.
801 N. Homewood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15208
(412) 731-1908
FAX (412) 731-4707

Institutional Review Board
University of Pittsburgh
Hieber Building
3500 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to authorize the research that will be conducted in cooperation with Operation Better Block, Inc. by Mary Ohmer, Ph.D. student at the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ms. Ohmer will distribute a confidential self-report survey to participants in Operation Better Block.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me directly at (412) 731-1908.

Sincerely,

Aliya D. Durham, MSW, MPIA
Executive Director

HERC

Homestead-area Economic Revitalization Corporation

January 7, 2004

Institutional Review Board
University of Pittsburgh
Hieber Building
3500 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to authorize the research that will be conducted in cooperation with Homestead-area Economic Revitalization Corporation by Mary Ohmer, Ph.D. student at the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ms. Ohmer will distribute a confidential self-report survey to members and participants of Homestead-area Economic Revitalization Corporation. HERC's participation has been approved by the Board's Executive Committee.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call me at 412.462.7033.

Sincerely,

Michael Solomon
Immediate Past President
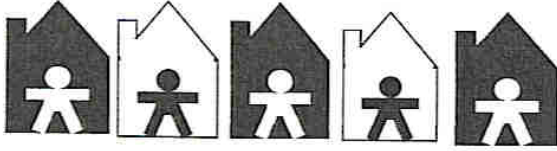
Institutional Review Board
University of Pittsburgh
Hieber Building
3500 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

January 5, 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to authorize the research that will be conducted in cooperation with the Central Northside Citizens Council by Mary Ohmer, Ph.D. student at the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ms. Ohmer will distribute a confidential self-report survey to members and participants of the Central Northside Citizens Council.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call me at (412) 231-7742.

Sincerely,

Mary McGinn
President
Central Northside Neighborhood Council Board

I. Measures of ORGANIZATIONAL VARIABLES

Bishop, P.D., Chertok, F., & Jason, L.A. (1997). Measuring Sense of Community: Beyond Local Boundaries. *The Journal of Primary Prevention, 18*(2), 193-212.

The *Perceived Sense of Community Scale* measures sense of community in non-geographical, organizational communities. There are three subscales: mission, reciprocal responsibility, and disharmony. The following subscale on mission measures the perception that a group has goals which transcend the goals of its individual members, and that members are engaged with others in pursuit of a common mission. This measure uses a 5 point Likert scale from 1 "not at all true," to 5 "completely true."

1. There is a clear sense of mission in this group.
2. The goals of this group are meaningful to the members.
3. There is a sense of common purpose in this group.
4. The goals of this group are important to members.
5. The goals of this group are challenging.
6. Members put a lot of effort into what they do for this group.
7. You know when you are a member of this group.
8. Members feel like they belong to this group.
9. The group makes use of everyone's skills and abilities.
10. The goals of this group are meaningful to the larger community.
11. Members of this group share common values.
12. Members are often asked to take more responsibility.

Cronbach's alpha for the Mission subscale = .93

Allen, S.C.L. (2001). Determining the Effectiveness of Community Organizing in achieving social change. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 62*(12), 4330. (UMI No. 3035687).

The following subscales are part of an overall measure of organizational effectiveness. A 6-point Likert scale is used, with 1 meaning "strongly disagree," to 5 meaning "strongly agree," and 0 meaning "does not apply."

Group Decision Making Subscale: Measures democratic processes and group decision making.
1. When we make a decision, pretty much everyone has to agree it's the best way to go.
2. The group is asked for preferences and opinions.
3. When a decision needs to be made, we decide by majority vote.
4. We hold each other accountable for our actions.
5. People are often persuaded to go along with the group.
6. When a decision needs to be made, we appoint a group of members to decide.

7. We have a group meeting to discuss issues and make decisions.
8. There are clear rules about what kinds of decisions must be made by the whole group.
9. There are clear rules about member rights and responsibilities.

Cronbach's alpha = .76

Community Support Subscale: Measures the extent of broad based grassroots community support.
1. People in the community-at-large are in agreement with the group's purpose.
2. People in the nearby neighborhood are in agreement with the group's purpose.
3. We have support for our organization among the poor in our community.
4. We have succeeded in forming ongoing coalitions with similar organizations.
5. Our leadership has been able to work with others outside or our organization.

Cronbach's alpha = .77

Effectiveness Subscale: Measures the effectiveness of the organization in specific areas.
1. Members believe positive changes have occurred in the community.
2. Members believe their participation in the group helped bring about change.
3. As a result of our efforts, resources in the community have been allocated different.
4. As a result of our efforts, policies that affect our community have been changed.
5. Life conditions of members of the community improved as a result of our efforts.
6. As a result of our efforts, we obtained something that we should have had anyway.
7. As a result of our efforts, the community has access to better housing.
8. As a result of our efforts, the community has access to better health care.
9. We forced a local bank to halt redlining in our community.
10. We created jobs or businesses through our organization.
11. We shut down illegal or undesirable businesses.
12. We have brought about administrative reform in an agency.
13. We have elected someone to a position of government power or leadership.

Cronbach's alpha = .79

Funding Subscale: Measures the success of the organization in raising funds.
1. Funding comes from members contributions.
2. Local foundations provide funding to our group.
3. We receive funding from national foundations.
4. Funding comes from fundraising in the general community.
5. Public resources (city budget, county budget, etc.) provide funds to our group.

Cronbach's alpha = .66

McMillan, B., Florin, P., Stevenson, J., Kerman, B., & Mitchell, R.E. (1995). Empowerment praxis in community coalitions. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 23,* **699-727.**

The following subscales are part of an organizational social climate scale from the above study:

1. Involvement/Inclusion: a 5 item social climate scale (Cronbach's alpha = .85) where respondents rated their level of agreement, on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with statements about member involvement (i.e., everyone is involved in discussion, not just a few) in task force operations.

2. Task focus: a 5 item social climate scale (Cronbach's alpha = .84) where respondents rated their level of agreement, on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with statements about order (i.e., the task force was disorganized and inefficient) and organization (i.e., the group needs more formalization and structure) in the task force.

Hughey, J., Speer, P., & Peterson, A. (1999).   Sense of community in community organizations: Structure and evidence of validity. *Journal of Community Psychology, 27, 97-113*.

The following subscale is from the *Community Organization Sense of Community Scale*. The following items measuring the Influence of the Community Organization are rated on a five point Likert-type scale: strongly agree (1), agree (2), unsure (3), disagree (4), strongly disagree (5). Lower scores on the scale indicate a stronger sense of community.

- (Organization name) gets overlooked in (neighborhood/city name).
- (Organization name) gets very little done in this (neighborhood/city name).
- (Organization name) has had a part in solving at least one problem in (neighborhood/city   name).

Cronbach's alpha for the above subscale = .61

II. Measures of *CITIZEN PARTICIPATION*

Itzhaky, H., & York, A. S. (2000).   Empowerment and community participation: Does gender make a difference? *Social Work Research, 24*(4), 225-234.

Citizen participation in the above study is analyzed using three scales that measure the extent of residents' participation in the organization (i.e., frequency), participation in decision making, and the extent to which respondents see themselves as representatives of their fellow community residents.

1. *Organizational Participation:* Please answer the following questions on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 meaning never, 5 meaning often.   Cronbach's alpha = .89
   - how often you attend meetings
   - how often you attend organizational functions and activities
   - the extent of your active participation in discussions

2. *Participation in Decision Making.* Choose your level of involvement in the organization: 1 = I take no part at all, 2 = I play a passive role, 3 = I participate in relaying information, 4 = I carry out various tasks at the staff's instruction, 5 = I participate partially in planning, decision making and implementation, and 6 = I am a full partner in planning, decision making and implementation.

Perkins, D.D. & Long, D.A. (2002). Neighborhood Sense of Community and social capital: A multi-level analysis. In A. Fisher, C. Sonn & B. Bishop (Eds.), *Psychological sense of community: Research, applications, and implications* **(pp. 291-318). New York: Plenum.**

Citizen Participation Index:
1. Are you currently a member of the block association?
2. Have you ever taken part in an activity sponsored by the block association?
3. Thinking about work you might do for the block association outside of meetings, how many hours would you say you give to organization each month, if any?
4. We would like to know what kinds of things people have done in the association. In the past year have you:
   - Attended a meeting?
   - Spoken up during a meeting?
   - Done work for the organization outside of meetings?
   - Served as a member of a committee?
   - Served as an officer or as a committee chair?

Cronbach's alpha: Time 1 = .78; Time 2 = .80

The following study added the questions below to question 4 of the above scale: **Perkins, D., Florin, P., Rich, R., Wandersman, A., & Chavis, D. (1990). Participation and the social and physical environment of residential blocks: Crime and community context.** *American Journal of Community Psychology, 18***, 83-115.**

   - Helped organize activities (other than meetings) for the association?
   - Participated in activities other than meetings (block party, cleanup)
   - Tried to recruit new members?
   - Tried to get people out for meetings and activities?
   - Served as a representative of the association to other community groups?
   - Worked on other block association activities?

III. Measures of PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

A. SOCIOPOLITICAL CONTROL

Zimmerman, M.A., & Zahniser, J.H. (1991). Refinements of sphere-specific measures of perceived control: Development of a sociopolitical control scale. *Journal of Community Psychology, 19,* **189-204.**

This scale includes measures of leadership competence and policy control. Respondents are asked to indicate how strongly they agree from 1 to 6, 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 6 meaning "strongly agree," with the following statements.
Leadership Competence:
1. I would prefer to be a leader rather than a follower.
2. Other people usually follow my ideas.

3. I like to wait and see if someone else is going to solve a problem so that I don't have to be bothered by it.
4. I would rather not try something I'm not good at.
5. I am often a leader in groups.
6. I would rather someone else took over the leadership role when I'm involved in a group project.
7. I can usually organize people to get things done.
8. I find it hard to talk in front of a group.

Cronbach's alpha: Zimmerman and Zahniser (1991) = .78; Itzhaky and York (2000) = .79;

Policy Control:
1. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.
2. I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues which confront our society.
3. It hardly makes any difference who I vote for because whoever gets elected does whatever he or she wants to do anyway.
4. So many other people are active in local issues and organizations that it doesn't matter much to me whether I participate or not.
5. A good many local elections aren't important enough to both with.
6. I enjoy political participation because I want to have as much say in running government as possible.
7. People like me are generally well qualified to participate in the political activity and decision making in our country.
8. There are plenty of ways for people like me to have a say in what our government does.
9. Most public officials wouldn't listen to me no matter what I did.

Cronbach's alpha: Zimmerman and Zahniser (1991) = .75; Itzhaky and York (2000) = .74

Smith, P.D. & Propst, D.B. (2001). Are topic measures of socio-political control justified? Exploring the realm of citizen participation in natural resource decision making. *Journal of Community Psychology, 29*(2), 179-187.

The above study developed a sphere-specific measure of policy control related to natural resource organizations and decision making. Respondents are asked to indicate how strongly they agree from 1 to 6, 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 6 meaning "strongly agree," with the following statements.

1. So many other people are active in local natural resource issues and organizations that it doesn't matter much to me whether I participate or not.
2. So many other people are active in state and national natural resource issues and organizations that it doesn't matter much to me whether I participate or not.
3. I enjoy political participation because I want to have as much say as possible in running agencies like the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Forest Service.
4. Most natural resource agency people in Michigan wouldn't listen to me no matter what I did.

5. There are plenty of ways for people like me to have a say in what the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Forest Service, and local planners do.
6. Sometimes natural resource agencies and issues seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on (Natural resources include forests, water, soil, wildlife, rivers, lakes, etc.)
7. People like me are generally well qualified to participate in natural resource and land use decision making in Michigan.
8. I feel like I have a pretty a good understanding of the important natural resource issues that confront Michigan.

Cronbach's alpha = .80

B. Measures of KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

McMillan, B., Florin, P., Stevenson, J., Kerman, B., & Mitchell, R.E. (1995). Empowerment praxis in community coalitions. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 23, 699-727.*

The *Perceived Knowledge and Skill Development Scale* measures the skills, beliefs, and knowledge of participants in a coalition (Cronbach's alpha = .91). A 7-item scale asks participants to rate, on a scale from 1 (no change) to 4 (major increase), the extent to which they feel participating in the task force had changed their knowledge (i.e., Knowledge of risk and protective factors related to alcohol and other drug abuse), their beliefs (i.e., Belief that prevention of alcohol and other drug problems is possible), and their skills (i.e., skills in conducting a community planning/problem solving process).

IV. Measures of COLLECTIVE COMPETENCIES: COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

Sampson, R. J., & Raudenbush, S. W. (1999). Systematic Social Observation of Public Spaces: A New Look at Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods. *American Journal of Sociology, 105*(3), 603-651.

The following *Neighborhood Collective Efficacy* scale measures informal social control and social cohesion/trust.

Informal social control: On a scale from 1 to 5, 5 being very likely to 1 being very unlikely, respondents are asked how likely is it that their neighbors can be counted on to take action ("do something") if:

1. children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner
2. children were spray painting graffiti on a local building
3. children were showing disrespect to an adult
4. a fight broke out in front of their house
5. the fire station closest to the home was threatened with budget cuts

Social cohesion/trust. Respondents are asked to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each of the statements below using the following rating scale: 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree):
1. People around here are willing to help their neighbors
2. This is a close-knit neighborhood
3. People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other
4. People in this neighborhood do not share the same values

The aggregate reliability for the collective efficacy scale was .68 and .80 at the tract and neighborhood cluster levels, respectively.

Perkins, D.D. & Long, D.A. (2002). Neighborhood Sense of Community and social capital: A multi-level analysis. In A. Fisher, C. Sonn & B. Bishop (Eds.), *Psychological sense of community: Research, applications, and implications* (pp. 291-318). New York: Plenum.

The following *Organizational Collective Efficacy Scale* measures trust in the effectiveness of organized community action. The following are things that the block association might try to do. For each one, respondents are asked to indicate whether they think it is "very likely," "somewhat likely," or "not likely" that the block association can accomplish that goal.

1. Improve physical conditions in the neighborhood like cleanliness or housing upkeep.
2. Persuade the city to provide better services to people in the neighborhood.
3. Get people in the neighborhood to help each other more.
4. Reduce crime in the neighborhood.
5. Get people who live in the neighborhood to know each other better.
6. Get information to residents about where to go for services they need.

Cronbach's Alpha: Time 1=.82; Time 2=.82

V. Measures of SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Perkins, D., Florin, P., Rich, R., Wandersman, A., & Chavis, D. (1990). Participation and the social and physical environment of residential blocks: Crime and community context. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* Vol. 18, pp. 83-115.

The *Sense of Community Scale* asks respondents whether the following statements are "true," or "false" regarding the block on which they live.

1. I think my block is a good place to live.
2. People on this block do not share the same values.
3. My neighbors and I want the same thing from this block.
4. I can recognize most of the people who live on my block.
5. I feel at home on this block.
6. Very few of my neighbors know me.
7. I care about what my neighbors think of my actions.
8. I have no influence over what this block is like.

9. If there is a problem on this block, people who live here get it solved.
10. It is very important to me to live on this block.
11. People on this block generally don't get a long with each other.
12. I expect to live on this block for a long time.

Cronbach's alpha = .80

Brodsky, A. E., O'Campo, P. J., & Aronson, R. E. (1999). PSOC in Community Context: Multi-level correlates of a measure of psychological sense of community in Low-Income, Urban Neighborhoods. *Journal of Community Psychology,* **Vo. 27, No. 6, pp. 659-679.**

Brodsky and her colleagues (1999) adapted the above Sense of Community Scale to measure neighborhood sense of community. Brodsky and her colleagues used the following 10 items in her study.

1. I think my neighborhood is a good place to live.
2. People in this neighborhood do not share the same values.
3. My neighbors and I want the same thing from this neighborhood.
4. I can recognize most of the people who live in my neighborhood.
5. I feel at home in this neighborhood.
6. Very few of my neighbors know me.
7. I care about what my neighbors think of my actions.
8. If there is a problem in this neighborhood, people who live here get it solved.
9. People in this neighborhood generally don't get a long with each other.
10. I expect to live in this neighborhood for a long time.

Cronbach's alpha = .78

APPENDIX G: Copy of Survey

(Name of Neighborhood) Neighborhood Survey

Thank you for agreeing to fill out our Neighborhood Survey. Please follow the instructions for each question.

1. **How long have you lived in this neighborhood?** _____ months _____ years

2. **Thinking about this neighborhood, how would you rate it as a place to live?** *(Check one)*

   1. □ Poor   3. □ Good
   2. □ Fair   4. □ Excellent

3. **Are you a member of the (Name of Neighborhood Organization)?**

   1. □ Yes 2. □ No

   IF YES:
   3(a). How long have you been a member?   _____months _____ years
   3(b). What is your current level of membership? (Check one)
   1. □ Member only (attend and occasionally talk at meetings).
   2. □ Member and worker (encourage neighbors to come to meetings, and/or do work on a committee or activity outside the meetings).
   3. □ Member and leader (act as an officer or committee leader).

4. Thinking about work you do for (name of neighborhood organization), how many hours, **on average,** would you say you give to organization each **month,** if any? _____ **Average # Hours a Month**

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR PARTICIPATION IN (NAME OF NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION): We would like to know how important the following reasons are for why you initially participated in the organization and why you continue to participate, from 1, *"not important"* to 5, *"very important."*

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

	Why *you initially Participated?* Not Important……………...Very Important	Why *you continue To Participate?* Not Important…………..…Very Important
1. To improve neighborhood conditions………..	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2. To learn about neighborhood issues……......	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3. To gain new skills and abilities………..........	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4. To influence government policies……...........	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5. To influence neighborhood development........	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6. To strengthen the neighborhood organization..	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
7. To serve as a leader for the organization........	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
8. To get to know people in my neighborhood…..1	2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
9. To contribute my knowledge and skills………1	2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
10. Because of a neighbor/friend's involvement…1	2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
11. Other (Specify:_____)…1	2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR PARTICIPATION IN (NAME OF NEIGHOBRHOOD ORGANIZATION):

We would like to know what kinds of things people have done with (name of neighborhood organization). In the __PAST YEAR__ how often have you…
(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)   *Never ………………………....Often*

1. Attended organizational functions and activities?**................................**1   2   3   4   5

		Never	..........................Often			

2. Actively participated in discussions?**.......................................**1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

3. Attended meetings of the organization?**..................................**1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

4. Done work for the organization outside of meetings?**............................**1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

5. Served as a member of a committee?**.....................................**1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

6. Served as an officer or as a committee chair?**.....................................** 1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

7. Helped organize activities (other than meetings)?**...........................** 1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

8. Tried to recruit new members?**.....................................** 1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

9. Tried to get people out for meetings and activities?**............................**1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

10. Served as a representative of the organization to other
community groups?**...** 1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

11. Worked on other activities for the organization?**.................................**1   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

12. How involved are you in (name of neighborhood organization)? (Check One)

    1. ☐ I take no part at all
    2. ☐ I play a passive role
    3. ☐ I participate in relaying information
    4. ☐ I carry out various tasks at the instruction of the staff and/or board
    5. ☐ I participate partially in planning, decision making and implementation
    6. ☐ I am a full partner in planning, decision making and implementation

Since participating in (name of neighborhood organization), to what extent have your knowledge and skills regarding the following issues changed.

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)	No Change	Slight Increase	Moderate Increase	Major Increase	Doesn't Apply
1. Knowledge of neighborhood housing issues………………….....1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**
2. Knowledge of neighborhood business district issues…………….1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**
3. Knowledge of neighborhood safety issues………………….......1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**
4. Knowledge of government policies affecting my neighborhood**...** 1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**
5. Skills in decision making………………………………………..1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**
6. Skills in organizing group activities…………………………......1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**
7. Skills in leading group activities…………………………………1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**
8. Skills in neighborhood planning and development……………...1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**D/A**

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR (NAME OF NEIGHBORHOOOD ORGANIZATION):

The following are statements regarding your PERCEPTIONS of the characteristics of (name of neighborhood organization). For each one, indicate how strongly you agree or disagree.

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)	Strongly Disagree………………..………….Agree					Don't Know
1. When the organization makes a decision, pretty much everyone has to agree it's the best way to go…………………1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**0**
2. The group is asked for preferences and opinions……………1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**0**
3. When we make a decision, we decide by majority vote…..…..1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**0**
4. We hold each other accountable for our actions………………1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**0**

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

	Strongly Disagree…………………..……………Agree				Strongly	Don't Know

5. People are often persuaded to go along with the group……….1   2   3   4   5   0

6. When a decision needs to be made, we appoint a group of
members to decide……………………………………………..1   2   3   4   5   0

7. We meet as a group to discuss issues or make decisions……..1   2   3   4   5   0

8. There are clear rules about what kinds of decisions must be
made by the whole group…………………………………......1   2   3   4   5   0

9. There are clear rules about member rights & responsibilities.....1   2   3   4   5   0

10. The organization is disorganized and inefficient…………………1   2   3   4   5   0

11. The organization has orderly and efficient meetings……….......1   2   3   4   5   0

12. The organization needs more formalization and structure………1   2   3   4   5   0

13. There are plenty of opportunities for people of diverse racial &
socioeconomic backgrounds to participate in the organization...1   2   3   4   5   0

14. The organization makes use of everyone's skills and abilities… 1   2   3   4   5   0

15. There are many roles participants can play in the organization.. 1   2   3   4   5   0

16. There are insufficient opportunities for developing participants'
skills and abilities in the organization…………………………….1   2   3   4   5   0

17. The organization actively encourages and solicits people
of diverse racial & socioeconomic backgrounds to participate.....1   2   3   4   5   0

18. There is a clear sense of mission in the organization……………1   2   3   4   5   0

19. The goals of the organization are meaningful to the members…1   2   3   4   5   0

20. There is a sense of common purpose in the organization……....1   2   3   4   5   0

21. The goals of the organization are important to members……....1   2   3   4   5   0

22. The goals of the organization are challenging……………….…1   2   3   4   5   0

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR (NAME OF NEIGHBORHOOOD ORGANIZATION):
The following are statements regarding your PERCEPTIONS of the effectiveness of (name of neighborhood organization). For each one, indicate your how strongly you agree or disagree.

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

Strongly Disagree…………………..………….Agree   Strongly   Don't Know

1. The organization gets overlooked in this community………….1   2   3   4   5   0

2. The organization gets very little done in this community……...1   2   3   4   5   0

3. The organization has had a part in solving at least one
problem in this community…………………………………......1   2   3   4   5   0

4. The community agrees with the organization's purpose……...1   2   3   4   5   0

5. Local businesses support the organization……………………1   2   3   4   5   0

6. Local government officials support the organization………….1   2   3   4   5   0

7. The organization has helped elect someone to a position
of government power or leadership…………………………....1   2   3   4   5   0

8. Resources in the community have been allocated differently
as a result of the organization's efforts………………………..1   2   3   4   5   0

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

	Strongly Disagree…………………..…………Agree				Strongly Agree	Don't Know

The leadership of (name of neighborhood organization) has been able to…

9. Work with others outside the organization………………………1	2	3	4	5		0
10. Motivate and inspire participants and members………………1	2	3	4	5		0
11. Recruit capable and competent staff and board members……1	2	3	4	5		0
12. Successfully raise resources from its members………………..1	2	3	4	5		0
13. Successfully raise resources from local foundations and/or corporate philanthropy………………………………………1	2	3	4	5		0
14. Successfully raise resources from the general community……1	2	3	4	5		0
15. Successfully raise resources from public sources (i.e., city, county, state and/or federal sources)……………......1	2	3	4	5		0

As a result of (name of neighborhood organization) efforts….

16. Life conditions of community residents have improved………..1	2	3	4	5		0
17. The community has access to affordable housing……..………1	2	3	4	5		0
18. The community has access to better information & resources..1	2	3	4	5		0
19. Local banks increased lending in our area…………………….1	2	3	4	5		0
20. Conditions in the business district have improved……………..1	2	3	4	5		0
21. Illegal or undesirable businesses were shut down……………..1	2	3	4	5		0
22. The community is safer………………………………………….1	2	3	4	5		0
23. The community is more visually attractive……………………….1	2	3	4	5		0
24. Youth in the community have more resources & opportunities..1	2	3	4	5		0

The following are things a neighborhood organization might try to do. For each one, indicate how likely it is that (name of neighborhood organization) can accomplish that goal.

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neither Likely Nor Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely
1. Improve physical conditions in the neighborhood like cleanliness or housing upkeep…………………………………… 1		2	3	4	5
2. Get people in the neighborhood to help each other more…….…… 1		2	3	4	5
3. Persuade the city to provide better services to people in the neighborhood……………………………………………… 1		2	3	4	5
4. Reduce crime in the neighborhood…………………………..…… 1		2	3	4	5
5. Get people who live in the neighborhood to know each other……….1		2	3	4	5
6. Increase decent, affordable housing in the neighborhood….……… 1		2	3	4	5
7. Improve the business district in the neighborhood………………… 1		2	3	4	5
8. Develop and implement solutions to neighborhood problems……….1		2	3	4	5

PLEASE TELL ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD:

The following are things people in your neighborhood might try to do. For each one, indicate *how likely* your neighbors could be counted on to do something if…

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neither Likely Nor Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely
1. children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner……………………………………………………	1	2	3	4	5
2. children were spray painting graffiti on a local building………………	1	2	3	4	5
3. children were showing disrespect to an adult…………………………	1	2	3	4	5
4. a fight broke out in front of their house……………………………………	1	2	3	4	5
5. the fire station closest to home was threatened with budget cuts……………………………………………………………	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate how strongly you *agree or disagree* with each of the statements below:
(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1. People around here are willing to help their neighbors…………………	1	2	3	4	5
2. This is a close-knit neighborhood……………………………………………	1	2	3	4	5
3. People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other..	1	2	3	4	5
4. People in this neighborhood do not share the same values……………	1	2	3	4	5
5. I think my neighborhood is a good place to live…………………………	1	2	3	4	5
6. My neighbors and I want the same thing from this neighborhood……..	1	2	3	4	5
7. I can recognize most of my neighbors…………………………………...	1	2	3	4	5
8. I feel at home in this neighborhood………………………………………	1	2	3	4	5
9. Very few of my neighbors know me………………………………………	1	2	3	4	5
10. I care about what my neighbors think of my actions………………………	1	2	3	4	5
11. I have no influence over what this neighborhood is like………………....	1	2	3	4	5
12. If there is a problem in this neighborhood, people who live here get it solved……………………………………………………………	1	2	3	4	5
13. It is very important to me to live in this neighborhood…………………	1	2	3	4	5
14. I expect to live in this neighborhood for a long time……………………	1	2	3	4	5

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF:

The following statements concern attitudes and feelings you might have about yourself in a variety of situations. Please indicate how strongly you *agree or disagree* with each of the statements, with 1 meaning "*Strongly Disagree"* to 6 meaning *"Strongly Agree."*

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
1. I would prefer to be a leader rather than a follower……………....	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Other people usually follow my ideas……………………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I like to wait and see if someone else is going to solve a problem so that I don't have to be bothered by it………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I would rather not try something I'm not good at………………	1	2	3	4	5	6

(PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER)

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
5.	I am often a leader in groups……………………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	I would rather someone else took over the leadership role when I'm involved in a group project…………..	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	I can usually organize people to get things done………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	I find it hard to talk in front of a group………………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on…..…	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues which confront our society……………	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	It hardly makes any difference who I vote for because whoever gets elected does whatever he or she wants to do anyway……	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	So many other people are active in local issues and organizations that it doesn't matter much to me whether I participate or not…………………………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	A good many local elections aren't important enough to bother with………………………………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	I enjoy political participation because I want to have as much say in running government as possible………………..	1	2	3	4	5	6
15.	People like me are generally well qualified to participate in the political activity and decision making in our country…………..	1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	There are plenty of ways for people like me to have a say in what our government does……………………………………	1	2	3	4	5	6
17.	Most public officials wouldn't listen to me no matter what I did…	1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	Sometimes neighborhood development seems so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on……	1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	I feel I have a pretty good understanding of the important issues that confront our neighborhood…………………..………	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	It hardly makes any difference if I participate because people In this neighborhood organization will do whatever they want to do anyway……..……………………………………..	1	2	3	4	5	6
21.	So many other people are active in this neighborhood organization that it doesn't matter much to me whether I participate or not…………………………………………..	1	2	3	4	5	6
22.	I enjoy participation because I want to have as much say in running this neighborhood organization as possible……………..	1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	People like me are generally well qualified to participate in neighborhood development activities and decision making……...	1	2	3	4	5	6
24.	There are plenty of ways for people like me to have a say in what this local neighborhood organization does….……………	1	2	3	4	5	6
25.	Most local people who run this neighborhood organization wouldn't listen to me no matter what I did…………………	1	2	3	4	5	6

1. What is your current age? _____ years

2. What is your sex? 1. ▢ Male 2. ▢ Female

3. How many people are living in your household (including yourself)? _____

4. What is your race? (check one)

    1. ▢ African American 4. ▢ Hispanic
    2. ▢ Asian 5. ▢ Other (specify:_____)
    3. ▢ Caucasian

5. Are you a registered voter? (check one):

    1. ▢ Yes 2. ▢ No 3. ▢ Don't know

6. What is your employment status? (check one)

    1. ▢ Employed Full-Time 5. ▢ Homemaker
    2. ▢ Employed Part-Time 6. ▢ Student
    3. ▢ Unemployed 7. ▢ Other (specify:_____)
    4. ▢ Retired

7. Which of the following best describes your current family situation? (check one)

    1. ▢ Never Married 5. ▢ Separated
    2. ▢ Married 6. ▢ Widowed
    3. ▢ Domestic partnership 7. ▢ Other (specify:_____)
    4. ▢ Divorced

8. Which of the following categories best describes your total household income from all sources in 2002? (check one)

    1. ▢ $10,000 or less 5. ▢ $50,001 to $75,000
    2. ▢ $10,001 to $20,000 6. ▢ $75,001 to $100,000
    3. ▢ $20,001 to $35,000 7. ▢ $100,001 or more
    4. ▢ $35,001 to $50,000

9. What is the highest grade you completed in school? (check one)

    1. ▢ Less than high school 4. ▢ Some college
    2. ▢ Some high school 5. ▢ College Degree
    3. ▢ High school graduate or GED 6. ▢ Graduate or Professional Degree

10. (a) Do you own or rent the home in which you live? (check one): 1. ▢ Own 2. ▢ Rent

    (b) If you own your home, which of the following categories best describes
    the value of your home in 2002? (check one)

    1. ▢ $50,000 or less 5. ▢ $125,001 to $150,000
    2. ▢ $50,001 to $75,000 6. ▢ $150,001 to $200,000
    3. ▢ $75,001 to $100,000 7. ▢ $200,001 to $250,000
    4. ▢ $100,001 to $125,000 8. ▢ $250,001 or more

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME
TO FILL OUT THIS NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY!

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