2006

Residential stability, social capital and parenting quality among African-American mothers

Gail Wallace
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd

Part of the African American Studies Commons, Family, Life Course, and Society Commons, Theory, Knowledge and Science Commons, Women's History Commons, and the Women's Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd/3029

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Retrospective Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Residential stability, social capital and parenting quality among African-American mothers

by

Gail Wallace

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Sociology

Program of Study Committee:
Jan L. Flora, Major Professor
Jill Bystydzienski
Alicia D. Cast
Carolyn E. Cutrona
George A. Jackson

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2006
This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation of

Gail Wallace

Has met the dissertation requirements of Iowa State University

Signature was redacted for privacy.

Major Professor

Signature was redacted for privacy.

For the Major Program
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**LIST OF FIGURES** vii  
**LIST OF TABLES** viii  
**ABSTRACT** ix  

**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**  
Conceptual Model 8  

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**  
Theoretical Framework: Major Theorists Define Social Capital 10  
Social Capital: A Characteristic of the Community 13  
Elements of Social Capital 14  
Trust/Norms of Reciprocity 14  
Closure 15  
Formal/Informal Social Control 16  
Social Networks 16  
African-American Social Networks 17  
The Absence of Social Capital 18  
Wilkinson’s Field Theory 19  

Literature Relevant to Specific Model to be Tested: Residential Stability Defined 21  
Residential Stability and Community Social Capital 22  
Residential Stability and Organizational Social Capital 23  

Incorporating Social Capital into Field Theory at Two Levels 24  
Community Social Capital and Field Theory 24  
Organizational Social Capital and Field Theory 25  

Psychological Well-Being Defined 26  
Community Social Capital and Psychological Well-Being 26  
Organizational Social Capital and Psychological Well-Being 27  

Parenting Quality 28  
Parenting Quality Defined 28  
African-American Parenting 28
Implications of Study 77
Limitations of Study 80
Suggestions for Future Research 82
APPENDIX A: MEASURES USED IN THE STUDY 85
APPENDIX B: FACTOR ANALYSES 94
REFERENCES 99
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 117
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>The Conceptual Model</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Standardized Beta Coefficients for Statistically Significant Relationships</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Means, Medians and Standard Deviations and Ranges for Study Variables</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Categorical Variables</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Zero Order Correlations among All Variables</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Multiple Regression Predicting Community Social Capital (Trust, Norms Reciprocity, Closure and Informal Social Control)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Multiple Regression Predicting Organizational Social Capital (Group Membership)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6</td>
<td>Multiple Regression Predicting Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7</td>
<td>Multiple Regression Predicting Parenting Quality</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 8</td>
<td>Summary of significant findings</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

This study examines neighborhood characteristics as predictors of parenting quality among African-American mothers. Drawing upon Wilson’s (1996) ideas of how community conditions affect the urban poor, I examined protective qualities of community life including residential stability and social capital. I examined social capital in two separate social fields based on Wilkinson’s (1970) field theory approach to community development. These two separate fields, community and organizational social capital were tested as predictors of African-American mothers’ psychological well-being and parenting quality.

Among the 759 African-American mothers who participated in this study, high residential stability significantly predicted community social capital but not organizational social capital. My results showed that organizational social capital significantly predicted African-American mothers’ psychological well-being, whereas community social capital marginally predicted mothers’ psychological well-being. Finally, my results showed a positive and direct relationship from community and organizational social capital to parenting quality among this group of African-American mothers. These effects were not mediated by psychological well-being, but retained significance when controlling for psychological well-being and an extensive set of community-level and individual-level demographic control variables.
CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

The work of William Julius Wilson provides the context for this dissertation. Wilson (1980, 1987, 1996) explains how, since the 1970s, the once residentially stable urban central-city metropolitan neighborhoods in which African Americans resided have deteriorated. These residentially stable communities of the past witnessed a large exodus of working and middle-class African Americans to the suburbs, which weakened their social organization, a major feature that once made these neighborhoods supportive places for residents to live. Wilson (1996) argues that this shift undermined community development in these neighborhoods, and produced impoverished community members who became vulnerable to crime, drug use, welfare dependency, delinquency, high school drop outs, teen births and intergenerational poverty (Wilson 1980, 1987, 1996). Wilson (1996) argues that the flight of middle-class African Americans from the inner city created a higher concentration of urban underclass African Americans with little or no job skills and economic resources to maintain the social organization of their neighborhoods that existed prior to the mid 70s (Wilson 1996).

Community-level economic disadvantage within the African-American community has been given considerable attention in the literature (Anderson 1978, 1990; Cohen et al. 1993; Drake and Cayton 1962; Dunier 1992; Frazier 1932; Jargowsky 1994; Jencks and Mayer 1990; Kasarda 1993; Liebow 1967; Massey and Denton 1993; Massey and Eggers 1990; Sampson 1986; Sampson and Groves 1989; Tienda 1991; Wilson 1980, 1987, 1991, 1996). In fact, the economic problems of African Americans have led to many negative community experiences for this group. One of these include deindustrialization, (the phasing
out of routine manufacturing and lessened need for those job skills). Wilson emphasizes rising economic problems as the basis for poverty and social unrest for residents living in central-city metropolitan neighborhoods.

Mothers in these communities, who are disproportionately without partners, rarely experience upward mobility because they have few resources that would allow them to migrate out of such communities into better areas. Furthermore, Wilson (1996) explains that those who do migrate into economically disadvantaged communities are usually other poor African Americans or newly arrived immigrants who share limited community resources and few opportunities for residential mobility into economically advantaged neighborhoods.

High numbers of unemployed community members who also live in concentrated and intergenerational poverty are more vulnerable to experiencing community social disorder.

When a high proportion of unemployed individuals reside in an impoverished community, community members lack the types of social resources that foster collective norms and trust, closure—a type of collective supervision whereby parents look after each other’s children (Coleman 1988), and formal/informal social control represented through church participation, neighborhood block clubs and local community-based organizations.

Poor neighbors who are trapped in “ghettoized” community conditions lack the economic and social infrastructure to build collective supervision of youth within the neighborhood. The lack of economic infrastructure according to Wilson (1996) weakens a community’s social organization and neighbors become unable to intervene for the common good of the community.

Wilson (1996) defines a major dimension of neighborhood social organization as “the extent to which the residents of a neighborhood are able to maintain effective social control.
and realize their common goals” (p. 20). Wilson (1996) includes two other dimensions of neighborhood social organization including: (1) strong social networks, and (2) residents’ participation in organizations (e.g., church, local civic organizations), voluntary associations (e.g., parent-teacher associations, community clubs) and informal networks (e.g., friendships, parental support groups).

According to Wilson (1996), all three dimensions of neighborhood social organization influence the local institutions that guide community development. When neighborhood social organization is weak, normative patterns of good social behavior such as routine work schedules, ethics of responsibility and care among adults and youth are compromised. Also, neighbors have few role models to encourage them to have positive goals and aspirations. Under these circumstances, neighbors are more likely to be skeptical about working toward collective goals for the betterment of their community. In neighborhoods such as these, parents may be less likely to exercise responsibility for the well-being of children through high levels of formal/ informal social control.

Wilson (1996) traces poor parenting to limited community institutional resources which then lead to the breakdown of social organization. He links lower levels of formal and informal social control to poor parenting. This breakdown of community social organization erodes levels of trust among single mothers. Mothers who don’t trust one another will find it difficult to reinforce positive parenting behaviors that foster community awareness regarding child safety and related issues. Thus a lack of closure (Coleman 1988) among the neighborhood parents makes social monitoring and control among parents difficult. Parents are not able to talk to other parents and do not know the whereabouts of each other’s children if trust is not first established.
During the 1950s, African-American parents in inner-city neighborhoods knew the parents of their children's playmates and supervised each others' children. Wilson (1991, 1996) argues that this is rarely seen in today's poor African-American inner cities. Furthermore, Wilson (1996) argues that specialized interest groups such as churches, parent-teacher organizations, and neighborhood block clubs are less effective when high rates of community unemployment and poverty are present. In his view, this has led to the deterioration of local institutions and services that formerly protected the safety and well-being of its community members.

Wilson (1996) also theorizes that the breakdown of community social organization lowers the aspirations of community members. When community members feel alienated from the larger society and lack basic resources and employment opportunities they suffer from low levels of self-efficacy. This makes life even more difficult for community members who are trying to manage everyday life. Daily life under these conditions becomes more of a struggle and parents are worn down and less able to develop the skills necessary to be effective parents.

Although Wilson's (1996) thesis refers to urban central-city metropolitan areas, his thesis is also plausible in explaining current community conditions in rural farm communities and smaller towns located in the Midwest (Simons et al. 1997; Simons et al. 2002) and particularly in areas of the South (Falk et al. 1993). Wilson's description of the inner-city ghetto neighborhoods that poor African Americans inhabit is very similar to non-metro African-American communities in the South because globalization, manufacturing, de-industrialization, agricultural industrialization, technological upgrading and suburbanization of manufacturing jobs have also affected rural areas of the Midwest and South. For this
reason, Wilson’s (1996) thesis could have similar implications for southern non-metropolitan and rural communities in the United States as well.

Wilson (1980, 1987, 1991, 1996) gives little attention to the positive benefits of social organization or which aspects of it could create or improve community conditions. He does not focus on how to build community or the benefits that social capital could have on community residents’ well-being.

According to Wilson (1996), high rates of residential mobility caused by the economic restructuring of employment opportunities from the large metropolitan centers to the suburbs drove out many working and middle-class residents living in the central inner city as late as the 1970s. This weakened the institutional structure of these communities and in turn damaged the socially cohesive community structures that previously existed. Wilson (1996) describes this breakdown of community as affecting residents’ self-efficacy, which influences parenting behavior. Thus, Wilson’s (1996) thesis served as a framework in the development of my model to test the relationship between residential stability, levels of social capital, psychological well-being and African-American mothers’ parenting quality.

**Conceptual Model**

An important part of my conceptual model involves examining social capital at two different levels. Although Wilkinson (1970) died before he had an opportunity to empirically test the relation of Field Theory to social capital, he laid the foundation for understanding how different interactional fields within a community could represent different levels of social capital. I hypothesize that social capital exists at two levels based on Wilkinson’s (1970) Field Theory and that these two levels differentially affect psychological well-being and parenting quality among African-American mothers. (See Figure 1.)
Wilkinson (1970) proposed that community and community development be conceived of in terms of interactional or social fields. The social field has two major parts to it. One is the community field, which makes up the common interests, those which benefit everyone in the community. The other kind of social field allows community members to pursue specialized interests. Wilkinson (1970) uses the term social field to represent specialized interests such as group memberships, social networks and friendships within the community and community field to represent the common interests of the community. In my extension of Wilkinson's (1970) ideas, I separate social capital into these two separate fields such that community social capital represents community field and organizational social capital represents the specialized social fields.

Residential stability facilitates the growth of social capital by encouraging positive relationships among community members. Those who own property and have lived in their community or neighborhood for a long period of time are likely to have an interest in the well-being of their community and pursue their concerns through local community organizations and special interest groups. Those who do not own their own homes tend to be more residentially mobile and this interferes with community development and the creation of social networking ties that stem from membership in groups (Coleman 1990; Sampson et al. 1999). Long-term ties to place could also be related to community members' interpersonal connections which strengthen the community's social infrastructure, which in turn may give parents a greater sense of well-being and facilitate more effective parenting. Residentially stable communities have helped African-American mothers play a major role in African-American community development (Stack 1974).
Wilson (1996) argues that high levels of residential mobility are secondary to high levels of community economic disadvantage in creating the breakdown of community social organization, one form of social capital. In my model, I test whether or not residential stability influences social capital at both levels while controlling for community-level economic disadvantage and other relevant socio-demographic variables.

Social capital serves as a resource for community members. I hypothesize that social capital at both levels has positive benefits for African-American mothers’ psychological well-being and parenting quality. I also propose that psychological well-being expressed as mastery and optimism encourages positive parenting qualities. High levels of social capital within a community may influence parenting quality directly or be mediated through mothers’ psychological well-being. Parents who know that others in the community will watch out for the community children may feel less psychologically burdened than parents who have to look over their shoulders constantly to keep their children safe from others within and outside the community, and this in turn could strengthen parenting quality.

In summary, the present study will examine residential stability and its effect on social capital using Wilkinson’s (1970) Field Theory at two levels of analysis. Also, my proposed model will explore social capital at both the community and organizational level and its influence on psychological well-being and parenting quality. The relationship of psychological well-being to parenting will be examined as well. Finally, the present study will examine whether or not psychological well-being mediates the relationship between community and organizational social capital and parenting quality among African-American mothers. (See Figure 1.)
Figure 1. The Conceptual Model
CHAPTER TWO:
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with the conceptualization of social capital and its relevance to Wilkinson's (1970, 1991) Field Theory. Next, the review will focus on how Wilkinson's field theory relates to the concepts of social capital, which I present in this study at two levels of analysis. These two levels represent two distinct social fields (Wilkinson 1970): community and organizational social capital. These two levels will be explained in the literature review.

The remainder of the literature review will address each component of the theoretical model shown in Figure 1. Associations between constructs will be considered in the order in which they appear in the model. I examine the relationship between residential stability and social capital based on Wilkinson's (1970) field theory approach to community development with a particular interest in its influence on social capital at the community and organizational level. Next, I incorporate social capital into field theory at the community and organizational level. Then, I examine the relationship of social capital at the community and organizational level to psychological well-being. Specific attention is given to understanding if communities that display higher or lower levels of community and organizational social capital contribute to African-American mothers' psychological well-being. Then, I examine the relationship of social capital at the community and organizational level to parenting quality. Next, I examine the relationship of psychological well-being to parenting quality. Then, I assess the mediating role of psychological well-being that could account for the relationship between social capital at both levels, on the one hand, and parenting quality, on
the other. Finally, socio-demographic correlates of the main study variables will be reviewed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Major Theorists Define Social Capital

James Coleman (1988) is considered the “founding father” of social capital theory. Coleman (1990) defined social capital as a resource emerging from the structure of social relationships, which in turn facilitates the achievement of specific goals. He “theorizes that social capital is lodged not in individuals but in the structure of social organization” (1990: 302). Coleman (1990) further defined social capital as a resource embedded in relations among people and positions that encourage activity on everyone’s behalf. Thus, social capital is an important resource that shapes the way in which a community sees itself as being able to give and receive through relationships with others within the community.

Coleman’s (1990) research emphasizes strong cohesive relationships among community members as the key to social capital. Community members’ relationships with each other provide a source of assistance and exchange based on (a) the strength of interpersonal ties, characterized by mutual obligation and reciprocity; (b) closure; and (c) norms and effective sanctions undergirding formal and informal social control. Coleman (1988) delineates trust, norms of reciprocity, closure, and formal/informal social control as central to what social capital represents. Finally, Coleman (1988) argues that these aspects of social capital play a major role in the making of a “civil society” because each is effective at engaging community members in cooperative action with one another.

Putnam (1993b) explains that social capital is an important part of communities. He states that “social capital means features of social organizations, such as networks, norms,
and trust, which facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit” (35-36). According to Putnam (2000), social capital is the glue that holds communities together. In general, Putnam’s (1993b) definition of social capital centers on social networks. From Putnam’s (2000) perspective, norms and trust arise out of social networks. Putnam also seeks a broader notion of community than does Coleman (1990). For Putnam (1995b), who is a political scientist, social capital is strongly connected to the civic participation of members within a community. Putnam’s (2000) notion of community extends beyond the community member’s residential location to the city, county, state and national relationships that connect humans together on a much broader level. Portes (1998) states that political scientists have “equated social capital with the level of ‘civicness’ in communities such as towns, cities, or even entire countries” (p. 18). However, my study will focus only on social capital within the immediate communities in which respondents reside.

Putnam (1993a) identified five principal characteristics of social capital. These are (a) community networks, which refer to the number and density of voluntary and personal networks, (b) civic engagement, which involves participation in and use of civic networks, (3) local civic identity, which refers to a sense of belonging, (4) reciprocity of norms of cooperation, which refers to a sense of obligation to help others along with confidence that such assistance will be extended in return and (5) trust among all community members. For Putnam (1995b) social capital encompasses “… features of social life–networks, norms [including reciprocity] and trust–that enable participants to act together more effectively” (p. 664).

Bourdieu’s (1986) definition of social capital emphasizes its implications for individuals. He focuses on “the role of the individual’s societal status, power, and
connections" (Whitley and Mckenzie 2005: 73). "These actual or potential resources are linked to the possession of a durable network or more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu 1986:249).

Sampson (2001b) theorized that communities high in social capital share common interests and accomplish common goals through maintaining community formal/informal social control. Sampson (1992) and Coleman (1988) both argue that social capital is a product of the social relationships in which community members engage. This engagement acts as a resource that enables the implementation of community goals and development.

Nan Lin (2001) limits the definition of the term social capital to the diversity of resources that can be accessed through network ties. Lin and colleagues (2001) emphasize that social capital is embedded within resources in a social structure, such as community, which is then accessed and pooled together for the purpose of a stated goal or mission (Chapter 3). Lin and colleagues (2001) highlight several processes that promote or hinder social capital. These include social integration, social cohesion, solidarity and social disorganization.

Jan Flora (1998) discusses social capital in communities of place. Community members develop ties to place and form relationships with others. Community members’ attachment to place serves as a major source of community bonding and this enables community members to rely on each other for goods and resources at both the institutional and interpersonal level. Also, social capital is fostered by community members’ civic participation which strengthens local infrastructure and community development goals (Flora and Flora 1993).
Social Capital: A Characteristic of the Community

A major challenge for theorists in community studies is to define social capital with a consistent set of meanings. Theorists use the concept social capital in different ways. Thus, social capital has taken on different names while meaning similar things in the research literature. The social capital concept is beneficial to understanding community dynamics and has been integrated in the community research literature to represent central aspects of community life.

Social capital is considered a community characteristic and is “attributed to the community itself” (Portes 2000:3). Social capital is related to aspects of a community that are vital to its livelihood. For instance, community norms enable networks that foster social relationships that are a resource for individual and community well being. This is possible because social capital within a community facilitates accomplishments of the group through community norms that guide individual social behavior. Community norms are embedded in social structure (Granovetter 1985; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). Therefore, a community norm is closely linked to the structure of a specific community and is typically defined as a shared expectation of how people should behave within certain roles or situations (Labovitz and Hagedorn 1973). Community norms may encourage negative or positive forms of social capital. I focus on positive forms of social capital and the benefits they confer on community residents.

Scholars in community studies argue that social capital is an important characteristic that makes for healthy interpersonal relations between community members (Coleman 1988, 1990; Putnam 2000), better parenting quality (Furstenburg and Hughes 1997; Murry et al. 2001; Simons et al. 1997) safer streets to walk down at night (Ross et al. 2002; Wilson 1996),
positive psychological well-being (Cutrona et al. 2000; Ross 2000), and positive outcomes for youth (Brooks-Gunn et al. 1993, 1997a, 1997b; McLoyd and Wilson 1992; Sampson 2001a). Over the last decade and a half, social scientists have amassed a considerable literature devoted to understanding the effects of community characteristics like social capital on individual and group outcomes (Aneshensel and Sucoff 1996; Brooks-Gunn et al. 1993; Crane 1991; McLeod & Shanahan 1993; Wilson 1987, 1996).

In summary, social capital is seen as a critical resource for the promotion of individual and community well-being (Wilson 1996). High levels of social capital include strong interpersonal ties among community members (Wilson 1987, 1996). These social ties provide community members with a sense of connectedness, meaning and purpose (Durkheim 1897).

**Elements of Social Capital**

Social capital consists of major elements such as trust, norms of reciprocity, closure, formal/informal social control, and social networks. Coleman (1988, 1990), Putnam (1993a, 1993b, 2000), Bourdieu (1986), Sampson (1992, 2001b), Lin (2001) and Flora (1998) all discuss one or more of the above major elements as central to the concept of social capital. I will now focus on each of these elements below.

*Trust/ Norms of Reciprocity*

Trust and norms of reciprocity operate in the context of cultural norms and expectations about what is appropriate for a particular community setting (Swidler 1986). Trust is the subjective aspect of social capital and facilitates the expectations of reciprocity that people have of each other as well as the institutions on which they depend (Paxton
Trust and norms of reciprocity are necessary to the formation of socially cohesive environments (Lochner et al. 1999).

The ability to form positive social relationships depends on trust. Trust allows pairs or groups of individuals to establish cooperative relationships whenever doing so is mutually beneficial (Coleman 1988; Rotter 1980). Coleman (1988, 1990) emphasizes trust as an element of social capital because trusting relationships produce desired outcomes. Community development depends on trust and norms of reciprocity among residents. Sampson (2001b) also emphasizes trust in his discussion of community development. As Putnam (1993b) explained, “trust lubricates cooperation” (171).

A number of scholars have emphasized the contribution of trust to the community (Coleman 1988; Putnam 1995a; Sampson 2001a, 2001b; Sullivan and Transue 1999). As an example, the willingness of local residents to intervene on behalf of public safety depends in large part on conditions of mutual trust and shared expectations among residents (Sampson 2001a).

Closure

Closure is important in building social capital (Coleman 1988; Gargiulo and Benassi 2000). Coleman (1990) regarded closure—that is, the existence of relations between different individuals and institutions that reinforce each other—as important to imposing sanctions. Coleman’s (1988, 1990) view of closure pertains to networks in which everyone is connected such that no one can escape the notice of others. Burt (2005) defines closure as a dense network which represents social capital.

Closure of the community social structure allows group-initiated sanctions that guide behavior through norms (Coleman 1988). Community closure is beneficial to parents raising
children (Coleman 1988). In Coleman’s (1988) study of school-centered social capital he operationally defined closure as a form of social capital by which parents know the parents of their children’s friends. Thus, parents collectively have the potential to observe the children’s actions in different circumstances, talk to one another about the children, compare notes and establish rules. Coleman (1990) goes on to state:

The effect of closure can be seen especially well by considering a system involving parents and children. In a community where there is an extensive set of expectations and obligations connecting adults to children, each adult has help from other adults to supervise and control her children (p. 318).

*Formal/Informal Social Control*

Formal/informal social control refers to the enforcement of norms governing social behavior. Order is the result of successful social control (Ross and Jang 2000; Ross and Mirowsky 1999, 2001; Ross et al. 2002). Communities strong in formal/informal social control practice norms that benefit community interests by cooperating with others to foster collective goals (Janowitz 1975). Formal/informal social control helps a community realize its common values by regulating community members’ behavior towards this end. Formal/informal social control minimizes crime and delinquency in a community and this influences community members’ perceptions that their community is a safe place to live (Ross 2000; Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson and Raudenbush 2004; Sampson et al. 1997). Closure makes it easier for formal/informal social control to be exercised, in the case of parents.

*Social Networks*

Social networks are important to the development of social capital. “Networks provide a basis for social cohesion because they enable people to cooperate with one another—and not just with people they know directly—for mutual advantage” (Field 2003:12).
Moreover, “networks are the mechanism through which trust is developed and legitimacy established” (Flora 1998: 492). Coleman (1988) has argued that voluntary associations can generate social capital, either intentionally or inadvertently, by generating community action around a specific purpose. Voluntary associations foster networks, both within and among associations within a community (Perrucci and Pilisuk 1970; Sharp 2001; Sharp et al. 2003). For instance, organizational participation of African-American mothers is fueled by the community involvement of other African-American mothers; thus, higher proportions of African-American mothers in the community catalyze this group’s agency (Goings and Mohl 1995). A group’s agency is embedded within its cultural, regional and economic concerns, among other important social issues that are tied to place (Flora 1998).

_African-American Social Networks_

During the 1960s African-American inner city enclaves were characterized by positive social organization and community values that regulated formal/informal social control and prevented deviant social behavior and conduct (Wilson 1987). Positive features of social organization in the African-American community were due to African-American middle and working classes living side by side in the same communities. Active social networks and resident participation in formal/informal organizations facilitated such cross-class networks. Middle-class African Americans imparted many positive resources and skills to their working-class neighbors (Wilson 1996). As a result of housing discrimination, this group mostly resided in the same neighborhoods, regardless of social class or economic status (Massey and Denton 1993). Until the late 1960s, rich social networks were salient among this population group (Jargowsky 1997). According to Coleman (1988), families that
resided in densely populated areas, like the inner city communities that housed African Americans, accumulated social capital effectively by generating tightly knit social networks.

The Absence of Social Capital

Social disorganization theory explains the breakdown of community stability and order. Social disorder results from low levels of community social organization (Skogen, 1990). Said another way, low levels of the core elements of social capital—trust, norms of reciprocity, closure, and formal/informal social control lead to social disorder, and vice versa (Aneshensel and Sucoff 1996). Social disorder is inversely related to social capital because disorder limits a community’s ability to realize its community objectives and maintain formal/informal social control (Bursik 1988; Kornhauser 1978; Markowitz et al. 2001; Sampson and Groves 1989). Ross and Jang (2000) reported that “community residents who see lots of disorder are more likely to mistrust each other than those who live in communities characterized by social control and order” (409). Also, Sampson and colleagues (1997) demonstrated that in urban areas of Chicago the residents of more disorganized communities felt less trusting and reported lower levels of community cohesion and fewer supportive social networks.

Geis and Ross (1998) point out that individuals residing in poor communities also experience greater levels of community disorder than residents of non-poor communities. Moreover, communities characterized by residential instability, high concentrations of poverty, economic decline, and many single parent families are more likely to have low levels of formal/informal social control and high levels of social disorder (Ross 2000; Sampson 2003; Sampson et al. 1997; Wilson 1987, 1996).
Rather than using the negative concept of neighborhood social disorganization, I have chosen to focus on social capital at two different levels within the neighborhood or community. By using social capital instead of social disorganization, results will likely point to solutions. Social capital is an asset-based concept, while social disorganization connotes deficiencies.

**Wilkinson’s Field Theory**

Wilkinson’s (1970) Field Theory is based on the premise that a social field is an interactional property of a community—and this social field represents a community’s social existence. However, this whole is not static but is always in the process of social change (Wilkinson 1970; Yinger 1965). The social field also represents the networks of social interactions that contain and integrate various community interests in a local society that would otherwise remain unconnected (Wilkinson 1970). For instance, all fields are contained within their parent social field. One thing that all fields have in common is that they rely on social interactions among community members for the active day-to-day maintenance of their local social structure (Wilkinson 1991). Any field present in the larger social field consists of interconnections among actions. Wilkinson (1970) states:

As a whole the social field differs from the sum of its elements; and the difference, as in any whole (or system), is due to part-whole integration (Holzner 1967). The social field, although unbounded, emerges in social interactions as the acts of people come to be interrelated. The whole formed by these interrelated acts then becomes an influence on subsequent acts. This idea of a field as an emergent whole that influences its components has been used in many scientific disciplines to focus attention on dynamic interaction processes (p. 88).

I focus on two fields contained within its parent social field; these are the community field level which I measure with community social capital and a social field level within the community which I measure with organizational social capital. These two fields are central to the development of the geographic community (Wilkinson 1970, 1991).
Wilkinson (1970, 1991) theorizes that an important level of social field is the community field. A community field represents the broad “interconnections among actions which express the common interests of the local population” (Wilkinson 1979: 8; my italics). In my study, I conceptualize the community field to represent community social capital through trust, norms of reciprocity, closure, and formal/informal social control. Community social capital at the community-field level represents the interests that community members share (Wilkinson 1970).

Wilkinson (1970, 1991) also theorizes that social fields that express different group interests within the community are a second important set of elements related to a community’s development. There could be many different social fields present within a community and seldom is there only one specialized social field.

I chose organizational social capital as my specialized social field of interest. Organizational social capital is composed of formal/informal groups that are maintained by special interests and/or friendships. Organizational social capital is a specialized social field that conveys the presence of special interest groups that emerge through social networks and membership in those groups. Also, friendship ties with others are a form of social network (Sampson 1988) and this constitutes another type of specialized social field.

Introducing social capital at two different field levels facilitates measurement of these fields and the testing of hypotheses regarding their independent and joint contributions to other relevant variables.

To summarize, Wilkinson (1991) conceptualizes community as more than territorial space but as a site that involves local interactions among community members at these two different field levels. These local interactions are sustained by stable communities where
members spend time in their place of residence and get to know the community and its members whom they call neighbors (Logan and Spitze 1994).

LITERATURE RELEVANT TO THE SPECIFIC MODEL TO BE TESTED

Residential Stability Defined

Following Figure 1 in Chapter One, I will now discuss the conceptual model from left to right. Residential stability is a structural characteristic of communities and should be measured at the community level. Sampson and colleagues (1999) defined residential stability as the product of community members’ time and effort in building community cohesion, because of their investment to it through high percentages of home ownership in the neighborhood. Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn (2003) operationalize residential instability as a high frequency of migration into or out of the neighborhood, a large percentage of homeowners who have not stayed in their current home more than 10 years, and a high percentage of renters who live in a designated block group area. Jargowsky (1997) states that community-level economic disadvantage is represented by a high number of housing vacancies in the area.

Two key structural characteristics of residential stability include length of residence and home ownership. Length of residence is important to community members’ well-being (Markowitz et al. 2001). Home ownership indicates that residents have a large investment in their communities, which encourages interaction among neighbors (Farrell et al. 2004).

Scholars have increasingly recognized the impact of residential stability on a community’s social infrastructure (Ross et al. 2000; Sampson 1988; Sampson 2001a, 2001b; Stack 1974; Wilson 1996). Social infrastructure holds a community together and allows its residents to act on behalf of its members (Flora and Flora 1993). Community members who
live in a residentially stable neighborhood are likely to have greater ties to their place of residence.

_Residential Stability and Community Social Capital_

Residential stability is a structural antecedent of community social capital (Sampson 1991). Shaw and McKay's (1942) research brought attention to the importance of residential stability for building community resources.

A community's social capital represents a vital resource in the everyday lives of its members. As a community resource, residential stability supports community social organization, which enables cohesive relationships between community members through trust, norms, closure and formal/informal social control (Sampson 1988; Sampson 2001a, 2001b).

Additionally, residential stability encourages shared values, norms, and trust (Markowitz et al. 2001; Shaw and McKay 1942). Also, residents who live in stable communities are more likely to monitor children's social behavior and intervene when they spot delinquent behavior in youth. This type of collective monitoring and intervention by neighboring adults is associated with residential stability (Coleman 1988, 1990; Ingoldsby and Shaw 2002; Sampson 1993; Sampson 2001b).

Community social organization is part of the community social infrastructure. This infrastructure is strengthened as a result of the number of years members have lived in the community and by high rates of home ownership status. Low residential turnover increases levels of formal/informal social control. Residents are more likely to know and watch out for each other (Sampson 1991; Tigges et al. 1998).
Residential Stability and Organizational Social Capital

Length of residence and home ownership are strong predictors of social networks (Logan and Spitz 1994). Residential stability is important for community members’ networking ties (Sampson 1988, 1991; Sampson 2001b). Perkins and Long (2002) argue that home ownership and length of residence are associated with greater participation in community organizations.

Residentially unstable communities often have less organizational social capital than stable neighborhoods (Sampson 2001b). Jewell (2003) explains that individuals who are frequent movers are unable to establish long-term relationships with other community members, which in turn greatly diminishes community organizational capacity. Also, community organizations are difficult to establish when residents plan to leave their community as soon as possible (Bursik and Grasmick 1993).

On the other hand, communities that are residentially stable should have higher levels of organizational social capital (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974) because “residential stability stimulates social interaction between neighbors” (Greer 1962: 113). Research by Taylor (1996) suggests that residential stability minimizes community social disorder and thereby sets the tone for organizational networks to occur within a community. Crenson (1983) surveyed 21 Baltimore neighborhoods and found local organizational involvement to be more likely among longer-term residents than among more recent arrivals. The motivation to form organizations or groups within a community is greatly reduced if community residents witness high community resident population turnover or know that their neighbors are not going to stay in the community for very long (Freudenberg 1986).
Incorporating Social Capital into Field Theory at Two Levels

Wilkinson’s (1970, 1991) field theory consists of complexes of social interaction called social fields. The community field represents the collective interests of a community’s residents while other specialized social fields within the community represent particular interests. These two field levels have interconnecting properties which may lead to their integration.

Community Social Capital and Field Theory

Community social capital represents the community field that brings together the common interests of all individuals within a particular community. The community field incorporates the collective interests of the community (Wilkinson 1970). Members rely on this generalized field to protect their collective interests and sustain the institutional structure of their community. The community field is “highly structured in the cultural sense, even institutionalized” (Wilkinson 1970: 318). The community field is applicable to all community members and it does not require the attention of particular social networks in the community. Instead, this type of social field is part of the institutional arrangements that a community sets forth regardless of the individual interests and social networks with which community members affiliate. Wilkinson (1970) argues that the community field represents an interactive space that all members share and it “is not a component or subfield in the sense that systems are said to have subsystems” (p. 320). Thus, the community field level represents the common arrangements and agreements that all community members abide by regardless of factions and specialized interests that exist among members’ social networks (Wilkinson 1970). Although Wilkinson (1970, 1991) discusses the community field in an elegant fashion, he does not offer suggestions about how to measure it. I have chosen
community social capital as a concept that makes the community field concrete and allows one to measure the strength of the community field. The institutional structure of a community is held together through trust, norms of reciprocity, closure and formal/informal social control which encourage cooperative relationships (Coleman 1988).

Relationships within communities also lead to special interest fields (Wilkinson, 1970). I address one special-interest social field, organizational social capital, which is more amenable to measurement than is social field per se.

Organizational Social Capital and Field Theory

As specialized social fields do not necessarily add up to the community field, organizational social capital within the community may not contribute to higher community social capital. Community members could maintain high levels of organizational attachment with many networks and friends and still fail to strengthen community social capital and further common community development goals (Flora 1998; Kingston 1999; Sampson 2001b). Although this specialized social field does not necessarily extend to the larger community field, it can benefit the lives of community members, but perhaps in different ways than does community social capital.

Formal and informal participation in community organizations involves the social integration of residents into the community (Bursik 1988; Kasarda & Janowitz 1974; Sampson and Groves 1989; Simcha-Fagan and Schwartz 1986). Sharp’s (1998) research in three Midwestern communities showed that the level of community social capital in one’s place of residence does not influence one’s organizational activity on behalf of community action, but it does influence community members’ perceptions of their collective efficacy in acting for community betterment. Thus, social capital at each level benefits community
members’ lives. I will turn next to the influence of social capital on the psychological well-being of community residents.

**Psychological Well-Being Defined**

Ryff (1989) suggests that psychological well-being consists of multiple components including self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, purpose in life, personal growth and environmental mastery. I will focus on Ryff’s (1989) environmental mastery component. Community members with high levels of mastery and personal control believe that they are in control of their future and capable of addressing personal adversity (Pearlin and Skaff 1996).

Cutrona and colleagues (2000) have documented associations between community social cohesion and mastery. In turn, feelings of control are associated with a range of adaptive behaviors (Mirowsky and Ross 1989). A sense of mastery and personal control over life is the most frequently examined coping resource in the sociological literature (Mirowsky and Ross 1989, 1990; Pearlin 1981; Thoits 1995). An impressive number of studies show that mastery and a sense of personal control both directly reduce psychological disturbance and buffer the deleterious effects of stress on mental illness (Kessler et al. 1988; Mirowsky and Ross 1990; Rodin 1986; Rosenfield 1989; Turner and Noh 1988).

**Community Social Capital and Psychological Well-Being**

Humans have always depended on cohesive and well-integrated communities for their psychological well-being (Durkheim 1897; Fitzpatrick and LeGory 2000; Putnam 2000; Sartorius 2003; Scheufele and Shah 2000). Sampson’s (2001b) research shows community trust, closure, and formal/informal social control as positively correlated with community members’ efficacy, which is closely related to mastery. Sampson (1991) finds that higher
levels of community member satisfaction are related to cohesive relationships and this contributes to psychological well-being (Riger and Lavarakas 1981). Also, Ross and Jang (2000) concur that high levels of formal/informal social control positively affect residents' psychological well-being. Coleman (1988, 1990), Portes (2000), and Shaw and McKay (1942) emphasized the importance of community ties in fostering community members' psychological well-being. Supportive ties among neighbors serve as a psychological resource even when economic pressures are present (House et al. 1988).

Little research has been done on how social capital per se influences psychological well-being (Lin et al. 1986). More research links psychological distress to community disorder (Aneshensel and Sucoff 1996; Cutrona et al. 2000; Ross 2000). Psychological distress has been linked to low levels of social capital among residents in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan communities (Christie-Mizell et al. 2003). Geis and Ross (1998) found that dwelling in urban neighborhoods characterized by social disorder, which is negatively associated with social capital, contributes to a lack of personal sense of control.

Organizational Social Capital and Psychological Well-Being

Social networks encourage community residents' integration which promotes psychological well-being (Durkeim 1933). Thus, participation in community organizations positively affects psychological well-being (Kawachi and Berkman 2001). Community members benefit from the social integration that takes place in these social networks even during periods of stress (Kawachi and Berkman 2001) and negative life events (Cattel 2001).

Community members' organizational involvement provides opportunities for community members to support each other through various community social networks (Sampson 1988; Yancey and Eriksen 1979). This type of social support affects the well-
being of community members (Cutrona et al. 2000). For instance, the Black church is a very significant institution in the African-American community and affects psychological well-being (Jewell 2003). Moreover, organizational involvement has been an important ingredient in the development of self esteem in many African-American women. For instance, their involvement in the Black church has fostered supportive relationships with other community members which positively influences their outlook on life (Peterson 1992). “African-American women also play an active role in constructing cohesive communities which confer additional mental health benefits on women with a positive outlook” (Cutrona et al. 2000:1099).

**Parenting Quality**

*Parenting Quality Defined*

Past research on parenting has indicated that effective parenting includes parent-child relationships that are warm and affectionate, careful monitoring of the child’s behavior, and consistent disciplinary strategies (Kotchick et al. 2005). Research evidence from a range of studies on parenting behavior also confirms that effective parents are warm, supportive, engage in monitoring and supervision, use inductive reasoning to explain rules and avoid harsh explosive punishment (Brody et al. 2001; Conger et al. 1992; Maccoby 1992; McLoyd 1990; Murry et al. 2002; Simons et al. 1997).

*African-American Parenting*

African-American mothers most often reside in communities that are disadvantaged and unsafe for children. Also, African-American families are 10 times more likely than European American families to live in urban communities where at least 30% of the residents are poor (Duncan et al. 1994). African-American families also live in communities with
disproportionate levels of crime and violence (Sampson et al. 1997). Even middle class African-American mothers face concerns of protecting their children from environmental contexts that negatively stereotype and label African-American youth (Simons et al. 2002b). Community dangers and delinquent behavior present in communities play an important role in how African Americans parent their children (Mason et al. 1996).

Past research on parenting of youth was based on the premise that children in urban areas will most likely be exposed to or engage in delinquent activities at some point in their adolescent years (Brody et al. 1998, 1999, 2001; Huizinga et al. 1991 McLoyd et al. 1994; Murry et al. 2002; Sampson 1997a, 1997b). Research by Huizinga and colleagues (1991) demonstrates those African-American parenting qualities that support children within these types of environments. I use several of these parenting indicators described above in my study, specifically parental monitoring, problem solving, inductive reasoning, and positive reinforcement. I suggest that these parenting quality indicators are appropriate for the specific environmental risks that confront African-American children (Brody et al. 2001; Conger et al. 1992; Murry et al. 2001; Simons et al. 1997, 2002a, 2002b).

A variety of research findings confirm that when studying parenting behavior one must consider the broader context in which adults rear their children (Abell et al. 1996). Parents’ normative beliefs about how to raise their children are influenced by the social environment in which they live and the characteristics of their communities (Caughby et al. 2001).

Research on African-American mothers’ parenting quality can be traced back to the Moynihan (1965) report which focused on improving the child rearing practices of Black mothers. There is still considerable debate in the parenting literature regarding whether
commonly used parenting measures that have been used to assess European families, operate in African-American families in the same way (Garcia et al. 1995; Kotchick et al. 1997). Duncan and Aber (1997) argue that African-American families have community experiences that differ dramatically from those of their European-American counterparts. Researchers who typify African-American parenting as being cold and harsh when compared to European parents (Klebanov et al. 1994; Pinderhughes et al. 2000) are viewing African-American parents' way of disciplining their children through a Eurocentric lens (Bluestone and Tamis LeMonda 1999). African Americans' parenting style is distinct in part because it responds to children's exceptional social environments and this group's historical experiences with oppression.

**Community Characteristics, Social Capital and Parenting Quality**

Recent theories of socialization place parenting in the context of the cultures and communities in which socialization occurs (Brody et al. 2001; Collins et al. 2000; Dishion & McMahon 1998; Dorsey & Forehand 2001; Meloyd 1990; Sampson 1992; Super and Harkness 1986). Research to date has focused on community factors that are disadvantageous for parents. Currently, there is a need to develop an understanding of community characteristics that facilitate positive parenting qualities (Furstenberg et al. 1999; Seidman et al. 1998), with a focus on the community as a resource for strengthening parenting (Furstenberg 2001). Specifically, more research is needed to examine how social capital facilitates parenting quality (Dorsey and Forehand 2003).

There is considerable literature on communities' influence on parenting, which makes it important to examine community characteristics (Coulton et al. 1995, 1996; Furstenberg and Hughes 1997; Turner et al. 1997). Parenting strategies are most likely influenced by
several community attributes, including the degree of community safety, a community’s social cohesiveness and the availability of institutional resources (Eccles et al. 1993). Communities are primary sites for socialization and social support (Coulton 1997). Mothers who are socially integrated into their communities are connected to each other (Massey and Denton 1993). These connections between mothers facilitate important resources such as the socialization of their children.

Parental awareness of community surroundings is critical particularly in impoverished and dangerous community settings. Parents who are more aware of their community surroundings are influenced to stay connected to other parents in the community which increases the likelihood of better quality parenting (Furstenberg 1993).

Studies that examine parenting outcomes, such as parenting quality, as a product of community social environments show mixed results. For instance, Armistead and colleagues (2002) report that mothers who reside in metropolitan areas recognize that their children are at greater risk for problem behavior and as a result monitor their children more than they do in non-metropolitan, rural community environments. This would appear to be a positive effect of negative community characteristics on parenting quality. Brody and colleagues (2001) reported that the relation of positive parenting and collective socialization was strongest in the most disadvantaged communities. Wilson (1991) found that socially disorganized communities have a much stronger impact on parenting quality. Thus, parents in economically disadvantaged communities, those with low levels of community social capital, will have to work harder at parenting than parents who reside in affluent communities (Coleman 1990; Jencks and Mayer 1990; Simons et al. 1997; Wilson 1987, 1996). On the other hand, Klebanov and colleagues (1994) found that community-level
economic disadvantage negatively affects parenting behavior. Simons and colleagues (1997) also found that community social disorganization, when accompanied by high levels of community-level economic disadvantage, negatively influences parenting quality.

Research supports the fact that community characteristics influence parenting quality (Bronfenbrenner 1986; Coulton et al. 1995; Deccio et al. 1994; Garbarino and Sherman 1980; Klebanov et al. 1994). However, the process by which a community affects parenting behaviors is starting to attract the interest of scholars who link the effects of community social environment to a variety of parenting influences (Simons et al. 2002a, 2002b, 2004; Wickrama and Bryant 2003).

**Community Social Capital and Parenting Quality**

Sampson (1992, 2001b) defines community social capital as a combination of trust, norms of reciprocity, closure and formal/informal social control whereby community members monitor youth and enforce acceptable behavior. When parents know the parents of their children’s friends, they are able to observe each others’ children in various social settings, talk to each other about their children, interrupt negative behavior in their neighbors’ children when they spot it, and get other parents’ perspectives on how to establish norms and rules for their children to follow. This community closure is an example of parents utilizing social capital to positively affect their parenting effectiveness (See Coleman 1988, 1990; Furstenberg and Hughes 1997; Sampson 2001b; Sampson et al. 1999; Simons et al. 2004 for other examples).

Jencks and Mayer (1990) highlight the role of collective socialization as an asset to child rearing. Parents who live in socially cohesive communities are better able to foster a collective approach to rearing children (Jencks and Mayer 1990; Shaw and Mckay 1942;
Wilson 1987). Thus, high levels of trust, norms, closure and formal/informal social control encourage collective monitoring and sanctioning of disorderly behavior (Sampson 2001b). Parents are thereby encouraged to cooperate with each other to provide safe community environments for children, which in turn affects their parenting quality (Simons et al. 2004).

When parents live in communities that establish norms that reinforce each others’ expectations of children through community closure and formal/informal social control, relations among parents are stronger and their position as parents is strengthened (Coleman 1990). Within the African-American community, neighbor-to-neighbor closure and formal/informal social control of children is an invaluable resource to parents, especially those who live in troubled communities (Jencks and Mayer 1990; Wilson 1987, 1996).

**Organizational Social Capital and Parenting Quality**

The presence of formal/informal social and interpersonal networks in a neighborhood can promote increased social connection with others and provide important support for positive parenting (Sampson 1992). Furthermore, formal/informal networks among residents are established through group participation. These networks appear important for enhancing the ability of community residents to parent (Crittenden 1985; Hashima and Amato 1994; Jennings et al. 1991). Networks established by parents to secure closure and formal/informal social control, for the safety of their children, are examples of organizational social capital (Coleman 1988; Sampson 1992).

Friendships with others in the community and group membership are important resources for African-American mothers (Barnes 2003). Social ties among African-American mothers in a particular place are important to their identity as parents (Magdol 2000). This support has been vital to helping African-American mothers (Billingsley 1992;
Burton 1990; McAdoo 1981) and has indirectly affected their ability to be effective parents (Jewell 2003).

In summary, both community and organizational social capital affect parenting quality (Kotchick and Forehand 2002). Parents who interact with others in the community, engage in social networks, and rely on cohesive community structures for the collective socialization of their young will likely be better parents than those who are socially isolated (Furstenberg 1993).

**Psychological Well-Being and Parenting Quality**

There is support in the literature for a link between mothers’ psychological well-being and parenting quality (McLoyd et al. 1994; Murry et al. 2001). Brody and Flor (1997) found that maternal self-esteem encouraged positive parenting practices. Maternal self-esteem and perceptions of self-efficacy have been found to predict specific aspects of parenting behavior in both rural and urban single-parent Black families (Brody & Flor 1997; Brody et al. 1999; Caldwell and Koski 1997; Taylor et al. 1997). Mothers with more optimistic outlooks are more involved parents (Brody and Flor 1997; Brody et al. 1999).

Murry and colleagues (2002) found that maternal psychological well-being was linked to positive parenting behavior, including high parental monitoring, problem solving and inductive reasoning. Also, Jones and colleagues (2003) report that mothers who had lower levels of depressive symptoms practiced higher levels of parental monitoring and effectively managed other parenting activities with their children.

Boardman and Robert’s (2000) research indicates that community members who display high levels of self-efficacy, which is related to mastery, are more likely to participate in activities that require ability and effort, both of which foster high-quality parenting.
The Mediating Role of Psychological Well-Being

Research by Aneshensel and Sucoff (1996) indicate that community social capital between neighbors that fosters social cohesion, an aspect of community social capital, decreases social disorder, making parents less susceptible to depression. A related study of economically disadvantaged African-American families has demonstrated that social support from friends within the community, a type of organizational social capital, enhanced maternal psychological well-being and self-esteem, which led to more effective parenting practices (Simons et al. 1993; Taylor and Roberts 1995). Also, social ties with others in the community, a type of organizational social capital which promotes cohesive relationships between neighbors, influences parenting through maternal psychological well-being (Simons et al. 1993). Among-African-American parents dealing with financial strain and residing in economically-disadvantaged communities, higher levels of parental psychological well-being positively mediated the relationship between community and organizational social capital and parenting quality (Elder et al. 1995).

Socio-Demographic Correlates of Constructs

Based on the model shown in figure 1, I will now describe how the control variables are correlated with my main study variables, residential stability, community and organizational social capital, psychological well-being and parenting quality. These socio-demographic control variables at the community level are community-level economic disadvantage, state of residence, metropolitan status, and percent of residents that are Black. Socio-demographic control variables identified as important at the individual level are family financial strain, parent’s education, age, and marital status.
Community-Level Economic Disadvantage

Research by Ross and colleagues (2000) confirms that residents who live in poor stable neighborhoods are more likely to depend on each other for social resources than residents who are poor and highly mobile. However, residential stability among poor residents may not yield positive benefits because poverty breeds social disorder and mistrust which leads to a host of other problems for community members (Jencks and Mayer 1990; Massey and Denton 1993; Ross and Jang 2000; Ross et al. 2001, 2002; Wilson 1987, 1996). Poor residents also face community-level economic disadvantage which influences community social disorder that in turn weakens a community’s social capital at both levels (Ross 2000).

Community-level economic disadvantage may undermine community social control (Bursik 1988; Sampson and Groves 1989; Shaw and Mckay 1942). Community social capital is weaker in economically disadvantaged communities. Fewer job opportunities, low levels of trust, social isolation and community disorder are common problems that plague these types of community environments (Jencks and Mayer 1990; Sampson and Groves 1989; Wilson 1987, 1996). Massey (1996) argues that high concentrations of poverty in urban areas contribute to the loss of formal/informal social control among residents.

Low-income metropolitan communities typically are characterized by high rates of unemployment, crime, single parent households, and mobility, as well as little cohesion and support among neighbors (Corcoran & Chandry 1997; McLoyd 1998; Sampson 2001b; Wilson 1987, 1996). Therefore, community-level economic disadvantage is associated with fewer community resources, which in turn reduce the social capital available to community
members (Boardman and Robert 2000; Stark 1987). This phenomenon occurs in smaller non-metropolitan communities as well as large metropolitan areas (Simons et al. 1997).

Furstenburg and colleagues (1999) found that in disadvantaged metropolitan communities, there were fewer expectations of adult participation in the social control of children. Parents were less trusting in the ability of other community adults to safely care for their children and were more likely to restrict the level of interaction between residents and their children. In fact, high levels of concentrated poverty create conditions that isolate residents, provide lower levels of community social organization and formal/informal social control over youth (Wilson 1987, 1996). In sum, community-level economic disadvantage circumvents trust and norms of reciprocity and weakens formal/informal social networks within a community (Elliot et al. 1996; Ross et al. 2001; Shaw and Mckay 1942; Wilson 1991). Moreover, structurally disadvantaged communities lack the social infrastructure necessary to sustain sturdy social networks that support the vitality of various community organizations (Berkman and Breslow 1983).

High poverty communities create disadvantages for African Americans (Wilson 1987) by decreasing their access to various social resources that facilitate community and organizational social capital. Research by Massey and Denton (1993) and Tigges and colleagues (1998) shows that poor African Americans experience more social isolation due to the interrelatedness of race, class and community-level economic disadvantage.

Wilson’s (1996) and Boardman and Robert’s (2000) research links community-level economic disadvantage to community members’ sense of hopelessness and low self-efficacy. Similarly, Geis and Ross (1998) discovered a link between community social disorder and lowered levels of personal control by individual community members. In both situations,
African-American mothers have limited psychological resources to overcome poverty and related economic and environmental stressors (Mitchell and LaGory 2002).

Community-level economic disadvantage undermines positive parenting (Dorsey and Forehand 2003; Pinderhughes et al. 2001; Wilson 1996). Parents who live in impoverished communities are less likely to have social networks that assist them with parenting (Levanthal & Brooks-Gunn 2000).

Poor mothers face many challenges in rearing children in high poverty areas (Klebanov et al. 1997). Past research has shown that parents who live in impoverished communities provide inadequate monitoring for children (Patterson et al. 1992), use harsh discipline and show less parental warmth (Conger 1984; Jarrett 1997; McLoyd 1990; Simons et al. 1997; Straus and Gelles 1990). Parents in disadvantaged communities are more socially isolated and have fewer social ties (Brody et al. 2001; Sampson et al. 1997), which diminishes trust, norms, closure and formal/informal social control. This leaves parents with an increased responsibility to socialize their children (Beyers et al. 2003). Such socialization is more restrictive because of the community environmental circumstances in which children live (Furstenberg 1993; Kotchick and Forehand 2002).

In summary, there is abundant evidence that community-level economic disadvantage affects many of the concepts deemed important for this study and should therefore be introduced as a control variable.

Metropolitan Status

Among metropolitan and non-metropolitan African-American families, community-level economic disadvantage is considered to have a negative affect on social capital, psychological well-being, and parenting. Metropolitan status among participants of this
study predisposed them to many of the same conditions that affect urban central-city metropolitan neighborhoods (Simons et al. 1997; Wilson 1996). Community-level economic is proposed to have negative consequences for both large and small cities as well as rural areas with small resident populations (Falk 1993; Simons et al. 1997).

Percent Black

There is a protective effect of having more people in the community of the same racial and ethnic heritage, which positively affects these members’ psychological well-being (Reidpath 2003). On the other hand, other researchers indicate that racially heterogeneous communities have certain advantages such as the psychological well-being of its members. (Tweed 1990).

Klebanov and colleagues (1994) found that the percentage of Blacks in the community minimized the effects of other important community and family-level dynamics, one of which is family level financial strain. Thus, racial homogeneity could benefit this group’s access to community resources despite individual group members’ financial constraints (Stack 1974; Whitley and McKenzie 2005).

Family Financial Strain

Research by Elliot (2000) demonstrates that financial strain increases depression. In fact, financial strain was the strongest predictor of depression in Dressler’s (1985) study of African-American adults. Mcloyd and colleagues (1994) have emphasized that economic hardship has a negative effect on mothers’ mental health. Research by Brown and Harris (1978) shows that experiencing a negative life event, such as financial strain, increases vulnerability to depression which in turn reduces one’s ability to experience positive psychological feelings of mastery and optimism. On the other hand, studies of economically
distressed families show that perceived personal control contributes to competence, promoting parenting and disciplinary strategies (Sigel et al. 1992).

Past research suggests that financial strain is associated with poorer parenting (Conger et al. 1992, 1994, 2002; Elder et al. 1984, 1995; Lempers and Clark-Lempers 1997; McLoyd 1990; Mcloyd and Wilson 1992). Research by Conger and colleagues (1994) indicated that economic hardship and parental stress led to harsh parenting practices. A number of researchers have conducted studies whose findings point to an association between stressful life events, such as financial strain, and parenting quality (Ceballo and McLoyd 2002; Elder et al. 1984; McLoyd 1990, 1998; McLoyd et al. 1994; Wiley et al. 2002). In fact, the more likely single mothers were to report financial strain (e.g., difficulty paying bills), the more negatively they perceived their maternal role responsibilities (McLoyd 1990; Mcloyd et al. 1994). Single parenthood and financial strain usually occur within the context of community-level economic disadvantage and community social disorganization, both of which negatively affect parenting quality (Ross 2000; Wilson 1996).

**Marital Status**

In general, marriage protects African-American mothers against psychological distress (Kandel et al. 1985; Kessler and Essex 1982; Turner and Marino 1994). Demo and Acock (1996) demonstrated that single mothers, compared with married mothers, have lower levels of psychological well-being. This coincides with research by Wilson (1996) and Simons and colleagues (1997) who argue that single parenthood leads to more psychological distress because more often than not those mothers live in disadvantaged communities. Not only are single mothers more likely to live in disadvantaged communities but they are the least likely to be residentially stable (Magdol 2000).
Marriage has been associated with higher organizational participation (Jewell 2003). Also, African-American mothers who are married have higher levels of education and more social resources. These social resources are in part due to their organizational involvement through a range of social networks (Tigges et al. 1998).

**Parent's Education and Age**

Taylor’s research (1996) on residential stability indicates that African Americans with higher levels of education report more local community attachment and social involvement in networks. Previous research by Wilson and colleagues (1995) indicates that predictors of African-American mothers’ parenting quality include education and financial strain. Pinderhughes and colleagues (2001) found parents’ educational level to be positively related to appropriate disciplinary strategies for children. Additionally, African-American mothers with higher levels of education had higher levels of psychological well-being than mothers with less education (Klebanov et al. 1994). This, in turn, affects mothers’ child-rearing behaviors. Wilson and colleagues (1995) found that a positive direct relationship exists between mothers’ education and their child rearing behaviors.

Age is another individual socio-demographic characteristic that influences residents’ participation in organizations. Older residents more often participate in formal/informal organizations (Putnam 2000). This groups’ involvement in organizations is associated with their length of residence which has also been linked to greater community social capital (Sampson 1988, 1991).

As shown in Figure 1, theory and empirical evidence led me to examine the links between residential stability and social capital at both levels and to examine the influence of social capital on psychological well-being and parenting quality. Also, the relationship of
psychological well-being to social capital at both levels and to parenting quality is examined to determine if any mediation takes place in this model. Finally, the literature led me to identify potential socio-demographic control variables that are associated with the concepts in the model. Controlling for these variables provides a rigorous test of the hypothesized links between variables in the model.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

I used data from the Family and Community Health Study (FACHS; Grant # MH6266, Carolyn Cutrona, Principal Investigator), which is a multi-site longitudinal study of neighborhood, family and individual predictors of health and well-being among African-American families. Data for the study were collected in Iowa and Georgia from residents of rural farm communities, small towns, suburban areas and mid-sized urban areas. Large cities (i.e., Atlanta) were excluded in an effort to learn about African-American families who reside outside of major metropolitan areas. Although the regions from which participants were drawn differ from the large metropolitan urban centers in which many African Americans reside, there is an increasing resemblance between rural and urban environments in terms of crime, substance abuse and harsh living conditions (Helge 1990). Thus, many of the social problems found in the large metropolitan inner city that affect neighborhood social organization are becoming more common in rural and suburban areas as well.

A total of 897 African-American families with a 10 to 12 year old child were recruited for participation in this study. In the state of Iowa, 467 families participated and in the state of Georgia 422 families participated. My sample population includes a total of 759 African-American women from this sample, all primary caregivers for the target child (i.e., the parent with greatest responsibility for raising the child). I excluded cases in which a male was the child’s primary caregiver or the primary caregiver identified with a race other than African-American. Overall, 93% of the primary caregivers were female. The primary caregivers’ mean age was 37.10 years (SD = 8.18 years) with a range of 23 to 80 years.
Their educational levels ranged from less than high school (19%) to a graduate degree (3%); the mode was a high school diploma (41%).

United States Census Bureau block group areas (BGAs) were the basis for selecting neighborhoods from which to draw the sample. Using data from the 1990 census, BGAs were identified in Iowa and Georgia in which African-American Families made up 10% or more of the population and in which 20% to 100% of families with children lived below the poverty line. A wide range of income levels was sought, so communities with a wide range of mean socio-economic statuses (SES) were selected.

In Georgia, the researchers identified metropolitan and non-metropolitan BGAs in northeast Georgia excluding inner-city Atlanta, which met the criteria for racial composition and extent of poverty. BGAs were selected from small towns and suburban areas adjacent to Atlanta. Within each BGA, University of Georgia researchers identified community members who agreed to serve as liaisons between the researchers and neighborhood residents. These community liaisons compiled rosters of children within each BGA that met the sampling criteria. In addition to their own direct knowledge, the liaisons used information from parents, teachers, pastors, youth groups, and community organizations in compiling rosters. Families were then randomly selected from these rosters until the required number of families from each BGA had been recruited. Over 60% of the families contacted agreed to participate.

In Iowa, only BGAs in Waterloo (population 65,000) and Des Moines (population 193,000) met the sampling criteria. Potential participants were identified through the public schools in these BGAs. The schools provided names and addresses of all African-American students in the fourth through sixth grades, typically 10 or 11-year-olds. As in Georgia, over
60% of the families that were contacted agreed to participate. The total sample included families from 259 BGAs: 144 in Iowa and 115 in Georgia.

Most of the BGAs from which the sample was drawn included fewer than five participating families, making the use of hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) on separate BGAs difficult. Statistical tests were run to determine if multi-level modeling was necessary for this study. It was determined that such analysis was not called for and that OLS regression was more appropriate.

**Measures**

A copy of all measures can be found in Appendix A. The measure for *residential stability* was constructed using the 1990 United States Census Data. Four items were used to construct the measure of residential stability. These items were: (1) owner-occupied housing unit with mortgage, (2) owner-occupied housing unit with no mortgage, (3) occupied housing units, and (4) median year that inhabitants moved into the BGA. I computed the percent of owner-occupied homes in each respondent’s BGA by adding the number of owner-occupied housing units with mortgage to the number of owner-occupied units with no mortgage and dividing the sum of these two variables by the number of occupied housing units in the BGA. The proportion of owner-occupied homes is a good indicator of residential stability (Farrell et al. 2004; Jargowsky 1997; Leventhal and Brooks-Gunn 2003; Markowitz et al. 2001; Sampson et al. 1999). People who own their own homes have a greater stake in the community. The variable, median year that inhabitants moved in to the BGA, was included.

---

2 A statistical test for intraclass correlations revealed low cluster-level variance. Intraclass correlations were computed on the outcome variable, parenting quality. The community-level variance for parenting quality accounted for less than 1% of the total variance. A one-way anova was performed on parenting quality. The effect for BGA was not significant. Thus, multi-level analysis was not needed. Ordinary Least Squares Regression was used instead.
to create a more robust measure of residential stability. To convert this variable into a rough index of the median number of years residents had lived in the neighborhood at the time of the interview, which was conducted in 1997, I computed the difference between 1997 and the BGA median years in residence for each BGA. The standardized alpha coefficient for the two variables of percent owner-occupied housing and average length of residence was .79. Living in a residence for a long period of time and/or being surrounded by people who have long residential tenure adds to the stability of a community.

The social capital construct consisted of two levels. These two levels are community social capital and organizational social capital. These two levels of social capital are based on Kenneth Wilkinson’s (1970, 1991) Field Theory. Wilkinson’s (1970) social field consists of the community field which represents community social capital based on members’ general needs as they define these within a localized space. Also, one of Wilkinson’s (1970) social fields at the level of organizational social capital consists of specific social interactions by group members who share specific common interests. Confirmatory factor analysis verified the two-factor structure of the social capital items.

Community Social capital was composed of three subscales. The subscales included: Trust and Norms of Reciprocity, Closure, and Formal/Informal Social Control. The coefficient alpha for the total score across all three subscales was .64. The first subscale, Trust and Norms of Reciprocity, consisted of nine items. These items were based on Kenneth Wilkinson’s (1970) definition of community field. These items were taken from the Social Cohesion and Trust scale developed by Sampson and colleagues (1997). Items in the Trust and Norms of Reciprocity subscale include: (a) “This is a close knit neighborhood”; (b) “People around here are willing to help their neighbors”; and (c) “You can count on
adults in your neighborhood to watch out that children are safe and don’t get in trouble.” The alpha coefficient for this subscale was .87.

The second subscale, Closure, consisted of three items that are also based on Wilkinson’s (1970) definition of community field and were also taken from the Social Cohesion and Trust scale developed by Sampson and colleagues (1997). Items in the Closure subscale include: (a) “Parents in your neighborhood know their children’s friends”; (b) “Adults in your neighborhood know who the local children are”; and (c) “Parents in this neighborhood generally know each other.” The alpha coefficient for this subscale was .70.

The third subscale, Formal/Informal Social Control consisted of three items that were taken from the Social Cohesion and Trust scale developed by Sampson and colleagues (1997). Items in the Formal/Informal Social Control subscale include the following: (a) “If a group of neighborhood children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something like call the school or parents?”; (b) “If some children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it?”; and (c) “If a child was showing disrespect to an adult, how likely is it that people in your neighborhood would scold that child or tell the child’s parents?” The alpha coefficient for this subscale was .81.

Organizational Social Capital was measured by two items based on Wilkinson’s (1970) definition of this social field. The two items were written for the FACHS study. The alpha coefficient for this scale was .85. These two items are: (a) “Thinking of all the organizations, clubs or groups you belong to how often do you attend meetings or gatherings of these groups?”; and (b) “How many different groups do you belong to?”
To assess women’s psychological well-being I included two scales: the 8-item Life Orientation Test (LOT; Scheier & Carver 1985), which assesses optimism about the future and the 7-item Mastery Scale developed by Pearlin and colleagues (1981). Items on the Life Orientation Test Scale included: (a) “In uncertain times, you usually expect the best”; and (b) “You always look on the bright side of things.” Alpha Coefficient for this scale was .70. The Mastery Scale assesses perceived control over events in the person’s life. Items in the Mastery Scale included: (a) “You can do anything you really set your mind to”; and (b) “What happens to you in the future mostly depends on you.” Alpha Coefficient for this scale was .70. Previous analyses (Cutrona et al. 2000) showed that these two measures are highly correlated and load on a single factor. Thus they were combined into a single aggregate measure. Using Nunnally’s (1978) steps to calculate the reliability of a linear combination of measures, the reliability for the composite measure of psychological well-being was .74. Regarding validity, these two measures correlated positively with positive affectivity and negatively with distress (p < .01).

The parenting quality scale was derived from the items in four parenting subscales obtained from the literature. These include: Parental Monitoring, Problem Solving, Inductive Reasoning and Positive Reinforcement. The alpha coefficient for the 14 items was .76. (See Appendix A for all scale items.) Researchers have validated many of these items in combination or alone in studies involving parenting among African-American mothers (Brody et al. 2001; Huizinga 1991; McLoyd 1990; Murry et al. 2002; Simons et al. 1997, 2002a, 2004).

The first subscale, Parental Monitoring, consisted of four items taken from Thornberry and colleagues (1989). Items in the Parental Monitoring Subscale included: (a)
"How often do you know what your child does after school?"; and (b) "How often do you know where your child is and what he/she is doing?" Alpha coefficient for this subscale was .61.

The second subscale, Problem Solving, consisted of two items that were taken from Thornberry and colleagues (1989). Items in the Problem Solving Subscale included: (a) "How often do the same problems between you and your child come up again and again and never seem to get solved?" (negative indicator); and (b) "When you and your child have a problem, how often can the two of you figure out how to deal with it?" Alpha coefficient for this subscale was .41.

The third subscale, Inductive Reasoning, consisted of six items that were taken from Thornberry and colleagues (1989). Items in the Inductive Reasoning Subscale included: (a) "How often does your child talk to you about things that bother him/her?"; and (b) "How often do you ask your child what he/she thinks before deciding on family matters that involve him/her?" Alpha coefficient for this subscale was .73.

The fourth subscale, Positive Reinforcement, consisted of two items that were taken from Thornberry and colleagues (1989). Items in the Positive Reinforcement Subscale included: (a) "When your child has done something you like or approve of, how often do you let him/her know you are pleased about it?"; and (b) "How often do you give your child a reward like money or something else that he/she would like when he/she gets good grades, does his/her chores, or something like that?" Alpha coefficient for this subscale was .36.

I included eight control variables. To test my theoretical prediction that community residential stability influences social capital and other variables in the model, it was necessary to statistically control for other community characteristics that may influence
model variables. It was also necessary to control for characteristics of individuals that may affect the social capital available to them and other variables in the model. The control variables included: (1) community-level economic disadvantage, (2) residence in a metropolitan or non-metropolitan county (3) state of residence (Iowa or Georgia), (4) percent black (in the participant’s BGA), (5) marital status, (6) age, (7) education and (8) financial strain.

Two of these control variables came from the 1990 United States Census and were measured at the BGA level. These are: Community-Level Economic Disadvantage and percent black residents. Two dummy-coded variables were included and these are state of residence (Iowa=1, Georgia=2) and metropolitan or non-metropolitan status (Non-Metro=1, Metro=2) of the participant’s county of residence. Metropolitan versus non-metropolitan status of the county in which the participant resided was computed based on rural and urban continuum codes taken from the 1990 Census (Brown et al. 1975). These codes assessed the status of the county in which participants resided as being either metropolitan or non-metropolitan. Metropolitan areas consisted of large populations and included counties that were in close proximity to large metropolitan population areas whereas non-metropolitan areas included counties with smaller populations and those with no metropolitan areas nearby (Brown et al. 1975).

Community-Level Economic Disadvantage was computed based on five census variables. These are: per capita income, household income, proportion of persons on public assistance, proportion of households below the poverty level, and proportion of unemployed males. Researchers have used some combination of these to assess community level socio-
economic status (Sampson et al. 1997; Sucoff & Upchurch 1998). Each variable was standardized and the standard scores were averaged to create a composite score.

Percent Black residents of the participants’ BGA of residence were derived from the 1990 United States Census. The U.S. Census data for percent black reflected the percentage of self-defined blacks who lived within each study BGA.

Marital status, age and education were measured as follows: marital status reflected whether the respondent was married or not. Age was computed by asking the respondents: “What was your age on your last birthday?” Education was assessed with the question: “What is your highest level of education completed?” The response categories were (1) less than a high school diploma, (2) high school diploma or GED equivalent, (3) some college, AA, voc-tech, (4) bachelors degree or (5) advanced degree.

**Financial strain** was computed using four measures that were combined to form an index of perceived financial strain. The measures were developed by Conger and Elder (1994). Measures of financial strain included: (a) Unmet Financial Needs, which indicate specific needs that cannot be met due to financial hardship (e.g., “Not enough money to afford a home, clothing, food and or medical care”). Alpha coefficient for this four item scale was .84; (b) Can’t Make Ends Meet measures the general perception that financial resources are insufficient (e.g., “During the last 12 months, how much difficulty have you had paying your bills?”). Alpha coefficient for these two items was .71; (c) Financial Adjustments, which measures strategies that the family has used to deal with financial problems (e.g., “Postponed major household purchases, changed residences to save money, reduced or eliminated medical insurance, changed eating habits to save money, reduced household utilities to save money”). Alpha coefficient for this 11 item scale was .75; (d)
Negative Financial Life Events measures negative life events in the previous 12 months (e.g.,
"Cut in wages, layoff from work, evictions, items repossessed, fired from job, started
receiving government assistance, AFDC, SSI, food stamps"). Alpha coefficient for this 15
item scale was .55. Alpha coefficient for the total composite score of financial strain was .85
using Nunnally’s (1978) formula for calculating the reliability of a linear combination of
measures.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

In this chapter I will present descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations and distributions for all study variables. I will also present correlations among all study variables. In the text, I will first highlight correlations with community-level economic disadvantage. Community-level economic disadvantage is widely examined in the literature as a key variable in explaining community dynamics as well as structural and individual factors. Next, I will highlight correlates of the main variables of study (residential stability, community social capital and organizational social capital, psychological well-being and parenting quality) to provide an understanding of how these variables relate to each other and to the demographic control variables.

Regression analyses include the following: (1) predicting social capital from residential stability and controls; (2) predicting psychological well-being from the two social capital variables and controls; (3) predicting parenting quality from psychological well-being and controls; (4) predicting parenting quality from the two social capital variables and controls; (5) predicting parenting quality from psychological well-being, the two social capital variables and controls.

Descriptive Statistics

I calculated means, medians, standard deviations and ranges for all continuous study variables (see table 1). For measures that have been used in previous studies, I compared scores found in the current sample to scores reported in the literature by Cutrona and colleagues (2000), Markowitz and colleagues (2001), Simons and colleagues (1997, 2002b), Taylor (1996) and
Table 1. Means, Medians, Standard Deviations and Ranges for Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community-Level Economic Disadvantage</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td>-3.16-2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Black</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.00-100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>4.70-60.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Social Capital (Aggregate Score)</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.265</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>-2.62-.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust/Norms</td>
<td>.993</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.347</td>
<td>.20-1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>.841</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.286</td>
<td>.00-1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Social Control</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.777</td>
<td>1.00-4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Social Capital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Membership</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>.236</td>
<td>.925</td>
<td>-.99-3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>24.0-80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Strain</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>-1.35-2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being (Aggregate Score)</td>
<td>-.0148</td>
<td>-.143</td>
<td>.899</td>
<td>-2.97-2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.382</td>
<td>1.63-8.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.485</td>
<td>1.86-9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Quality (Aggregate Score)</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.369</td>
<td>1.96-4.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Monitoring</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>2.00-4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Problem Solving</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>1.00-6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Inductive Reasoning</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.555</td>
<td>1.00-4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Positive Reinforcement</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.551</td>
<td>1.50-4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Beyers and colleagues (2003). My findings were similar to those scores reported in the literature.

I calculated the distributions for categorical variables (See table 2). Slightly more than half of the participants in my study subsample resided in Georgia. Most participants (79%) resided in metropolitan counties. Most participants were not married (66%). The modal level of education was a high school diploma or GED (43%). Twenty percent had less than a high school degree; 29% had some college or a two year degree and 9% had a Bachelor’s or advanced degree.

Table 2. Categorical Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metropolitan Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Metropolitan</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Married</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School or GED</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, Two Year Degree</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Degree</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Correlates of Study Measures

Zero order correlations were computed among all variables used in the regression analyses. The overall correlation matrix can be found in Table 3. Correlates of key study variables will be highlighted next. Residential stability was higher among participants who resided in non-metropolitan areas \((r = -0.367, p < .01)\), in Georgia \((r = 0.101, p < .01)\), in communities with a higher percentage of black residents \((r = 0.086, p < .05)\), married study participants \((r = 0.181, p < .01)\), older study participants \((r = 0.094, p < .05)\), study participants with more education \((r = 0.082, p < .05)\) and less financial strain \((r = -0.148, p < .01)\). (See Table 3.)

Turning next to social capital, communities high on community social capital were lower on community-level economic disadvantage \((r = -0.078, p < .05)\), non-metropolitan \((r = -0.125, p < .05)\), located in Georgia \((r = 0.115, p < .01)\), had a higher percentage of married participants \((r = 0.103, p < .01)\), older participants \((r = 0.124, p < .01)\), participants with lower financial strain \((r = -0.198, p < .01)\) and higher levels of residential stability \((r = 0.198, p < .01)\). The educational level of respondents and percent black in the BGA were unrelated to community social capital. (see Table 3.)

Moving forward to organizational social capital, communities high on organizational social capital were more often in the State of Iowa \((r = -0.133, p < .01)\), had higher percentages of married participants \((r = 0.237, p < .01)\), older study participants \((r = 0.179, p < .01)\), and participants with higher mean levels of education \((r = 0.290, p < .01)\). (See Table 3.)

Next, psychological well-being among the study participants was negatively correlated with community-level economic disadvantage \((r = -0.103, p < .01)\), and personal financial strain \((r = -0.235, p < .01)\) and positively correlated with being married \((r = 0.115, p < .01)\).
Finally, parenting quality among the study participants was negatively correlated with financial strain ($r = -0.146, p < 0.01$) and positively correlated with community social capital ($r = 0.171, p < 0.01$), organizational social capital ($r = 0.135, p < 0.01$) and psychological well-being ($r = 0.141, p < 0.01$). Interestingly, parenting quality was not significantly linked to any of the socio-demographic control variables except financial strain. (See Table 3.)

Community social capital, as indexed by trust/norms of reciprocity, closure, and informal social control and organizational social capital as indexed by group participation, represent two distinct levels of a community's social capital. The correlation between community social capital and organizational social capital was 0.088 ($p < 0.05$). (See Table 3.)

**Correlates of Community-Level Economic Disadvantage**

A strong correlation was found between community-level economic disadvantage and percent black residents ($r = 0.449, p < 0.01$) such that poor communities had higher percentages of black residents. State of residence correlated with the extent of community-level economic disadvantage. Iowa participants were more likely to live in poor communities than Georgia participants ($r = -0.184, p < 0.01$). Poor communities also had lower residential stability ($r = -0.383**, p < 0.01$), higher financial strain among study participants ($r = 0.137, p < 0.01$), lower mean education levels among study participants ($r = -0.252, p < 0.01$) and fewer married study participants ($r = -0.213, p < 0.01$). (See Table 3.)
Table 3. Zero Order Correlations among All Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community-Level Economic Disadvantage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>- .184**</td>
<td>- .486**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Black per BGA</td>
<td>.449**</td>
<td>- .203**</td>
<td>.260**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>- .213**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.024</td>
<td></td>
<td>- .077*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.078*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>- .252**</td>
<td>.143**</td>
<td>- .115**</td>
<td>- .152**</td>
<td>.212**</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Strain</td>
<td>.137**</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>- .151**</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.195**</td>
<td>- .076*</td>
<td>- .184**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>- .383**</td>
<td>- .367**</td>
<td>.101**</td>
<td>.086*</td>
<td>.181**</td>
<td>.094*</td>
<td>.082*</td>
<td>- .148**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Social Capital</td>
<td>- .078*</td>
<td>- .125**</td>
<td>.115**</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.103**</td>
<td>.124**</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>- .198**</td>
<td>.198*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Social Capital</td>
<td>- .016</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>- .133**</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.237**</td>
<td>.179**</td>
<td>.290**</td>
<td>- .033</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.088*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td>- .103**</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.115**</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.309**</td>
<td>- .235**</td>
<td>.073*</td>
<td>.128**</td>
<td>.224**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Quality</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>- .023</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>- .146**</td>
<td>- .027</td>
<td>.171**</td>
<td>.135**</td>
<td>.141**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (Standard Deviation)</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
**p < .01
***p < .001
Results of Hypotheses Testing

In the following section, I tested each hypothesis using multiple regression analysis. The socio-demographic variables were included in every regression as control variables. A conceptual model of the following hypotheses was presented in Figure 1 at the end of Chapter One.

Hypothesis 1: I hypothesized that high residential stability would be positively associated with community social capital, as indexed by trust/norms of reciprocity, closure and formal/informal social control among African-American mothers. All of the control variables (community-level economic disadvantage, metropolitan status, state, percent black, marital status, age, education, and perceived financial strain) were entered first into the regression equation predicting community social capital followed by residential stability.

As shown in Table 4, community social capital was significantly predicted by residential stability net of the socio-demographic control variables ($\beta=.161, p < .001$). Also, two socio-demographic variables were significant predictors of community social capital. Mother’s age ($\beta=.096, p < .01$) and mother’s financial strain ($\beta=-.148, p < .001$) were related to African-American mothers’ community social capital. Financial strain was negatively associated and age was positively associated with community social capital; no other socio-demographic control variables attained significance.

Hypothesis 2: It was hypothesized that residential stability would be positively associated with organizational social capital. Residential stability and all of the control variables (community-level economic disadvantage, metropolitan status, state, percent black, marital status, age, education, and perceived financial strain) were entered first into the regression equation predicting organizational social capital.
Table 4

Multiple Regression Predicting Community Social Capital (Trust/Norms of Reciprocity, Closure and Informal Social Control)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Disadvantage</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>-.056</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>-.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>-.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.096**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Strain</td>
<td>-.157</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>-.148***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theoretically Relevant Predictor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.161***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = .087 (R² Adjusted = .076), F (9,716) = 7.58, p < .001

*p <.05  
**p <.01  
***p <.001
As shown in Table 5, organizational social capital was not significantly predicted by residential stability net of the socio-demographic control variables. However, organizational social capital was predicted by three socio-demographic variables. Marital status ($\beta = .197$, $p < .001$), age ($\beta = .139$, $p < .001$) and education ($\beta = .255$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted organizational social capital. Women who were married, older, and more highly educated were more likely to participate in community organizations.

**Hypothesis 3:** It was hypothesized that social capital at both levels would be positively associated with psychological well-being among African-American mothers. Both social capital measures and all of the control variables (community-level economic disadvantage, metropolitan status, state, percent black, marital status, age, education, and perceived financial strain) were entered into the regression equation predicting psychological well-being.

As shown in Table 6, psychological well-being was significantly predicted by organizational social capital ($\beta = .149$, $p < .001$). However, contrary to prediction community social capital was only marginally significantly related to psychological well-being ($\beta = .069$, $p < .10$). Also, psychological well-being was predicted by two socio-demographic variables when all variables were in the equation. Education ($\beta = .235$, $p < .001$) and financial strain ($\beta = -.169$, $p < .001$) were significantly predictive of psychological well-being among African-American mothers. Residential stability was not significantly related to psychological well-being.

**Hypothesis 4:** It was hypothesized that psychological well-being would be positively associated with parenting quality among African-American mothers. All of the control variables (community-level economic disadvantage, metropolitan status, state, percent black,
Table 5

Multiple Regression Predicting Organizational Social Capital (Group Membership)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Disadvantage</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>-.039</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>-.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>-.205</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>-.111*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>.385</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.197***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.139***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.255***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Strain</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theoretically Relevant Predictor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² = .160 (R² Adjusted = .149), F (9, 716) = 15.145, p < .001

*p < .05
**p < .01
*** p < .001
Table 6

Multiple Regression Predicting Psychological Well-Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Disadvantage</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>-.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>-.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>-.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.235***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Strain</td>
<td>-.198</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>-.169***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theoretically Relevant Predictor(s)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Social Capital</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.040</td>
<td>.069+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Social Capital</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.149***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2 = .165$ (Adjusted $R^2 = .152$), $F_{(11,714)} = 12.787$, $p < .001$

$+ < .10$

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001
marital status, age, education, and perceived financial strain) were entered first into the regression equation predicting parenting quality followed by psychological well-being.

As shown in Table 7 Model 1, parenting quality was significantly predicted by Psychological well-being ($\beta = .138, p < .001$). Also, financial strain ($\beta = -.131, p < .001$) was significantly predictive of parenting quality among African-American mothers. Women with higher financial strain showed lower parenting quality.

**Hypothesis 5:** It was hypothesized that social capital at both levels would be positively associated with parenting quality among African-American mothers. All of the control variables (community-level economic disadvantage, metropolitan status, state, percent black, marital status, age, education, and perceived financial strain) were entered first into the regression equation predicting parenting quality. Next, social capital at both levels was entered together into the regression equation.

As shown in Table 7 Model 2, parenting quality was significantly predicted by community social capital ($\beta = .154, p < .001$) and by organizational social capital ($\beta = .132, p < .001$). Also, parenting quality was predicted by one socio-demographic variable when all variables were in the equation. Financial strain ($\beta = -.138, p < .001$) was significantly predictive of lower parenting quality among African-American mothers.

**Hypothesis 6:** It was hypothesized that the relationship between social capital at both levels and parenting quality would be mediated by psychological well-being among African-American mothers. To test mediation, it is necessary to conduct four regressions. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), to demonstrate that the first variable affects the third variable through the mediation of the second variable, it must be true that the first variable significantly predicts the second variable. It must also be true that the first variable predicts
the third variable. Finally, the second variable must significantly predict the third variable. Furthermore, the effect of the first variable on the third variable must decrease when the second variable is in the equation.

As shown in Table 6 organizational social capital significantly predicted psychological well-being and community social capital was a marginally significant predictor. As shown in Table 7 Model 2, social capital at both levels significantly predicted parenting quality. As shown in Table 7 Model 3, the relationship between community social capital and parenting quality only decreases slightly when psychological well-being is added to the regression equation. It is reduced from $\beta = .154 \ (p < .001)$ to $\beta = .146 \ (p < .001)$. Similarly, the relationship between organizational social capital and parenting is reduced only slightly from $\beta = .132 \ (p < .001)$ to $\beta = .116 \ (p < .001)$ when psychological well-being is added to the regression equation. It appears that the best way to conceptualize the pattern of results is to view psychological well-being and social capital at both levels as direct predictors of parenting quality. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Figure 2.

**Do Community Characteristics Influence Parenting?**

A final question to be addressed is the extent to which community and organizational social capital influences parenting quality, beyond the contribution of individual characteristics. As shown in Table 7 (Model 3), both community and organizational social capital retain significance in the prediction of parenting quality, beyond the effects of psychological well-being. Furthermore, when the two social capital variables are added to the regression equation (Table 7, Model 3), the explained variance in parenting quality increases significantly from .048 to .080, $F_{\text{change}}(2, 713) = 12.27, \ p < .001$. 
Table 7

Multiple Regressions Predicting Parenting Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficients</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Level Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Disadvantage</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>-.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>-.031</td>
<td>-.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Level Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>-.080+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Strain</td>
<td>-.131***</td>
<td>-.138***</td>
<td>-.120***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theoretically Relevant Predictors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Social Capital</td>
<td>.154***</td>
<td>.146***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Social Capital</td>
<td>.132***</td>
<td>.116***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td>.138***</td>
<td>.109***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model 1 $R^2 = .048$ (R$^2$ Adjusted = .035), $F (10, 715) = 3.64$, $p < .001$
Model 2 $R^2 = .07$ (R$^2$ Adjusted = .056), $F (11, 714) = 4.90$, $p < .001$
Model 3 $R^2 = .080$ (R$^2$ Adjusted = .065), $F (12, 713) = 5.18$, $p < .001$

$+ < .10; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001$
Figure 2. Standardized Beta Coefficients for Statistically Significant Relationships

RESIDENTIAL STABILITY

COMMUNITY SOCIAL CAPITAL

ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

PARENTING QUALITY

.161***

.146***

.069+

.149***

.109***

.116***
Table 8. Summary of significant findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Significant Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>Positively correlated with Community Social Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Social Capital</td>
<td>Marginally correlated with Psychological Well-Being and significantly correlated with Parenting Quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Social Capital</td>
<td>Positively Correlated with Psychological Well-Being and Parenting Quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td>Positively correlated with Parenting Quality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the above summary, the results are as follows: (1) residential stability significantly predicted community social capital but not organizational social capital; (2) organizational social capital is a significant contributor to psychological well-being while community social capital is only marginally related to psychological well-being; (3) community social capital, organizational social capital and psychological well-being each contributed independently to parenting quality; and (4) contrary to expectations, psychological well-being did not mediate the relationship between social capital measures and parenting quality.
CHAPTER FIVE:
DISCUSSION

This chapter will be organized around the study hypotheses. For each hypothesis, I will summarize the findings and place them in the context of prior relevant research. I will end with a discussion of study limitations and directions for future research.

Does Residential Stability Lead to Community Social Capital?

In my first hypothesis, I predicted that high residential stability would be positively associated with community social capital as indexed by trust, norms of reciprocity, closure and formal/informal social control among African-American mothers. Results showed that residential stability was a significant predictor of community social capital among African-American mothers. This is especially notable given the many control variables that were included in the equation. These include community-level economic disadvantage, metropolitan status, state, percent black, and, at the individual level, control variables included marital status, age, education and family financial strain. Communities with higher residential stability were rated by study participants as higher on trust, supportive and helpful interactions with neighbors, and willingness to monitor the behavior of each other's children. My results are consistent with those of other researchers, who found residential stability to be positively associated with social capital, (Coleman 1988, Sampson 1988, 1997, 2001b), trust, (Coleman 1988, 1990; Lochner et al. 1999; Putnam 1993b, 2000; Sampson et al. 1997) closure, (Burt 2005; Coleman 1988) and formal/informal social control (Coleman 1988; Sampson 1992, 2001b; Sampson et al. 1999). When people have lived in a community for many years with the same neighbors, they are more likely to develop trust, help each other in
times of need, know the parents of other children, and become involved in safeguarding the community.

In addition to residential stability, family financial strain was negatively correlated with community social capital, which means that poorer families see their communities as lacking characteristics that index community social capital and perhaps they have a harder time building community social capital than families that are not as financially distressed.

**Does Residential Stability Lead to Organizational Social Capital?**

In my second hypothesis, I predicted that high residential stability would be positively associated with organizational social capital as indexed by participation in groups, clubs and organizations among African-American mothers. Contrary to prediction, residential stability was unrelated to organizational social capital among African-American mothers. Only one community level variable, state of residence, significantly predicted organizational social capital. Participants in Iowa were more likely to be involved in organizations than those in Georgia. Results also suggested that characteristics of individual mothers were more likely to predict organizational involvement than characteristics of the community. Mothers who were married, older, and better educated were most likely to report organizational involvement.

Contrary to my findings, other researchers have found a link between residential stability and organizational social capital. Researchers have consistently argued that residential stability is important for community members' participation in groups and networking ties to flourish. Homeownership and length of residence have been associated with residents' participation in groups and social networks (Logan and Spitze 1994; Perkins and Long 2002; Sampson 2001b). Jewell (2003) and Sampson and colleagues (1999) argued
that residentially unstable communities create fewer opportunities for community members to become involved in groups and social networks with others. There is abundant research confirming the importance of residential stability to organizational involvement and social networks among community members (Bursik and Grasmick 1993; Crensen 1983; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Sampson and Groves 1989). On the other hand, Wellman (1979) argues that residential stability may not affect social networks and group membership among residents.

Researchers who found an association between residential stability and organizational social capital used measures that were slightly different from mine. Taylor (1996) emphasized friendships, acquaintances on the block and community involvement to indicate organizational social capital. Perkins and Long (2002) stressed civic participation in neighborhoods through block groups, advocacy committees and coalitions whereas Sampson (1988, 2001b) highlighted friendships and social networking ties among neighbors as the basis of organizational social capital. My measure of organizational social capital included belonging to groups, clubs and organizations inside and outside of the community. Thus, differences in how researchers operationalized this measure could account for different findings across studies.

Another explanation may be that involvement in groups, clubs or organizations depends on having the time to do so. Since more than 50% of the mothers in my sample did not have partners to help with daily responsibilities, this group may need to spend more time raising children and caring for the daily needs of their family and immediate community. Therefore, they have less time to participate in group-related activities.
The fact that residential stability predicted community social capital and not organizational social capital supports Wilkinson’s (1970) field theory that community development consists of different social fields. Findings based on these first two hypotheses confirm that delineating social capital by its field properties, community and organizational social capital, is appropriate. Residential stability, which is a characteristic of the community as a whole, seems to have a greater impact on residents’ perceptions of community-level social capital than on each resident’s participation in organizations or groups.

**Does Community and Organizational Social Capital Positively affect Psychological Well-Being among African-American Mothers?**

In my third hypothesis, I predicted that community and organizational social capital would be positively associated with psychological well-being among African-American mothers. Psychological well-being was operationalized as mastery and optimism. Results showed that community social capital marginally predicted psychological well-being whereas organizational social capital was a significant predictor of psychological well-being.

Although the association between community social capital and psychological well-being was not strong, it was in the predicted direction. This suggests that living in neighborhoods with norms of mutual assistance and help from others in the supervision of youth does contribute to women’s feelings of mastery and optimism. It is especially notable that community social capital was related to psychological well-being after controlling for community economic disadvantage. Thus, norms of helpfulness can evolve even in low-income neighborhoods. Furthermore, the relations of community social capital remained significant after controlling for women’s individual financial strain and family structure.

Organizational social capital was a significant predictor of psychological well-being. This is consistent with previous findings that participation in community organizations positively affects psychological well-being (Durkheim 1933; Kawachi and Berkman 2001). Residents who are members of groups, clubs, or organizations are more likely to engage in projects or tasks which encourage the development of skills and self-confidence (Cattel 2001). My findings showed that organizational involvement predicted well-being, even when controlling for mothers’ personal financial strain. One important community organization is the Black Church. Participation in church activities has been shown to buffer African-American women against distress (Jewell 2003). It is notable that high levels of financial strain among African-American mothers did not eradicate the positive benefits of organizational involvement on well-being.

African-American mothers with higher levels of education had higher levels of psychological well-being in my study. This is consistent with the work of Klebanov and colleagues (1994), who reported that mothers with higher levels of education also had higher
levels of psychological well-being than mothers with less education. Thus, individual
c Characteristics such as financial strain and mother’s level of education influence this group’s
psychological well-being in combination with the positive effects of organizational social
capital.

Again, a case for differentiating between community and organizational social capital
based on Wilkinson’s (1970) Field Theory approach is confirmed in that the levels of social
capital both made unique contributions to psychological well-being.

Is Psychological Well-Being Positively Associated with Parenting Quality among
African-American Mothers?

In my fourth hypothesis, I predicted that psychological well-being would be
positively associated with parenting quality among African-American mothers. Results
showed that psychological well-being was a significant predictor of parenting quality among
African-American mothers. Since parenting is a skill that involves effort, ability and task
management, having higher levels of psychological well-being in the form of self-mastery
and optimism encourages mothers to engage in quality parenting (Jones et al. 2003).

Researchers have consistently linked mothers’ psychological well-being to parenting
quality (Brody and Flor 1997; McLoyd et al. 1994; Murry et al. 2001). Also maternal self-
efficacy, which is related to the mastery construct, has been found to encourage positive
parenting practices among rural and urban inner city African-American mothers (Brody and
Flor 1997; Brody et al. 1999; Caldwell and Koski 1997; Simons et al. 1997; Taylor et al.
1997; Wilson 1996). Optimism among mothers has also been associated with parenting
quality (Brody and Flor 1997; Brody et al. 1999).
Are Community and Organizational Social Capital Positively Associated with Parenting Quality among African-American Mothers?

In my fifth hypothesis, I predicted that community and organizational social capital would be positively associated with parenting quality among African-American mothers. Results showed that both community and organizational social capital significantly predicted parenting quality. Parents who participate in groups, clubs and organizations have an opportunity to get to know other parents better. When parents know each other, there is a greater tendency for them to supervise one another’s children and to monitor the quality of parenting in the community. Social pressure can be applied to discourage lax or neglectful parenting.

My findings are consistent with previous research that shows that collective socialization is an asset to childrearing (Coleman 1988, 1990; Jencks and Mayer 1990; Shaw and McKay 1942; Sampson 2001b; Sampson et al. 1997; Simons et al. 2004). In community environments that foster trust, closure, and formal/informal levels of social control, parents are encouraged to cooperate with each other to provide a safe environment for children. The presence of community social capital increases the social connection that parents have to each other and this further supports parenting quality (Sampson 1992).

Organizational social capital also encourages good parenting behavior because group and club memberships among parents within the community foster discussion of child safety and well-being in the local community (Coleman 1988; Sampson 1992). Parents who watch out for the collective interests of the community and locally participate in groups of some type will interact more with others in the community and benefit from cohesive community
structures that assist them in becoming better parents (Furstenberg 1993; Kotchick and Forehand 2002).

**Is the Relationship between Community and Organizational Social Capital and Parenting Quality Mediated by African-American Mothers’ Psychological Well-Being?**

In my sixth hypothesis, I predicted that the relationship between community and organizational social capital and parenting quality would be partially mediated by African-American mothers’ psychological well-being. Results showed that psychological well-being, community and organizational social capital were each significant predictors of parenting quality. However, the effects of the community variables on parenting were not mediated by psychological well-being. Rather, both social capital variables showed direct effects on parenting quality.

The research literature shows mixed findings regarding this hypothesis. Researchers who support the mediating role of psychological well-being have indicated that social environmental factors make parents more susceptible to stress exposure, which in turn, may affect parenting quality (Conger et al. 1984; Klebanov et al. 1994; Kotchick and Forehand 2002; Mcloyd et al. 1994). Some researchers have found that organizational social capital positively influences psychological well-being, which in turn influences parenting (Simons et al. 1993; Taylor and Roberts 1995). Elder and colleagues (1995) found that psychological well-being mediated the relationship between cohesive communities and organizational and networking ties to parenting. This was even true for African-American families dealing with financial strain and community-level economic disadvantage.

However, Sampson (2001a) found no mediating role for psychological well-being. Sampson (2001b) argues that the collective socialization of children is rooted in norms of
behavior and formal/informal social control among parents who care for children. The saying, "it takes a village to raise a child" is relevant to this finding because if other parents are looking out for each others’ children, parenting is made easier regardless of parents’ state of psychological well-being. Sampson (2001a) further states that fostering social ties through participation in local activities with others in the community means that parents will have greater contact with each other and this generates formal/informal social networks for parents. Thus, both levels of social capital promote parenting apart from the parent’s psychological well-being.

Turning to other variables that significantly predicted parenting quality, financial strain was the only significant predictor. This finding is consistent with research that suggests that financial strain leads to poorer parenting (Conger et al. 1992, 1994, 2002; Elder et al. 1984, 1995; Lempers and Clark-Lempers 1997) and with research showing that mothers who report experiencing financial strain perceived their maternal role responsibilities negatively (McLoyd 1990; McLoyd et al. 1994).

Implications of Study

In the following section, I will integrate the findings across hypotheses by relating the main concepts of the study to each other. Following a discussion of the implications of this study’s findings, I will discuss this study’s limitations and will offer suggestions for future research.

In summary my most important findings are the following: (1) residential stability predicted community social capital even in poor neighborhoods but was not influential in the prediction of organizational involvement among African-American mothers; (2) social capital at the community and organizational level made unique contributions to
psychological well-being and parenting quality; and (3) the effects of the two community social capital variables on parenting quality were direct and not mediated through psychological well-being.

When people have lived in a neighborhood for a long time, trust is established, neighbors have a tendency to help one another, and parents are invested in collectively supervising children. Neighbors are more willing to protect the common interests of the community which benefits the well-being of the entire community. This finding has important policy implications. Bringing businesses back into economically bankrupt communities will encourage residents who have moved away due to lack of employment opportunities to consider reestablishing residence in these inner-city urban metropolitan areas.

The fact the residential stability positively influences community social capital reinforces the understanding that “it takes a village” to collectively supervise community children and that this supervision is most effective in communities where residents are trusting, look out for neighbors and will ensure that the local community children stay out of trouble. Keeping children out of trouble continues to be an important goal, especially among inner city law enforcement and child protective service agencies. These institutional entities have more success when the community partners with them to ensure that community members intervene for the common good of everyone and practice formal and informal social control to secure safe and supportive environments for children.

Organizational involvement was not predicted by residential stability among the African-American mothers in my study. The distinction between community field and specialized social fields is useful in understanding why. An organized community field or
high social capital is not a prerequisite for residents' forming groups. Indeed, it is common for organizations to work at cross purposes, thereby diminishing the community field. The important finding from this study is that residential stability fosters a stronger community field, but does not appear to be associated with special interest organizational activity. A policy that encourages homeownership in the neighborhood could strengthen community social capital.

The socio demographic characteristics of the mothers had more to do with their organizational involvement than did residential stability. Two of these socio-demographic characteristics, marital status and parents' education, have been especially problematic for African-American mothers. Single motherhood and low levels of educational attainment are problematic because of the barriers that they create for this group. Bringing employment opportunities as well as educational programs and centers back into poor African-American communities would offer a wide range of social and economic benefits to residents.

Furthermore, my findings revealed that social capital differentially contributes to psychological well-being at the community and organizational level which in turn influences parenting. This has important implications for community intervention and prevention programs that seek to improve the quality of life for this group. Community service organizations for African-American mothers could benefit by knowing how these two levels of social capital differentially influence this group's psychological well-being. For instance, attempting to build community social capital among African-American mothers' may not be as effective as organizational social capital in fostering high levels of mastery and optimism among this group. Thus, community programs that partner with community members by encouraging them to attend weekly activities and groups, for example, through hand-to-hand
buddy programs may be more effective at improving the psychological well-being of
African-American mothers than efforts at strengthening community social capital.

Another important implication of this study is that community characteristics affect
parenting beyond the individual-level socio demographic characteristics measured in this
study. Thus, better parenting does not depend only on increasing feelings of mastery and
optimism of African-American mothers. It can also be fostered by strengthening the
community field, that is, by building community social capital. Not only does it take a
village to raise a child but by improving the ability of the village to act collectively the child
may be raised better. This serves as further justification to encourage social policy that
builds community capacity. Participatory approaches to generating jobs and bringing
institutional resources back into economically disadvantaged communities will build
community social capital. This could further strengthen the positive influence of
residentially stable communities, and increase community development through community
member investment in social capital. Social policy aimed in this direction will effectively
address the needs of poor people spread across urban and rural communities throughout the
United States, who are disproportionately African-American mothers.

Limitations of Study

One limitation of the study was that women’s parenting quality was not assessed from
perspectives other than that of the woman herself. Survey responses from children that
describe their relationship quality with their mothers could provide more information about
African-American mothers’ parenting quality. Also, survey questions that tap extended kin
and other family members’ perceptions of mother’s parenting, could provide important
information that is more objective about the parenting quality of these mothers.
My research relied exclusively on mothers’ self-reports. It is possible that because mothers were the only source of data, the significant relations found were the result of shared method variance involved in the measures. Additional informants and additional methods of data collection, such as qualitative and observational data, would more firmly establish my present findings.

Another limitation of my study is that I did not collect qualitative data on African-American mothers’ perceptions of social capital and its meanings for this group. Also, qualitative research could provide a more accurate assessment of parenting processes among African-American mothers. Since parenting quality has different cultural and contextual meanings among different racial and ethnic groups, qualitative research may be a useful tool for better understanding how this group defines good parenting.

My study used block group areas to define neighborhoods. Block groups impose boundaries on what constitutes a community and this may or may not correspond with mothers’ perceptions of their community boundaries. McKenzie and colleagues (2002) argue that a problem with statistically imposed boundaries, such as block group areas, is that the researcher is assuming that social capital is based on geographically defined boundaries. Communities may be of family, friends, people who share the same ethnic heritage, academic colleagues or a religious group.

Another limitation is the cross-sectional nature of this data. As with any cross-sectional research, this study is limited in its efforts to establish causal direction. The causal direction of the relations of variables cannot be determined on the basis of the correlational data I have examined in this study.
Also, the measure of organizational social capital consisted of only two items. This may in part explain why residential stability did not predict organizational participation among the mothers in this study. My measure of organizational social capital did not include questions about formal/informal networking ties with others or the number of friends study participants had. Moreover this study did not highlight the importance of the church as a site of formal group membership that has implications for establishing social-networks needed to reinforce parenting quality among this group. The church is an important source of structured group relations among African-American mothers. A more thorough study of the different kinds of organizational involvement and their influences on parenting quality is in order.

Also the sample included only African-American mothers’ with a 10 to 12 year old child. Therefore, these findings may not be generalizable to the larger population of African-American mothers.

This study also has many strengths. For instance, I incorporate social capital in two different social fields. My study showed that both levels of social capital have a positive, independent and direct effect on parenting quality. Also, the sample size was relatively large which provided power to detect rather modest effects.

My study is also rich in that I examined African-American mothers of various socio-economic classes. I also included married and single parent mothers in this study, a departure from the many studies of poor single mothers.

**Suggestions for Future Research**

Future studies could further delineate aspects of social capital by using Wilkinson’s (1970) Field Theory approach to community development. By adding more fields in which
social capital operates will enable researchers to understand the rich and varied dimensions of community dynamics and how these benefit their residents. Incorporating more social fields through which social capital operates will shed understanding of how these additional fields differentially affect psychological well-being and parenting quality.

Also, a broader range of organizational social capital items are needed to tap questions that extend to networking ties, friends and other forms of involvement. Specific questions that ask the respondents if their networks extend beyond their own neighborhood and how frequently they participate in these will be very important to future research that examines social capital that specifically develops outside of the community but yet benefits community members indirectly. Furthermore, questions about involvement in church are important because church serves as the primary site of organizational participation for many African Americans mothers (Jewell 2003).

Future studies that include longitudinal data will enable researchers to examine possible reciprocal effects of parenting quality on maternal psychological well-being. The possibility that psychological well-being may affect social capital should be examined. For example, African-American mothers who exhibit low levels of psychological well-being may be less likely to participate in organizations since this usually involves a degree of self-confidence. Also, mothers with low levels of psychological well-being may find it hard to build community with others. Longitudinal data in which all measures are assessed at several time points is beneficial in establishing the nature of relation of the variables and the causal direction of the relations which could greatly add to further research in this area.

Furthermore, future studies could examine how social capital at one or more levels could strengthen specific parenting skills among African-American mothers that benefit their
children. For instance, researchers could test social capital at the level of African-American mothers' parental involvement in The Parents and Teachers Association (PTA), a specialized social field, to determine if the effect of greater parental involvement in this specialized field encourages those parenting qualities among this group that in turn produce higher academic achievement in their children. A study, such as this one, would link parenting quality among African-American mothers to its effects on their children's academic achievement.

Finally, further research that examines the unique influences that paternal involvement, immediate and extended family, and fictive kin have on mothers' parenting quality, could help researchers better understand how these potential sources of maternal social support could affect parenting in relation to the community level characteristics that I have introduced in this study.
APPENDIX A: MEASURES USED IN THE STUDY

Residential Stability Measure Taken from the 1990 United States Census Data

The following variables were used to calculate percent owner occupied homes in respondent’s BGA:

Owner Occupied Housing Unit with Mortgage
Owner Occupied Housing Unit no Mortgage
Occupied Housing Unit

Another Variable Measure Taken from the 1990 Census Data was Median Year that the Inhabitants Moved into the BGA

Community Social Capital Construct: Social Capital at the Level of Community Field

Trust and Norms of Reciprocity Subscale Items (self report):

Coding Scheme: G1B0395 thru G1B0406 (0) False (1) True; G1B0429 and G1B0430 (0) never (1) sometimes (2) often.

G1B0395  This is a close-knit neighborhood. Is this.....

G1B0398  People around here are willing to help their neighbors. Is this...

G1B0400  You can count on adults in your neighborhood to watch out that children are safe and don’t get in trouble. Is this.....

G1B0401  If you had to borrow $30 in an emergency, you could borrow it from a neighbor. Is this...

G1B402  When you are away from home, you know that your neighbors will keep their eyes open for possible trouble to your place. Is this...

G1B405  If you were sick, you could count on your neighbors to shop for groceries for you. Is this...

G1B0406  People in this neighborhood can be trusted. Is this.....

G1B0429  About how often do you and people in your neighborhood do favors for each other? Would you say..

G1B0430  When a neighbor is not at home, how often do you and other neighbors watch over their property?
Closure Subscale Items (self report):

Coding Scheme: G1B0407, G1B0409 and G1B0413 (1) False (2) True

G1B0407 Parents in your neighborhood know their children’s friends. Is this…

G1B0409 Adults in your neighborhood know who the local children are. Is this…

G1B0413 Parents in this neighborhood generally know each other. Is this…

Formal/Informal Social Control Subscale Items (self report):

Coding Scheme: G1B0414, G1B0415 and G1B0416 (1) very unlikely (2) unlikely (3) likely (4) very likely

G1B0414 If a group of neighborhood children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something like call the school or parents? Is it…

G1B0415 If some children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it? Is it…

G1B0416 If a child was showing disrespect to an adult, how likely is it that people in your neighborhood would scold that child or tell the child’s parents? Is it…

Organizational Social Capital Construct: Social Capital at the Level of Social Field

Organizations Subscale Items (self report):

Coding Scheme:

G1B0305 0=Groups; 87=Groups

G1B0306 (0) doesn’t belong to any clubs or organizations or never attends (1) Less than once a month (2) 1 to 3 times a month (3) about once a week (4) more than once a week

G1B0305 How many different groups do you belong to?

G1B0306 Thinking of all the organizations, clubs or groups you belong, how often do you attend meetings or gatherings of these groups? Would you say…
Psychological Well-Being Scales

Pearlin Mastery Scale Items (self report):


Coding Scheme: (1) Strongly Agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly Disagree

Next, I will read some statements about you. For each one, tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

G1C0105 There is really no way you can solve some of the problems you have. Do you.... (negative indicator of mastery)

G1C0106 Sometimes you feel that you are being pushed around in life. Do you.... (negative indicator of mastery)

G1C0108 You have little control over the things that happen to you. Do you... (negative indicator of mastery)

G1C0109®* You can do just about anything you really set your mind to. Do you....

G1C0110 You often feel helpless in dealing with problems of life. Do you... (negative indicator of mastery)

G1C0112®* What happens to you in the future mostly depends on you. Do you...

G1C0113 There is little you can do to change many of the important things in your life. Do you... (negative indicator of mastery)

*®=reverse coded

Life Orientation Test (LOT) Scale Items (self report):


Coding Scheme: (1) Strongly Agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly Disagree

Next, I will read some statements about you. For each one, tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.
G1C0116®* In uncertain times, you usually expect the best. Do you....

G1C0118 If something can go wrong for you, it will. Do you…
(negative indicator of optimism)

G1C0119®* You always look on the bright side of things. Do you...

G1C0120®* You are always optimistic about your future. Do you...

G1C0123 You hardly expect for things to go your way. Do you…
(negative indicator of optimism)

G1C0124 Things never work out the way you want them to. Do you…
(negative indicator of optimism)

G1C0126®* You are a believer in the idea that every cloud has a silver lining. Do you...

G1C0127 You rarely count on good things happening to you. Do you…

*®=reverse coded

**Parenting Quality Scale**

**Parental Monitoring Subscale Items (self report):**


Coding Scheme: (1) Never (2) Sometimes (3) Often (4) Always

Now I will be asking questions about how you relate to [child’s name] and what kind of expectations you have of [fill him/her].

G1B0009 How often do you know what [fill name] does after school? Is it…

G1B0010 How often do you know where [fill name] is and what [he/she] is doing? Is it…

G1B0011 How often do you know how well [fill name] is doing in school? Is it…

G1B0012 How often do you know if [fill name] does something wrong? Is it…
Parental Problem Solving Subscale Items (self report):


Coding Scheme: (1) Never (2) Sometimes (3) Often (4) Always

Now I will be asking questions about how you relate to [child’s name] and what kind of expectations you have of [fill him/her].

G1B0025®* How often do the same problems between you and [fill name] come up again and again and never seem to get solved? Is it...

G1B0026 When you and [fill name] have a problem, how often can the two of you figure out how to deal with it? Is it...

*®=reverse coded

Parental Inductive Reasoning Subscale Items (self report):


Coding Scheme: (1) Never (2) Sometimes (3) Often (4) Always

Now I will be asking questions about how you relate to [child’s name] and what kind of expectations you have of [fill him/her].

G1B0027 How often does [fill name] talk to you about things that bother [him/her]? Is it....

G1B0028 How often do you ask [fill name] what [he/she] thinks before deciding on family matters that involve [him/her]? Is it...

G1B0029 How often do you give reasons to [fill name] for your decisions? Is it....

G1B0030 How often do you ask [fill name] what [he/she] thinks before making decisions that affect [him/her]? Is it....

G1B0031 When [fill name] doesn’t know why you make certain rules, how often do you explain the reason? Is it....
G1B0032 How often do you discipline [fill name] by reasoning, explaining, or talking to [him/her]? Is it…

**Parental Positive Reinforcement Subscale Items (self report):**


Coding Scheme: (1) Never (2) Sometimes (3) Often (4) Always

Now I will be asking questions about how you relate to [child’s name] and what kind of expectations you have of [fill him/her].

G1B0033 When [fill name] has done something you like or approve of, how often do you let [him/her] know you are pleased about it? Is it…

G1B0034 How often do you give [fill name] a reward like money or something else [he/she] would like when [he/she] gets good grades, does [his/her chores], or something like that? Is it…

**Index of Perceived Financial Strain Measures**

**Primary Caregiver Unmet Material Needs (self report):**


Coding Scheme: (1) Strongly Agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly Disagree

The following statements concern your family’s financial situation. For each statement, please tell me if you strongly agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

G1B0438 My family has enough money to afford the kind of home we need. Do you…

G1B0439 We have enough money to afford the kind of clothing we need. Do you…

G1B0440 We have enough money to afford the kind of food we need. Do you…

G1B0441 We have enough money to afford the kind of medical care we need. Do you…
Primary Caregiver Can’t Make Ends Meet (self report):


Coding Scheme: G1B0442 (1) no difficulty at all (2) a little difficulty (3) some difficulty (4) quite a bit of difficulty (5) a great deal of difficulty; G1B0443 (1) more than enough money left over (2) some money left over (3) just enough to make ends meet (4) almost enough to make ends meet (5) not enough to make ends meet.

G1B0442 During the past 12 months, how much difficulty have you had paying your bills? Would you say…

G1B0043 Think again over the past 12 months. Generally, at the end of each month did you end up with….

Primary Caregiver Financial Adjustments (self-report):


Coding Scheme: (1) No (2) Yes

In the past 12 months…

G1B0462 Has your family postponed major household purchase(s) because of financial need?

G1B0463 Has your family changed residence’s to save money?

G1B0464 Has your family reduced or let life insurance lapse because of financial need?

G1B0465 Has your family reduced or eliminated medical insurance because of financial need?

G1B0466 Has your family reduced or eliminated auto or household insurance because of financial need?

G1B0467 Has your family changed food shopping or eating habits to save money?

G1B0468 Has your family reduced driving a care to save money?

G1B0469 Has your family reduced driving a car to save money?

G1B0470 Has your family postponed medical or dental care to save money?
G1B0471 Has your family taken bankruptcy?
G1B0472 Has your family postponed or delayed paying property tax?

**Primary Caregiver Negative Financial Life Events (self-report):**


Coding Scheme: (1) No (2) Yes

The following questions ask about important financial and employment changes you may have experienced during the past 12 months. During the past 12 months, did you:

G1B0446 Take a cut in wage or salary?
G1B0447 Get laid off?
G1B0448 Get fired?
G1B0449 Suffer a financial loss in business, investments, or property?
G1B0450 Lose some or all of your government benefits?
G1B0451 Get evicted from where you live?
G1B0452 Move to a worse residence or neighborhood?
G1B0453 Have a car, furniture, or other items repossessed?
G1B0454 Have a home loan foreclosed on?
G1B0455 Have any other loan foreclosed on?
G1B0456 Dip heavily into family savings because of financial problems?
G1B0457 Start receiving government assistance such as AFDC, SSI, food stamps, or something else?
G1B0458 Take on financial responsibility for a parent, in law, or other family member?
G1B0459 Quit your own business because of financial difficulties?
G1B0460 Have any other financial or employment problems?
G1B0461  How often in the past year have you had no money at all?
APPENDIX B: FACTOR ANALYSES

Factor Analysis of Residential Stability Measure

Factor loadings for the Residential Stability measure showed a loading of .908 on a single factor. This single loading consists of (1) proportion of owner occupied homes in each respondents BGA and, (2) median year that inhabitants moved into the BGA and both indicate a high amount of shared variance on the first factor using principle components extraction and varimax rotation.

Table B1. Factor Loadings for Residential Stability Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of owner occupied homes in each Respondents BGA</td>
<td>.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median year that inhabitants moved into the BGA</td>
<td>.908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Analysis used principal components extraction and varimax rotation
Factor Analysis of Community Social Capital Subscales

Factor loadings for Community Social Capital were captured using three subscales. These three subscales showed loadings ranging from .803 to .859. All three subscales loaded on a single factor. This single loading consists of (1) Trust and Norms of Reciprocity, (2) Closure, and (3) Formal/Informal Social Control. All three subscales indicate a high amount of shared variance on the first factor using principle components extraction and varimax rotation.

Table B2. Factor Loadings for Community Social Capital Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composite Score for trust and norms of reciprocity</td>
<td>.859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite Score for closure</td>
<td>.809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite Score for formal/informal social control</td>
<td>.803</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Analysis used principal components extraction and varimax rotation
Factor Analysis of Organizational Social Capital Items

Factor loadings for Organizational Social Capital consisted of two question items that consisted of participant’s organizational or group involvement. Both these question items loaded on a single factor at .932. This single loading captured the questions: “Thinking of all the organizations, clubs or groups you belong to, how often you attend meetings or gatherings of these groups?” And (b) “How many different groups do you belong to?” Both questions indicate a high amount of shared variance on the first factor using principle components extraction and varimax rotation.

Table B3. Factor Loadings for Organizational Social Capital Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many different groups do you belong</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking of all the organizations, clubs and groups you belong, How often do you attend meetings or gatherings of these groups?</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Analysis used principal components extraction and varimax rotation
Factor Analysis of Psychological Well-Being Scales

Factor loadings for the Psychological Well-Being measure was captured using two scales, Optimism and Mastery. These two scales, Optimism and Mastery loaded on a single factor at .895. Both scales indicate a high amount of shared variance on the first factor using principle components extraction and varimax rotation.

Table B4. Factor Loadings for Psychological Well-Being Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composite Score for Mastery Scale Items</td>
<td>.895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite Score for Optimism Scale Items</td>
<td>.895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Analysis used principal components extraction and varimax rotation
Factor Analysis of Parenting Quality Scales

A factor loading for the Parenting Quality Measure was captured using four subscales. These include: Parental Monitoring, Problem Solving, Inductive Reasoning and Positive Reinforcement. All four subscales showed loadings ranging from .613 to .776. All four subscales loaded on a single factor indicating a high amount of shared variance using principle components extraction and varimax rotation. (Additional tables showing factor loadings of all questions contained in each of the four parenting subscales are included).

Table B5. Factor Loadings for Parenting Quality Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental Monitoring</td>
<td>.631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>.634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductive Reasoning</td>
<td>.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Reinforcement</td>
<td>.613</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Analysis used principal components extraction and varimax rotation
REFERENCES


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to administration and staff at the Institute for Social and Behavioral Research for providing me with a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment. I am also indebted to my major professor, Dr. Jan Flora, and academic coach, Dr. Carolyn Cutrona for their guidance and mentorship during my doctoral studies at Iowa State University. I would also like to thank Dr. Thomas Hill, Dr. George Jackson and Dr. Paul Lasley for their academic support and encouragement. Finally, I would like to thank my mom, dad, siblings, relatives and friends for their high and noble expectations of me. My completion of this doctorate degree satisfies at least one of their expectations and I consider this accomplishment a blessing from God Almighty.