Community-level crime control: a closer look at the mediating variables of social disorganization theory

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COMMUNITY-LEVEL CRIME CONTROL: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE MEDIATING VARIABLES OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORY

by

David P. Armstrong

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the mediating factors of social disorganization theory. To be more specific, this study combines the insights from the classical social disorganization model, the systemic model of crime, and the more recent work of Sampson and colleagues on collective efficacy and Carr (2003) on the new parochialism to answer some of the lingering questions within the perspective. The three mediating factors examined are social ties, collective efficacy, and organizational activism, a concept derived from Carr’s work on the new parochialism. The concept organizational activism refers to using local organizations with access to outside resources to indirectly solve local problems such as crime. While organizations have long been acknowledged as a potential source of crime control, their role has not been thoroughly examined. The analysis revealed that the role of local organizations in community crime control is much more complex than previously thought. By using simultaneous equation models, the analysis exposed the countervailing effects of organizational activism on crime and violence. While organizational activism appears to directly facilitate crime it also indirectly inhibits it by strengthening collective efficacy within a community. These countervailing influences may explain why previous research on local organizations that has relied on single equation models, such as multiple regression, has produced inconsistent findings. Another important finding involved the relationship between social ties and organizational activism. The significance of the relationship between social ties and organizational activism was a test between the systemic model of crime and the emerging line of thought that suggests social ties are not related to more modern forms of
social control that rely on indirect methods to regulate a community. The study found that social ties positively affect organizational activism indicating that social ties may still play a prominent role in community-level crime control in today’s society. In the end, however, despite the recent focus on the mediating variables of social disorganization theory in the literature, the total effect of concentrated disadvantage on crime was greater than any other factor including collective efficacy.
Dedicated to Alvin and Wyoline Armstrong
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A CLOSER LOOK AT THE MEDIATING VARIABLES OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORY

As the title suggests, the present study focuses on the mediating factors of social disorganization theory. To be more specific, this study draws insights from the classical social disorganization model, the systemic model of crime, and the more recent work of Sampson and colleagues on collective efficacy and Carr (2003) on the new parochialism. The three mediating factors considered are social ties, collective efficacy, and organizational activism, a concept derived from Carr’s work on the new parochialism. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section presents the research context for this study. This section ends by presenting the research questions that guide the analysis. The last section, the present study, discusses the analysis in more detail and provides a brief outline of the rest of this thesis.

THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

The origin of social disorganization theory is most closely associated with the writings of Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay in the 1930s. These authors, along with others, proposed that the processes of urbanization and industrialization associated with urban environments lead to conditions such as poverty, residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity that break down internal and external social controls that inhibit crime.
They observed that impoverished neighborhoods were associated with high rates of population turnover since these neighborhoods were not desirable places to live. Individuals and families in impoverished neighborhoods tended to move out as soon as it became economically possible for them to do so. As a result, long-term social ties among neighbors were hard to maintain. The rapid population turnover in these neighborhoods also caused them to be racially and ethnically diverse making communication and the development of social ties among neighbors more problematic. Due to the lack of communication among neighbors and residents’ lack of long-term interest in the well-being of the neighborhood, internal and external social controls broke down. Such neighborhoods did not have the ability to regulate themselves. That is, they did not have the ability to realize collective goals such as inhibiting crime. However, the writings of these early theorists lacked definitional and theoretical clarity. Shaw and McKay often failed to distinguish between social disorganization and its presumed outcome. This lack of clarity led to tautological reasoning. The condition of social disorganization was often described as a cause of crime, but crime was also described as an indicator of social disorganization. Furthermore, they failed to precisely describe the mechanism within a neighborhood that led to crime. Partly as a result of this lack of definitional and theoretical clarity, researchers lost interest in the theory over time.

In the 1980s, there was a renewed interest in the theory. Bursik (1988) attempted to clarify the logic of the theory by defining social disorganization as “the capacity of a neighborhood to regulate itself through formal and informal processes of social control” (p. 527). Bursik along with others reframed the thesis as a systemic model of crime, in which, neighborhood social networks played a prominent role in the ability of a
neighborhood to regulate itself. Because of this research an image of the theory evolved, in which, dense social networks among neighbors increased the capacity of a neighborhood to regulate criminal activity through informal and formal social controls. However, this viewpoint was not uncontested. Research beginning in the mid 1990s led by Sampson, one of the pioneers of the systemic model, and more recently contributed to by Carr (2003) has focused on informal social control processes rather than strong social ties as the primary mechanism for controlling crime in neighborhoods.

Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997) defined collective efficacy as “social cohesion among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good” (p. 918). Unlike the image of the theory that evolved in conjunction with research focusing on the systemic model of crime, they emphasized social cohesion and trust among neighbors rather than the number of people a person knows in a neighborhood and the degree to which they interact as being central to increasing the regulatory capacity of a neighborhood. The authors theorized that collective efficacy should not only inhibit crime, but also mediate the effect of the exogenous factors in social disorganization theory (e.g., concentrated disadvantage, immigrant concentration, and residential stability).

More recently, Carr (2003) in an ethnographic study of a Chicago neighborhood, “Beltway,” extended the work of Sampson by focusing on informal social control processes that work through local organizations. Like the previous authors, Carr asserted that dense social networks among neighbors might not be as important in preventing crime as previously thought. Using Hunter’s (1985) typology, Carr described this “new parochialism” as characterized by the interdependence of the parochial spheres of control
(e.g., local organizations) and the public spheres of control (e.g., outside public agencies). An important aspect of Carr’s work was that residents in Beltway preferred to deal with problems indirectly rather than directly in order to mitigate potential harm to themselves. That is, residents in Beltway preferred to use organizations that have access to resources outside the neighborhood to deal with local problems. For example, rather than directly confronting local teenagers that have been loitering about and causing problems after school, Beltway residents would prefer to have the local school deal with the problem by providing more after school activities such as sports programs. The present research focuses on this aspect of Carr’s study by examining the concept of organizational activism. The concept organizational activism derives directly from Carr’s work on the new parochialism, but it is not intended to fully encompass Carr’s thoughts. Rather the concept organizational activism refers specifically to using local organizations with access to outside resources to indirectly solve local problems such as crime. While organizations have long been acknowledged as a potential source of crime control, their role has not been thoroughly examined and the majority of studies that have considered them have limited their measurement to the mere presence of, or attendance at, local organizations. Not surprisingly these studies have produced mixed results since they have not attempted to ascertain whether or not people in the community were actually using local organizations to deal with local problems.

Carr’s insights may represent an important new source of crime control in today’s society, but as of yet they have not been tested. Furthermore, there are reasons to suspect that his insights about Beltway may not be generalizable to other communities. Carr described Beltway as an upper-middle class, White neighborhood; would a lower class,
minority neighborhood have the access to outside resources that Beltway does or the financial resources to sustain organizations? Or is it the case that a few charismatic activists in Beltway were primarily responsible for what Carr describes as the new parochialism and that the new parochialism is an isolated entity specific to Beltway?

Ultimately, the new research by Sampson, Carr, and others directly challenged the central tenet of the systemic model of crime by positing that strong social ties were not necessary for the development of informal social control processes that inhibit crime. As Carr (2003) states “evidence from Beltway would seem to question the centrality of dense social ties in the implementation of informal social control” (p. 1250). However, this shift in focus left many lingering questions. While these questions were partly due to differing theoretical interests, data and methodological problems were also to blame. Research on the classical social disorganization perspective and the systemic model of crime was hindered by the lack of adequate measures for the intermediating variables of the theories. Research on the classical social disorganization perspective was for the most part limited to theoretical evaluations and examinations of the effects of the exogenous variables on crime, along with an occasional ethnographic study, since empirical research at the time relied on readily available data sources such as the U.S. Census and the Unified Crime Reports provided by the FBI – neither of which contain measures of the potential intermediating variables of the theory, dense social networks, and informal and formal social control processes (see Sampson, Morenoff, and Gannon-Rowley, 2002).

Prior to Sampson and Groves’ (1989) study of the systemic model of crime, the intermediating variables of the theory had not been measured in a social disorganization model of crime. The findings of this study along with the availability of new data sources
that focused on neighborhood-level processes (e.g., the British Crime Survey, the Police Services Study, and the Seattle victimization survey) led some researchers to focus exclusively on the role of social ties in the systemic model of crime. Much of this research produced mixed results, and with the emerging focus on informal social control processes, social ties fell out of favor with researchers examining the intermediating factors of social disorganization theory.

The new emerging focus on informal social control processes was led by Sampson and his colleagues and their research on collective efficacy. This research was in part stimulated by a study in which Sampson participated, the Project of Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN). Since then much research on community-level crime control has focused on informal social controls that may operate in the absence of strong social ties. This research has provided many new insights into community-level crime control processes, but it has also raised new questions in regard to which forms of these mechanisms are most effective and how they interrelate to each other. Like the research that focused exclusively on the role of social ties, this new research has focused almost entirely on informal social control processes, ignoring the potential role of social ties as a mediating factor in social disorganization theory. Hence, no empirical study to date has thoroughly examined both sets of mediating factors together as was originally envisioned by the classic social disorganization theorists.

The present research attempts to address many of these questions by integrating the classical social disorganization model and the systemic model of crime with the more recent work of Sampson and Carr (2003). This research integrates social ties with Sampson and colleagues’ concept of collective efficacy and the concept of organizational
activism derived from Carr’s work on the new parochialism as mediating variables in a social disorganization theory of crime. By integrating these concepts, the present study attempts to answer some critical questions regarding these distinct perspectives on community-level crime control. Specifically, the present study addresses the following questions: Is organizational activism an important new source of crime control in today’s neighborhoods? What is the relationship between organizational activism and collective efficacy in urban neighborhoods? Do strong social ties play a central role in preventing crime by leading to the development of informal social control processes, such as collective efficacy and organizational activism, as the systemic model of crime predicts? Or is the development of informal social control processes that prevent crime not hindered by the presence of weak social ties as the more recent research of Sampson and Carr implies? Finally, does the inclusion of social ties, collective efficacy, and organizational activism as intervening factors mediate the effects of the exogenous variables on crime in social disorganization theory?

THE PRESENT STUDY

While much recent research has focused on community-level crime control, there are still many questions to be answered. In order to address these questions, the present study combines the insights from four theoretical models. The first theory examined is the classical social disorganization model. This model includes only the exogenous variables of social disorganization theory and the dependent variable crime. While this model is not theoretically replete, it is representative of the research conducted on the
perspective at the time. The second theory examined is the systemic model of crime. This model not only includes the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory, but also the mediating factor social ties. This model, like the first, is not theoretically complete. That is, it does not hypothesize that social ties reduce crime by facilitating informal social control processes. Instead, it characterizes much of the research that was conducted on the model. The third model examined focuses on the concept collective efficacy. Like the systemic model of crime, this model includes the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory, but instead of including social ties as a mediating factor, it includes collective efficacy. The fourth model examined integrates the classical social disorganization model, the systemic model of crime, and the theory of collective efficacy, and expands the social disorganization perspective by introducing the concept organizational activism. In this model, there are three mediating factors: social ties, collective efficacy, and organizational activism. Social ties are hypothesized to facilitate both collective efficacy and organizational activism.

Ultimately, these four theoretical models are combined to address the research questions that guide this analysis. This “combined” model makes three major contributions to the existing literature. First, it incorporates the concept organizational activism, which is derived from Carr’s work on the new parochialism. Organizational activism may represent an important new form of social control in today’s society given the changing patterns of everyday life. Second, it examines the relationship between multiple mediating factors. No research has previously examined the relationship between two informal social control processes in a community. The combined model hypothesizes that organizational activism should strengthen collective efficacy within a
neighborhood, while also directly reducing crime. Furthermore, as previously noted, the research on the systemic model of crime and the newer work on informal social control have largely ignored each other. Hence, how social ties relate to the newer forms of social control in today’s neighborhoods that rely on more indirect methods is unknown. Third, the present study introduces a methodological technique for examining the mediating factors of social disorganization theory that has not been widely employed in this research tradition: structural equation models (or simultaneous equation models). While structural equation models are hardly novel, most of the research on the classical social disorganization model, the systemic model of crime, and the theory of collective efficacy has been limited to single equation models such as multiple regression and hierarchical linear models that are ill-suited for determining the relationship among several mediating factors because they cannot simultaneously measure direct, indirect, and total effects. In contrast, structural equation models are ideal for disentangling the mediating factors of social disorganization theory since they can simultaneously evaluate multiple types of effects. This technique will allow the present study to more thoroughly examine the relationship between the mediating factors of social disorganization theory than previous work and potentially uncover previously unknown relationships.

In the next chapter, the research literature pertaining to this study is reviewed. The literature review is broken down into four sections: classical social disorganization theory, the systemic model of crime, critiques of the systemic model of crime, and expanding social disorganization theory. The latter section focuses on the new research by Sampson and Carr. Chapter 3 develops the theory and hypotheses for the four theoretical models. Chapter 4 discusses the data and methods that are used in the analysis.
This section is followed by the results of the analysis in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 presents a discussion of the findings and outlines future topics of study.
CHAPTER 2

THE BUILDING AND EXPANSION OF A PERSPECTIVE

In this chapter, the research literature pertaining to the study is reviewed. The chapter begins by tracing the origins of social disorganization theory. This section focuses on the writings of Shaw and McKay and those who influenced them. The next section discusses the revitalization of social disorganization theory in the mid 1980s and early 1990s, by focusing on the systemic model of crime. The work of Bursik and Sampson among others is discussed here. The third section examines the numerous critiques of the systemic model of crime – especially those that focus on the assumption that strong social ties lead to a reduction in crime by fostering informal and formal social control processes in a neighborhood. The fourth section focuses on recent attempts to expand the social disorganization perspective. Specifically, this section highlights informal social control processes in a neighborhood that may operate without the presence of strong social ties. The most important work regarding this research is presented; that is, Sampson and colleagues’ concept of collective efficacy and Carr’s on the new parochialism.

CLASSICAL SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORY

While social disorganization theory is most closely associated with the writings of Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, it was W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki who
originally defined the term in discussing the plight of the *Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1994). They defined social disorganization as a “decrease of the influence of existing social rules of behavior upon individual members of the group” (p. 57). They emphasized that social disorganization “refers primarily to institutions and only secondarily to men” (p. 56). As defined, the concept of social disorganization is similar to Durkheim’s concept of anomie, because both concepts focus on situations in which the rules that govern society breakdown. The present usage of the term social disorganization differs somewhat from its original usage, but the impetus of the concept is much the same. Furthermore, while Shaw and McKay are most associated with the term social disorganization, they eventually became dissatisfied with its usage and the term did not appear in their seminal work *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas* (1969).

Shaw and McKay were also inspired by Robert Park and Ernest Burgess’ research on “human ecology.” Park and Burgess like many other social theorists at the time were heavily influenced by Darwin’s work *On the Origins of Species* (1859) and the *Descent of Man* (1871) and the science of plant and animal ecology. The science of plant and animal ecology studied the relationship between an organism and its environment. Park was especially intrigued by the idea of a “web of life” as it potentially referred to human organization. This concept emphasized the interdependence and interrelations of both plant and animal species within a community. Park (1936) defined a community as “(1) a population, territorially organized, (2) more or less completely rooted in the soil it occupies, (3) its individual units living in a relationship of mutual interdependence that is symbiotic rather than societal, in the sense in which that term applies to human beings” (p. 4). Park also borrowed other ideas from plant and animal ecology to describe human
organization. In particular, Park borrowed the basic concepts of invasion, competition, accommodation, and succession. Ecologists believed that these basic processes governed the organization of plants and animals in biotic communities located in geographically distinct “natural areas.” When a new species invades an area they compete for resources such as food with the long-term inhabitants of the area. If the new species is successful in its competition, the previous inhabitants of the area are forced to accommodate them and, ultimately, the new species might succeed (supplant) the previous inhabitants in the area entirely. Unlike plants and animals, Park believed that human organization was governed not only by a “biotic order,” but also by a “moral order.” According to Park, the moral order consists of norms, customs, rules, and values that limit the action of individuals in the competition for resources such as land. However, in their writings, Park and Burgess emphasized the role of the biotic order rather than the moral order in describing human organization.

Using this human ecological framework, Burgess (1925) described the development and organization of the city of Chicago. Burgess described the city as consisting of a series of five concentric zones. The central zone, called the central business district (Zone I), consisted of businesses and industries that were constantly expanding and invading the next zone – the zone in transition (Zone II). The zone in transition was constantly in the process of being taken over by the central business district. It was the most undesirable place to live in the city. Landlords in this zone did not take care of their property because they were looking to maximize their profit when they sold the property to businesses. This zone was occupied by the poor and newly-arrived migrants and immigrants. Proceeding from the zone in transition, Zone III was
called the zone of workingmen’s homes. It primarily consisted of multifamily, working class homes. Zone IV was called the residential zone, it largely consisted of single-family homes, and Zone V was called the outer commuter’s zone. The highest land values in the city were located in the central business district. Land values then increased the further they were from the zone in transition. These more distant areas increasingly had better homes and were occupied by more affluent individuals and families. According to Burgess, the city of Chicago was in a state of constant flux. All of the zones were constantly expanding and invading successive zones as the city grew. Burgess’ concentric zone theory of urban development is arguably the most well known theory in human ecology and greatly influenced Shaw and McKay in their seminal work.

In *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas* (1969), Shaw and McKay attempted to describe the distribution of delinquency in Chicago using the ecological framework developed by Burgess (1925). They largely succeeded. But when describing the exact mechanism that produced crime within this framework they lacked theoretical precision and drew upon many different and seemingly contradicting perspectives such as control, strain, and cultural conflict. This unfortunately led to much confusion, and it was left to others to clarify and interpret what is known as classical social disorganization theory.

Using several different series of data collected over many years, Shaw and McKay (1969) mapped out delinquency rates in the city of Chicago over multiple time periods. The most prominent series they used was that of alleged delinquent boys aged 10 to 16 that were brought before the Juvenile Court of Cook County. This series was collected for three distinct seven-year time periods between 1900 and 1933: 1900-1906, 1917-1923, and 1927-1933. Based on what they visually observed across the different
time periods and some simple statistical tests, Shaw and McKay arrived at two very important conclusions. First, delinquency rates in neighborhoods remained stable over the three time periods, despite drastic racial and ethnic population turnover. Based on this finding, they argued that race and ethnicity were not directly related to delinquency. Second, delinquency rates decreased with distance from the zone in transition. That is, delinquency rates were highest in the zone in transition and decreased the further they were from the zone in transition. Another finding was that poverty also decreased with distance from the zone in transition. However, this finding led people to erroneously conclude that Shaw and McKay reported that poverty was positively related to crime. This was not the case. Instead, Shaw and McKay asserted that the same ecological factors that led to crime also produced poverty.

Overall, Shaw and McKay (1969) described a vision of urban America in which ecological forces such as urbanization and immigration through the competitive marketplace produced “natural areas” or neighborhoods within a city. These neighborhoods, depending on their location from the central business district, either suffered or were largely unaffected by poverty and other undesirable conditions. Neighborhoods nearest the central business district in the zone in transition were the most affected by these deleterious conditions, and as a result, were the least desirable places to live. These neighborhoods had the highest rates of residential instability and ethnic heterogeneity. Individuals living in these neighborhoods moved out as soon as possible and immigrants and racial and ethnic minority groups continued to move in with the hope of eventually achieving a better life. These conditions produced what may be described as social disorganization, because individuals living in these areas were unable to achieve
mutual goals such as security and job opportunities. However, when Shaw and McKay began to describe how these conditions led directly to delinquency their arguments lacked theoretical consistency. They drew upon several different perspectives to describe these processes. Kornhauser (1978) suggested that their thesis was best understood from a control perspective. Bursik and Grasmick (1993) identified three ways from the literature in which residential instability and ethnic heterogeneity led to delinquency from the control perspective. First, because residents did not care about the future of their neighborhood (everyone wanted to move out) it was difficult to establish institutions that facilitated internal social control processes, such as schools and churches (Korhauser 1978). Second, establishing primary relationships that led to informal social control processes, such as surveillance, was difficult when residents were constantly moving (Berry and Kasarda 1977). Third, because residents in high racial/ethnic heterogenic neighborhoods had different backgrounds, communication between neighbors was awkward and, subsequently, their ability to achieve mutual goals was compromised (Kornhauser 1978).

While Shaw and McKay’s work was well received by other theorists at the time and led to the Chicago Area Project (CAP), a large-scale community improvement effort in the city, their view of urban America did not dominate sociological thought. Instead, Wirth’s view of urban America did. In his article “Urbanism as a Way of Life” Wirth (1938) described a city “as a relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous people” (p. 8). This environment, according to Wirth, led to a “segmentalization of human relationships” (p. 12). In other words, individuals tended to develop secondary relationships rather than primary ones because of the sheer volume of
people individuals encountered every day and their wide range of backgrounds. As a result, people did not get to know each other and interactions in cities were impersonal and exploitive, since everyone regarded each other as a means to an end. This bleak assessment of urban America, unfortunately, took hold in contemporary thought as some individuals saw industrialization and urbanization as a threat to traditional ways of life.

THE SYSTEMIC MODEL OF CRIME

The mid 1980s and early 1990s saw a reemergence of Shaw and McKay’s social disorganization theory of crime in the form of the systemic model of crime, a clarification and reinterpretation of Shaw and McKay’s original work. The groundwork for the reemergence began with the dismissal of Louis Wirth’s vision of urban America. Building on Janowitz’s (1951) earlier work, Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) conducted a crucial test of what they described as the “linear development model” and the “systemic model.” The linear development model was derived from the work of Toennies (1887) and Wirth (1938) and postulated that as population’s size and density increased primary relationships within a community would be replaced by secondary ones, which led to a breakdown of community attachment. The authors critiqued this perspective as a normative approach to the study of urban life that did not take into account the degree of complexity found in modern urban communities. The systemic model, on the other hand, was extrapolated from the writings of Thomas (1967), Park and Burgess (1921), and Park, Burges, and McKenzie (1925) and described modern urban communities “as a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal
associational ties rooted in family life and on-going socialization processes” (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974:329). This view was also shared by Shaw and McKay. Length of residency was the key factor in community organization in this approach. The longer residents stayed in a community, the more friendship networks and kinship bonds they developed, which in turn, increased community attachment.

In order to test the competing perspectives, Karsada and Janowitz (1974) formed a single empirical model out of the two approaches: population size, population density, and length of residence were exogenous factors; friendship and kinship associational bonds were intermediary factors; and community attachment was the endogenous variable. The results of the analysis strongly supported the systemic model. Length of stay strongly affected both local social bonds and community attachment, whereas population size and density only weakly affected both sets of variables. Furthermore, the effect of population size on local social bonds was in the opposite direction of what the linear development model predicted. This suggested that individuals living in large communities were more likely to develop local social ties than individuals living in smaller communities. Karsada and Janowitz drew three important conclusions from their analysis. First, length of residence in a community was the most crucial factor in developing local social bonds. Second, increased population size and density did not result in individuals replacing primary relationships with secondary ones. And third, increased population size and density did not impede community attachments among residents.

In 1988, Sampson replicated Karsada and Janowitz’s (1974) work with an important addition. “A fundamental assumption of the ecological approach is that social
systems exhibit structural properties that can be examined apart from the personal characteristics of their individual members” (Sampson 1988:766). The author noted that contemporary research on local social bonds concentrated on individual-level causal processes – not aggregate. The primary reason for this focus was limited study designs and the subsequent lack of adequate aggregate measures. In order to address this issue, Sampson used a two-stage research design. At the community level, structural determinants of community organization were examined, (community residential stability) and at the individual level, Karsarda and Janowitz’s study was replicated. Sampson reported that both community residential stability and individual length of stay positively affected local social bonds. Later, Sampson (1991) revisited this topic and extended the analysis to include social cohesion as an individual- and community-level factor. Once more the results strongly supported the systemic model as both individual-level and community-level measures of residential stability and social cohesion positively affected local social ties. Both of these analyses and others (see Simcha-Fagan and Schwartz 1986) established the viability of the systemic approach. Perhaps more important, they established the existence of macro-level effects on individuals net of analogous individual measures, thus, demonstrating a central tenet of social disorganization theory that ecological processes affect individuals.

Bursik (1988) also contributed to the revitalization of social disorganization theory by identifying five major criticisms of social disorganization theory that caused social disorganization theory to fall out of favor in criminological thought. First, Bursik pointed out that there was a disciplinary shift in emphasis. While earlier criminological theories, such as Shaw and McKay’s social disorganization theory and Sutherland’s
differential association theory (Sutherland and Cressey 1955), focused on group-level explanations of crime and deviance, more recent theories such as Hirschi’s (1969) social control perspective and Aker’s (1985) social learning theory have focused on individual-level processes. This theoretical shift may have been overcompensation for the imbalance in the number of aggregate-level theories compared to the number of individual-level theories during the early years of the discipline. At the time, sociological theorists were trying to establish sociology as a unique focus compared to other specialties such as psychology. Furthermore, it did not help when Robinson (1950) published his classic article on the “ecological” fallacy of making inferences about individuals based on aggregate data. While Robinson did not say that all aggregate-level research should be avoided, his paper was often used as an excuse to do so. Bursik pointed out that this shift in focus to individual-level theories did not invalidate aggregate approaches.

Second, Bursik (1988) addressed the assumption of stable ecological structures. Many researchers of social disorganization theory had been (at least partially) forced to assume ecological stability over time for the sake of generalization due to cross-sectional study designs. However, the study of human ecology emphasized change. The ecological dynamics of the city of Chicago remained fairly stable during the time of Shaw and McKay’s (1969) classic study. This allowed the researchers to observe that some neighborhoods continued to have high delinquency rates, despite drastic changes in the ethnic and racial composition of the neighborhoods over time. The ecological characteristics of many cities changed after World War II as urban areas decentralized. Neighborhoods that once had high delinquency rates later did not and vice versa. Such
ecological changes cannot be captured by cross-sectional studies. In order to capture these dynamics more longitudinal studies of social disorganization theory are needed.

Third, Bursik (1988) examined arguably the most problematic aspect of Shaw and McKay’s social disorganization theory – its measurement. There were two primary sources of confusion. First, Shaw and McKay sometimes failed to distinguish the presumed outcome of social disorganization (i.e., crime) from the concept of social disorganization. This led to confusion in the literature as to what social disorganization actually meant. However, Shaw and McKay were not the only ones who occasionally equated social disorganization with crime. Lander (1954) declared that the concept of social disorganization was “dubious” because you cannot separate the concept from delinquency. Drawing on prior studies and Thomas and Znaniecki’s (1994) original definition, Bursik defined social disorganization as “the capacity of a neighborhood to regulate itself through formal and informal processes of social control” (p. 527).

Greenberg, Rohe, and Williams (1982a, 1982b, 1985) described three forms of informal social control processes that operated within a neighborhood: informal surveillance, movement-governing rules, and direct intervention. Informal surveillance referred to neighbors looking out for each other by casually, albeit actively, observing activities that took place in the neighborhood. Movement-governing rules referred to avoiding areas in the neighborhood and the city that were considered unsafe. And direct intervention entailed questioning neighbors and strangers about suspicious activities that took place in the neighborhood. This form of control also entailed admonishing children and adults about unacceptable behavior. Formal social control processes such as policing also operated at the neighborhood level. But as Sampson (1987) pointed out, such processes
were largely out of the control of residents, since the processes were often controlled by the city, state, and federal agencies.

The second source of confusion in measuring social disorganization was the traditional study designs (Bursik 1988; see Sampson 1988). Most studies of social disorganization theory had focused on city-level processes or other aggregate units. This traditional study design allowed for the measurement of ecological processes (e.g., residential stability and population heterogeneity) through government data sources such as the census, but it did not allow for the accurate measurement of the concept of social disorganization. However, in fairness to previous research efforts, there were not many data sources that allowed investigators to measure the concept of social disorganization at the time.

The fourth criticism focused on the measurement of crime and delinquency (Bursik 1988). Shaw and McKay (1969) used official crime data to conduct their study. The problem with official crime data was that they might be subject to biased police practices such as patrolling one neighborhood more frequently than another. Thus, it was not clear whether or not official records reflected actual criminality or simply police activity. Bursik (1988) argued that despite this critique, Shaw and McKay’s findings could not simply be dismissed. Furthermore, potential bias in official records was a problem that plagued other studies as well.

The fifth criticism Bursik examined was the normative assumption of social disorganization theory. Social disorganization theory assumed that residents shared common goals. For example, all residents shared the common goal to live in a safe and secure neighborhood. He argued that it was not necessary for all residents to agree on
everything nor was it necessary for them to agree by consensus on anything. It was just
necessary for the vast majority of them to share common goals such as neighborhood
safety in order for the neighborhood to be able to regulate itself. Overall, Bursik
concluded that while the classical social disorganization model of crime was incomplete
and it needed to be expanded, the theory was still a viable criminological perspective and
the many criticisms that had been levied against it did not undermine its value.

Sampson and Groves’ (1989) study was the first to directly test social
disorganization theory. Or to be more precise, it was the first study to directly test the
systemic model of crime envisioned by Karsada and Janowitz (1974). The authors
addressed two limitations of previous studies (see Bursik 1988). First, prior studies had
focused on the effects of the ecological factors of social disorganization theory and had
failed to measure the mediating factors of the theory that occurred at the neighborhood
level. While ethnographic studies had provided insights about these processes, they had
generally been limited to focusing on just one or a few neighborhoods. As a result,
findings from these studies could not be generalized to other communities. Second,
previous research relied on official measures of crime that may be susceptible to bias
police practices. In order to address these limitations, Sampson and Groves used data
from the 1982 British Crime Survey conducted in England and Wales. The survey of
10,903 randomly selected individuals in 238 communities contained data that allowed the
authors to measure the mediating processes of social disorganization theory and to
construct measures of crime based upon self-reported victimization and offending rates,
alleviating the problem of police bias in official records.
Like Bursik (1988), Sampson and Groves (1989) defined “social disorganization as the inability of a community structure to realize common values of it residents and maintain effective social controls” (p. 777). Drawing on Karsada and Janowitz (1974), the authors argued that social disorganization can be measured in terms of the density of both formal (e.g., organization participation) and informal (e.g., friendship and kinship ties) community social networks and the ability of these networks to supervise and manage local problems. Accordingly, the authors measured the concept of social disorganization along three dimensions. The first dimension was unsupervised teenage peer groups. Shaw and McKay (1969) in their classic work noted that delinquency was primarily a group phenomenon. As a result, the ability of a community to monitor and supervise teenage peer groups was a crucial factor in preventing delinquency, because unsupervised teenage peer groups sometimes emerged into delinquent peer groups and gangs. Furthermore, teenage delinquency and adult criminality were highly correlated. As Thrasher (1963) noted, there is no steadfast line between delinquent groups of boys and adult criminal gangs.

The second dimension was local friendship networks (Sampson and Grove 1989). Of the three dimensions of social disorganization the authors’ measured, this one best captured the thrust of Karsada and Janowitz’s (1974) argument that the primary factor in preventing crime in a community is associational bonds rooted in family, friends, and acquaintances. There were two means by which dense social networks inhibited crime. First, when residents were familiar with each other the ability of a neighborhood to monitor itself was increased. In other words, when residents knew each other they were more able to recognize strangers and suspicious behavior and they were more able and
more likely to engage in guardianship behavior such as questioning strangers and reporting suspicious behaviors. The second means by which dense neighborhood networks inhibited crime was by informally controlling members of its own group through negative reactions. Individuals would be less prone to misbehave if they knew they would be strongly rebuked and reprimanded by others (for a discussion of the effects of shame and embarrassment see Grasmick, Bursik, and Arneklev 1993).

The third dimension of social disorganization theory measured was organizational participation. Participation in formal voluntary organizations represented the “structural embodiment of local community solidarity” (p. 779). When participation in local organizations was low, links between institutions were weakened and the ability of a neighborhood to defend its interests was inhibited because of a lack of established community solidarity on an issue.

Sampson and Groves (1989) also identified five exogenous factors that should affect the mediating variables of social disorganization theory. Included in these five factors were the three variables that were most associated with Shaw and McKay’s classic theory: socioeconomic status (SES), residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity. The other two variables were family disruption and urbanization. Low SES communities lacked money and resources. Consequently these communities were unable to maintain local organizations. The authors hypothesized that low SES should primarily affect crime by weakening local community organizations and the ability of a community to supervise youths. Residential mobility disrupted local social networks, since such ties took time to develop and this process was hindered when people kept moving. Hence, residential mobility should affect crime primarily through the disruption
of local social ties. Ethnic heterogeneity thwarted the ability of residents in a neighborhood to communicate with each other and achieve consensus on an issue because of their different backgrounds. Suttles (1968) argued that people may initially fear and distrust individuals from a different background when they would initially trust individuals who looked and acted like them in similar circumstances. This communication impediment disrupted the ability of a community to form a consensus on an issue even when people shared common values and outlooks.

The other two exogenous factors included in their model were family disruption and urbanization. Family disruption was defined as the percentage of one-parent families with children and the proportion of divorced or separated adults within the community of those who had ever been married. Sampson and Groves (1989) argued that two-parent families provided more family control and parochial control by increasing the supervision of children within the family and within the neighborhood compared to one-parent families. They hypothesized that high levels of family disruption should affect crime by weakening the ability of the community to monitor local youths. Urbanization, on the other hand, should primarily affect crime by breaking down local social ties and friendship networks and inhibiting the participation of residents in local organizations and institutions (see Karsada and Janowitz 1974).

Sampson and Groves (1989) constructed eight dependent variables from the self-reported measures of crime, including six violent and property victimization rates and two personal offending rates. Weighted-least squares regression was used to test the theoretical model. The authors reported that their findings strongly supported the systemic model of crime. The exogenous factors of social disorganization theory affected
the mediating variables as expected. The effect of SES on organizational participation was especially large, as was the effect of residential stability on local friendship networks. All of the exogenous factors significantly affected the mediating variable of unsupervised teenage peer groups. In regard to the effects of all of the exogenous factors and the mediating variables on the dependent variable total victimization (the most general indicator among the dependent variables), unsupervised teenage peer groups had the largest independent effect. The effects of local friendship networks and organizational participation on total victimization were also significant, but none of the effects of the three traditional exogenous factors of social disorganization theory was significant. However, the effects of family disruption and urbanization were positively related to total victimization. This demonstrated how misleading inferences could be made about the effects of the exogenous variables of social disorganization theory on crime, when the mediating variables of the theory were not taken into account. “The three dimensions of community social disorganization mediate over one-half of the effect of Shaw and McKay’s three structural factors (SES, mobility, heterogeneity) on the most general indicator of crime (i.e., total victimization rate) in the predicted manner” (p. 791). The primary mediating variable in the model was unsupervised teenage peer groups. Similar results were also reported for the effects of the independent variables on the other self-reported measure of crime. In conclusion, Sampson and Groves’ (1989) research was the first to measure the concept of social disorganization and directly test the theory that originated from Shaw and McKay. But they were not the last. And soon other researchers began to raise questions that are still not completely answered today.
CRITIQUES OF THE SYSTEMIC MODEL OF CRIME

In 1993, Warner and Pierce reexamined social disorganization theory using data from 60 Boston neighborhoods. While this study did not directly look at the systemic model of crime, it did raise some interesting questions concerning the effects of the exogenous variables in social disorganization theory. The authors addressed a primary criticism of previous research on social disorganization theory -- the use of official crime data (see Bursik 1988) -- by using calls to the police to measure three different types of crime: assault, robbery, and burglary. Calls to the police data, unlike official crime data, are not susceptible to police bias, since they are unscreened by police and reflect complaints made directly by citizens. However, they are susceptible to a critique of other self-reported measures of victimization. Citizens do not always report criminal behavior. This is especially the case when the perpetrator is someone they know. Warner and Pierce found that poverty positively affected all three measures of crime and ethnic heterogeneity positively affected burglary. However, the effect of residential mobility on assault was significant and negative, contrary to the predictions of social disorganization theory.

Warner and Pierce (1993) also examined the effect of interaction terms on crime. These findings also raised questions because the effect of poverty on the three different measures of crime decreased in neighborhoods where residential mobility and ethnic heterogeneity were low. On closer examination, the authors noted that the six neighborhoods with the highest assault and burglary rates had high levels of poverty, but...
low levels of ethnic heterogeneity. Furthermore, of these six neighborhoods, four were predominantly Black and the other two were largely Irish.

In another study noting the centrality of social ties to the systemic model of crime, Warner and Rountree (1997) set out to add to the scant literature that had examined social ties as a mediating factor of social disorganization theory. They also tested the generalizability of the effect of social ties on crime across different types of neighborhoods. Little attention had been given to effect of social ties across different types of neighborhoods, and what attention had been given to this issue had yielded mixed results. For example, Merry (1981) suggested that friendship groups that infrequently crossed racial lines restricted the ability of social networks to control crime, because they lacked breadth. In contrast, Clinard and Abbot (1976) argued that friendship groups that crossed racial boundaries inhibited the ability of social networks to control crime, because they decreased within group solidarity by exposing individuals to different values. Furthermore, while social disorganization theory assumes that individuals share common values, recent ethnographic studies suggested that this was not always the case (Anderson 1990, 1994; Wilson 1996). If non-normative beliefs existed in certain types of neighborhoods, it cannot be assumed that the effect of social ties on crime would be consistent across all neighborhoods.

Warner and Rountree (1997) used data from a 1990 survey of 100 census tracts in Seattle to construct a measure of local social ties. The exogenous factors of social disorganization theory were constructed from U.S. Census data. Official crime data were used to measure two dependent variables: assault and burglary. They reported that social ties had a negative effect on assault, but a positive effect on burglary. Furthermore, social
ties did not mediate the effect of poverty and ethnic heterogeneity on crime. Only the
effect of residential mobility appeared to be mediated. They also considered the effects of
interaction terms among the exogenous variables on crime. They found that the effect of
poverty on violent crime was conditioned by residential mobility and ethnic
heterogeneity. When residential mobility was low and ethnic heterogeneity was low the
effect of poverty on violent crime (assault) increased. The effect of poverty on property
crime was also moderated by residential mobility. The effect of poverty on property
crime (burglary) increased when residential mobility was low. These latter findings
 corroborated Warner and Pierce (1993). More importantly, though, they reported that the
effect of social ties on assault was stronger in predominantly White neighborhoods than
in minority neighborhoods. They speculated that the effect of social ties might be
stronger in predominantly White neighborhoods because of the limited breadth of social
ties in minority neighborhoods. While social ties may exist in predominantly minority
neighborhoods, they may not extend beyond the boundary of the neighborhood, hence,
limiting residents’ access to extra communal resources that could help regulate the
neighborhood.

The authors revisited the subject of social ties in 1999. Rountree and Warner
(1999) asked the question – are social ties gendered? They reported that while both males
and females have similar levels of social ties, the effect of social ties on crime was
stronger for females than males. This was especially the case for communities with few
female-headed households. Warner (2003) also considered the role of culture in the
systemic model of crime. She reported that both concentrated disadvantage and social ties
affected cultural strength, which in turn, affected informal social control processes. That
is, as concentrated disadvantage increased and social ties decreased, the cultural strength of a community weakened, which decreased the level of informal social control. Both of these studies further called into question the role of social ties in social disorganization theory.

Bellair (1997) also examined the role of social ties in preventing crime. Bellair examined how frequency of social interaction amongst neighbors affected crime. He pointed out that when studies measured social ties in terms of the size of local family and friendship networks, they consistently supported social disorganization theory, but when studies measured social ties in terms of frequency of interaction amongst neighbors they did not. The systemic model of crime assumes that frequent social interactions are more effective at controlling crime than infrequent interactions. This assumption had not been tested. Furthermore, infrequent social interaction may be as effective, if not more effective at controlling crime then frequent social interactions. First, infrequent social interaction amongst neighbors may indicate the existence of broader social networks within a neighborhood. The frequency of interactions amongst neighbors may matter little to the supervisory capacity of a neighborhood. As long as neighbors interacted occasionally they may be willing to intervene on the behalf of others if they observe suspicious behavior. Furthermore, recent urban research had indicated that frequent interaction amongst neighbors was no longer the norm in urban communities. In today’s society, it is increasingly easy to sustain close friendships with people who live far away, because of modern means of communication and transportation. Second, Granovetter (1973) suggested that weak social ties might be crucial for community organizations. Unlike strong social ties, weak social ties provide connections between different groups.
within a community. Such linkages are crucial for sustaining community organizations that need to draw upon multiple resources within a community. Communities with only strong social ties, on the other hand, may remain fragmented and disorganized because of a lack of communication between different groups.

Data from the Police Services Study were used to test how different frequencies of social interaction within a community affect crime. The data comprised 60 urban communities from three cities: Rochester (NY), St. Petersburg/Tampa (FL), and St. Louis (MO). Ten different measures of social interaction were constructed each reflecting a different degree of interaction between neighbors. The dependent variables were constructed from victimization measures and several exogenous variables were also included in the analysis. Bellair (1997) reported that of the 10 measures of social interaction constructed, getting together once a year or more had the strongest and most consistent effect on the measures of criminal victimization. This finding contradicted the systemic model’s assumption that more frequent social interactions are more inhibitive of crime. Socioeconomic status (SES) and ethnic/racial heterogeneity were also strong predictors of crime. But when the social interaction variable of getting together once a year or more was added to the equations, the effect of these factors on crime was often reduced and in some cases, became insignificant. Hence, infrequent social interaction was able to mediate some of the effects of the exogenous factors on crime as social disorganization theory predicts. However, it should be noted that this finding was not consistent across all equations.

In a qualitative study, Pattillo (1998) examined the ability of dense social ties to regulate criminal activity. Most studies of Blacks/African Americans had focused on the
poor. Pattillo, on the other hand, examined the organizational structure of the Black middle class neighborhood “Groveland.” She observed that Black middle class neighborhoods more closely resembled poor neighborhoods than White middle class neighborhoods. Groveland had a relatively high poverty rate compared to White middle class neighborhoods and was located closer to high crime and high poverty areas. Furthermore, despite having strong social ties and high rates of home ownership within the neighborhood, the neighborhood still had a high crime rate compared to White middle class neighborhoods. While the dense social ties within the neighborhood did facilitate informal and formal social control processes, they also inhibited them, because much of the criminal element was incorporated into the dense social and kinship networks. For example, a resident might feel reluctant to call the police on a local teenager who was dealing drugs if they liked and respected the teenager’s parent. This observation, like Bellair’s (1997), contradicted the assumption made by the systemic model that dense social ties were inherently inhibitive of crime.

Veysey and Messner (1999) reanalyzed Sampson and Groves’ (1989) seminal study of social disorganization theory using more advanced statistical techniques. In the original study, Sampson and Groves used several independent regression equations to test their proposed model. To improve on this, Veysey and Messner simultaneously estimated all of the equations using a structural equation model. This approach was an improvement over the original, because it allowed all of the information about the predicted relationships to be used in a single model. Veysey and Messner began their analysis by re-estimating Sampson and Groves’ original model. They confirmed the original findings, but multiple indicators of goodness of fit indicated that the overall fit of the model was
poor. Next, they estimated the more exact model implied by Sampson and Groves’ theory. In this model, both organizational participation and local friendship networks affected total victimization directly and indirectly through unsupervised teenage peer groups. This model fit the data much better than the original. From their analysis, the authors derived three conclusions. First, Sampson and Groves overstated the mediating effects of the three measures of social disorganization. While the three indicators did mediate a substantial proportion of the effects of the exogenous variables on crime, the exogenous variables, in particular urbanization and family disruption, still had large direct effects. Second, the correlation matrix revealed that the three indicators of social disorganization theory were not closely related. Only unsupervised teenage peer groups and organization participation were significantly, albeit moderately, related. This suggested that the concept of social disorganization as measured by Sampson and Groves could not be thought of as a single construct. Instead, it represented several distinct processes by which communities regulate themselves. Third, the final model may be interpreted to support theories other than social disorganization because of the strong effect of unsupervised teenage peer groups. For example, because of this effect the results may be interpreted as supportive of social learning theory. However, the authors agreed with Sampson and Groves’ conclusion that social disorganization theory had “vitality and renewed relevance for criminological inquiry” (p. 172).
EXPANDING SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORY

Researchers have known for a long time that violence varies across neighborhoods. And while aggregate-level processes such as poverty and residential instability were known to be associated with violence, it was not entirely clear why. Social disorganization theory and later the systemic model of crime provided a partial explanation for the relationship between external factors such as poverty and residential mobility and crime and violence, but they failed to completely explain it. Indeed, much of the research on social ties did not fully support the systemic model of crime and the social disorganization perspective. In order to extend the research within the perspective, Sampson et al. (1997) focused on informal social control processes. Like the systemic model, they assumed that organizational characteristics of neighborhoods explained variations in crime and mediated the effect of external factors on crime. But instead of concentrating on social ties and networks that fostered social control processes, they focused on informal social control processes that were capable of operating without strong social ties in a community. To be more specific, they examined on the concept of collective efficacy. Collective efficacy was defined as “social cohesion among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good” (p. 918). They argued that effective informal social control mechanisms such as residents monitoring local youth, preventing truancy, and stopping arguments that may escalate into violence are crucial for controlling neighborhood crime. But in order for neighbors to intervene on the behalf of others they have to trust them and share common values with
them. Individuals will be reluctant to intervene on the behalf of others when they do not trust them and in situations where the social rules are unclear.

Data from the PHDCN were used to test the theory. The project’s community survey interviewed 8,782 residents in the city of Chicago across 343 neighborhood clusters (constructed from census tracts). The community survey included questions about social cohesion, informal social control processes, perceptions of violence in a neighborhood, and criminal victimization. Data from the 1990 census were used to construct three external factors. Sampson et al. (1997) hypothesized that increases in collective efficacy should reduce crime in a neighborhood and mediate the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory in much the same way that social ties and networks mediated the external factors in the systemic model of crime. The exogenous factors included in the analysis were concentrated disadvantage (a measure of multiple disadvantages including indicators of SES, female-headed families, age structure, and race), residential stability, and immigrant concentration. Using hierarchical linear models and controlling for individual-level factors, the authors reported that increases of collective efficacy at the neighborhood level significantly reduced crime and mediated much of the effects of the exogenous variables on crime. Overall, this study was important for two reasons. First, it introduced the new concept collective efficacy. Second, and perhaps more important, it marked the beginning of a shift within the social disorganization perspective away from focusing on social ties to focusing on informal social control process that were not reliant on the presence of strong social ties to effectively control crime.
Morenoff, Sampson, and Raudenbush (2001) extended Sampson et al.’s (1997) analysis of collective efficacy by conducting a spatial analysis of homicide rates across the 343 neighborhoods in the PHDCN. They also extended the theoretical underpinnings of the shift from focusing on social ties to informal social control processes. They noted that the traditional view of urban neighborhoods as “urban villages,” which consisted of dense social networks and were contained and relatively isolated from each other, still pervaded criminological thought. Specifically, much research on the systemic model of crime and social capital assumed this ideal type. However, such neighborhoods were not typical in contemporary cities. Neighborhoods in contemporary cities were often characterized by weak social ties among residents and permeable borders that did not map neatly onto distinct geographic areas. There were also other reasons to question the focus on social ties in criminological research. First, some research suggested that strong social ties within a neighborhood might impede the development of a social control mechanism. Wilson (1996) pointed out that many poor neighborhoods that have high crime rates were also highly integrated. Furthermore, Patiilo-McCoy (1999) argued that in some cases dense social networks might facilitate organized crime, because when criminals were imbedded in local networks through their family and normative friends they had access to the social capital that those networks provided. Second, many neighborhoods that have strong social control processes in place were not characterized by strong social ties among neighbors. Granovetter (1973) suggested that weak social ties might be crucial to bringing together otherwise disparate groups and gaining access to more social resources. Bellair (1997) applied this logic to crime control and found that weak social ties were effective crime control agents (see previous section).
The results of the analysis by Morenoff et al. (2000) indicated that spatial proximity to homicide, collective efficacy, and concentrated disadvantage were predictive of lower homicide rates when controlling for other factors and prior homicide rates. Unlike the previous study by Sampson et al. (1997), however, the effect of concentrated disadvantage on violence was not mediated by collective efficacy. Morenoff et al. (2000) also examined the direct effect of social ties, neighborhood organizations, and voluntary associations on homicide. Both organizations and voluntary association were considered forms of social capital that might assist in the development of social control mechanisms within a neighborhood. The authors reported that there was no direct relationship between social ties and homicide nor organizations and voluntary associations and homicide. But they did find that social ties, organizations, and voluntary associations positively affected collective efficacy suggesting that these variables inhibited crime in so far as they increased collective efficacy in a neighborhood. However, much caution should be taken in interpreting the effects of local organizations and voluntary associations on violence. By only considering the presence of organizations and the attendance at voluntary associations, the authors were unable to ascertain whether or not residents were attempting to use local institutions to solve problems such as crime. Hence, the conclusion that “perhaps criminological theory has overstated the benefits to be derived from local forms of institutional organization” may be premature (p. 553).

In a related study, Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) attempted to disentangle the relationship between public disorder and crime by taking into account other structural characteristics of neighborhoods such as poverty, mixed land use, and collective efficacy.
Previous research by Wilson and Kelling (1982) theorized that what Hunter (1985) called “public incivilities” (i.e., signs of urban decay such as visible garbage, graffiti, and broken windows) increased predatory crimes, because offenders assumed based on the condition of the neighborhood that residents simply did not care about what went on in the neighborhood. Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) challenged the “broken windows” theory by arguing that both forms of social disorder and public disorder have the same antecedents as predatory crimes. In other words, the authors suggested that public incivilities and predatory crimes were caused by the same explanatory processes and that they fell on “different ends of a ‘seriousness’ continuum” (p. 608).

Using the Chicago data set, Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) tested their contention. They measured public disorder with two variables: social disorder and public disorder. Social disorder referred to threatening behaviors that occurred in public such as verbal harassment from strangers, misbehaving youths, and other public derelictions. Whereas physical disorder referred more directly to what Hunter (1985) referred to as public incivilities, that is, visible signs of urban decay. They measured multiple predatory crimes including violent victimization, household burglary, homicide, and robbery. The explanatory variables they considered were concentrated disadvantage, residential stability, immigrant concentration, mixed land use (the use of land for both residential and business purposes), and collective efficacy, among others. The results of the analysis indicated that public disorder and the predatory crime variables were only moderately correlated. However, when the other explanatory variables were taken into account public disorder was no longer significantly related to crime with the exception of robbery. Based on these findings, the authors concluded that the relationship between public disorder and
crime was spurious. The variable collective efficacy, on the other hand, proved a robust predictor of crime even when the other explanatory variables and the reciprocal effect of violence on collective efficacy were controlled for. Concentrated disadvantage and mixed land use were also strong predictors of violence. Overall, Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) further disentangled the structures and processes that led to crime in a neighborhood by not only looking at antecedents of crime in a neighborhood, but at how these antecedents interrelated to each other. Subsequently, Sampson (2006a) has considered the possibility that crime may also affect collective efficacy and other criminological antecedents, but as of yet, no empirical research has addressed this issue.

Several other studies have also attempted to address the mediating processes of social disorganization and other neighborhood organization theories of crime. Bellair (2000) examined the relationship between informal surveillance and crime. Like Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) he also considered potential reciprocal relationships. Bellair noted that few studies have examined the effect of informal social control on crime and no studies have examined potential reciprocal relationships between informal social control processes and crime. The latter was surprising, given that many theories had suggested that this might be the case. While the systemic theory of crime predicted that informal surveillance processes reduced crime, other theories suggested that crime might also affect informal surveillance processes. Theories of community decline argued that street crime may weaken informal social control processes by constraining people’s social interaction. When street crimes increased people became fearful and more reluctant to leave their home and participate in neighborhood organizations and informal social control networks, thus, reducing the capacity of a neighborhood to monitor itself. In
contrast, the functions of crime perspective argued that some types of crime such as burglary increased the capacity of neighborhoods to regulate themselves by collectively infuriating residents and uniting them. However, this potential positive effect on informal surveillance processes may be masked by other crimes such as robbery and stranger assault that may weaken informal social control processes in a neighborhood. Hence, in order to identify the effect of burglary on informal surveillance, robbery/stranger assault needed to be controlled.

Bellair (2000) measured burglary and robbery/stranger assault by combining official crime data and victimization data from the Seattle victimization survey. Informal surveillance and fear of crime was also measured using data from the Seattle victimization survey. Several control variables were included in the analysis. The results of the analysis supported all three perspectives. Both informal surveillance and robbery/stranger assault were strongly and inversely related to each other as both the systemic model and community decline theories predicted. The effect of informal surveillance on burglary was not significant, but burglary positively affected surveillance when robbery/stranger assault was controlled supporting the functions of crime perspective. Furthermore, the effect of robbery/stranger assault on surveillance was medicated by fear of crime as predicted by community crime theories. Overall, the analysis suggested that the relationship between informal social control and crime was more complex than had previously been measured. However, Bellair pointed out that this study did not invalidate traditional recursive approaches to research on the systemic model of crime, since the model considered neighborhood organization in terms of local networks, which decreased crime by bolstering informal social control processes.
Building on the work of Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) and Bellair (2000), Markowitz et al. (2001) looked at the relationship between disorder, burglary, cohesion, and fear of crime. They expanded research on social disorganization theory in three respects. First, they added to the scant literature that had examined neighborhood cohesion as a mediating factor between neighborhood demographic variables and public disorder. Unlike Sampson et al.’s (1997) measure of social cohesion (i.e., sharing common beliefs), they defined neighborhood cohesion in terms of neighborhood networks and organizational participation. They point out that previous studies have indicated that the relationship between neighborhood cohesion and crime was not as straightforward as social disorganization theory predicted (see Warner and Rountree 1997; Rountree and Warner 1999; Patillo 1998 in previous section). Second, they tested Skogan’s (1990) argument that high levels of public disorder increased more serious crimes in a neighborhood (see also Wilson and Kelling 1982). Finally, they examined community decline theory’s prediction that public disorder and crime increased fear of crime, which in turn, decreased neighborhood cohesion, which led to more disorder and crime. When public incivilities in a neighborhood increased, residents who could afford to move out of the neighborhood did and residents who could not move out constrained their social interactions due to the fear of becoming a victim of crime. However, when residents withdrew from public life they decreased the neighborhood’s social cohesion and its regulator capacity on crime, which in turn, led to more crime and disorder.

Markowitz et al. (2001) used data from the British Crime Survey to examine the relationship between disorder, cohesion, fear, and crime (measured as burglary). The results of their analysis indicated that neighborhood cohesion mediated part of the effects
of low SES, ethnic heterogeneity, family disruption, and residential instability on public
disorder. However, contrary to Skogan’s (1990) assertion, public disorder did not directly
increase crime. On the other hand, their results did support the community decline
theory’s prediction of a feedback loop. That is, the results indicated that increases in
public disorder and crime, increased fear of crime, which in turn, decreased cohesion that
subsequently led to more public disorder and crime. Thus, while public disorder did not
directly affect crime as Skogan and the broken windows theory predicted, it did indirectly
affect crime by increasing fear, which in turn, lowered neighborhood cohesion.

A question that has plagued social disorganization and other neighborhood
organization theories of crime is “Why do some social organized neighborhoods
nevertheless exhibit relatively high crime rates?” (Browning, Feinberg, and Dietz
2004:504; see Warner and Pierce 1993). Browning et al. (2004) attempted to answer this
question by examining the relationship between social network interaction and
reciprocated exchange (i.e., social ties), collective efficacy, and crime. The systemic
model of crime views social ties as an unalloyed good and predicts that increases in
social ties inhibits crime in a neighborhood. However, cultural transmission theories of
crime suggest that increases in social ties in the absence of strong social controls may
actually increase crime in a neighborhood. Combining aspects of these two competing
theoretical perspectives and recent insights by Bellair (1997) and Pattillo (1998),
Browning et al. (2004) proposed the negotiated coexistence model to explain why some
socially organized neighborhoods have high crime rates. They argued that while social
ties may increase neighborhood social control (collective efficacy), they also potentially
increase crime by increasing the social capital of offenders who are already embedded in a neighborhood’s social networks (see Pattillo 1998).

Browning et al. (2004) tested the negotiated coexistence model against both the predictions made by the systemic model and cultural transmission theories of crime concerning the relationship between social ties and crime. The authors used the Chicago data set and controlled for neighborhood organizational characteristics including concentrated disadvantage, immigrant concentration, and residential stability. The findings strongly supported the negotiated coexistence model. Unlike the predictions of both the systemic model of crime and cultural transmission theories of crime, the effect of social ties on crime was insignificant when controlling for other neighborhood organizational characteristics (excluding collective efficacy). On the other hand, the effect of social ties on collective efficacy was positive and significant. Furthermore, when the variable collective efficacy was entered into a model that included the control variables and social ties, the effect of social ties became positive and significant as the negotiated coexistence model predicted and the effect of collective efficacy on crime remained strong and negative. They also reported that effect of the interaction between social ties and collective efficacy was positive and significant. This finding strongly suggests that the effect of collective efficacy on crime diminishes in neighborhoods that are characterized by strong social networks as the negotiated coexistence model predicts. By highlighting the countervailing influence of the effect of social ties on crime, the negotiated coexistence model provided a plausible explanation for why some socially organized neighborhoods have high crime rates and further suggested that the
relationship between the mediating factors of social disorganization theory are not as straightforward as predicted.

The articles discussed above focused on examining the role of mediating factors in social disorganization theory and other neighborhood theories of crime. These factors included social ties, collective efficacy, public disorder, and other social control processes. But as Triplett, Gainey, and Sun (2003) pointed out “While the systemic model that today’s theories of social disorganization are based on acknowledges that neighborhood-based institutions may vary in their ability to contribute to effective social control, relatively little attention has been given to their role in understanding neighborhood rates of crime” (p. 439). Sampson and colleagues’ concept of collective efficacy as discussed did not exclude the possibility of residents using local organizations and institutions to regulate crime. The informal social control aspect of collective efficacy was left open ended as to how residents regulated crime and deviant behavior. But the measurement of the concept focused on more traditional forms of parochial controls rather than the use of local organizations and institutions.

For example, Sampson and colleagues measured the informal social control aspect of the variable collective efficacy with the following five questions: (1) “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 about it?,” (2) “If some children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it?,” (3) “If a child was showing disrespect to an adult, how likely is it that people in your neighborhood would scold that child?,” (4) “If there was a fight in front of your house and someone was being beaten or threatened, how likely is it that
your neighbors would do something about it?,” and (5) “Suppose that because of budget
cuts the fire station closest to your home was going to be closed down by the city. How
likely is it that neighborhood residents would organize to try to do something to keep the
fire station open?” Of the five questions, the first four focused on traditional forms of
parochial controls – the informal surveillance of children and neighbors. Only the last
question broadened the measure to potentially include less traditional forms of parochial
controls such as the usage of local organizations to keep the fire station open. But, the
question did not specify how residents would attempt to keep the fire station open. Thus,
while Sampson and colleagues’ concept of collective efficacy, as discussed, appeared to
include the possibility of residents using local institutions and organizations to regulate
their neighborhood, as measured, the concept focused on traditional forms of parochial
controls and not the usage or potential usage of organizations. Furthermore, the concept
and its measure did not consider forms of public social control that might affect the
ability of a community to regulate itself. However, other more recent studies have
focused on the ability of local institutions and organizations to regulate crime and obtain
outside resources.

Peterson, Krivo, and Harris (2000) and Velez (2001) respectively examined the
ability of local institutions and forms of public social control to regulate crime in a
neighborhood. Peterson et al. (2000) examined the role of different types of local
institutions in regulating violence in a neighborhood. Most previous criminological
studies used universal measures of institutions (e.g., the presence of institutions and
organizational participation). They found that the presence of recreational centers in a
neighborhood reduced violence, but the presence of local bars and taverns had the
opposite effect. Velez (2001) argued that the ability of a neighborhood to secure outside resources (i.e., public social control) was more important for disadvantaged neighborhoods than for affluent ones. Unlike affluent neighborhoods, disadvantaged neighborhoods do not have the internal resources needed to regulate crime. Also, disadvantaged neighborhoods have less public social control to begin with than affluent neighborhoods – hence, public assistance should have a greater impact. Using data from the Police Services Survey, Velez measured public social control with a government and police satisfaction scale. She reported that high levels of public social control reduced crime and that the effect was especially pronounced for disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Carr (2003) in an ethnographic study also considered the ability of local organizations to control crime and obtain outside resources. As part of the Comparative Neighborhood Study at the University of Chicago, Carr studied the social organization and informal social control processes of the neighborhood “Beltway.” Carr described Beltway as “a homogenous [White], residential stable neighborhood with an above-average level of income and a below-average level of crime” (p. 1262). From the study, Carr drew two important conclusions that questioned the assumptions made by the systemic model. First, strong interpersonal networks and social ties were not important for the development and maintenance of informal social control processes. Residents in Beltway did not want to become directly involved. Many families in Beltway were dual-earner families. Both parents worked outside the home, thus limiting their actually time spent in the neighborhood. Not only did this diminish family control, but also the ability of neighbors to form strong social ties. As a result, many of the traditional forms of parochial control such as the collective supervision of youth and intervention in
neighborhood disputes were diminished in Beltway. Many parents were not present
during the day to help monitor local children and residents were reluctant to intervene
when disputes occurred between neighbors they did not know. Furthermore, the
collective supervision of youth that occurred in Beltway was age-graded. While some
residents willingly monitored each other’s younger children, they were reluctant to
monitor the behavior of teenagers out of fear. Teenagers in Beltway were largely
unsupervised, except for organized activities such as sports.

Second, the parochial and public spheres of control were not independent from
each other. Beltway was characterized by what Carr (2003) described as a “new
parochialism.” The new parochialism was defined by the merging of the parochial and
public spheres of control. In Beltway the new parochialism replaced traditional private
and parochial forms of control. Instead of becoming directly involved in neighborhood
problems, residents in Beltway preferred more secure and less direct methods of solving
neighborhood issues. Residents in Beltway utilized local institutions and organizations
with direct ties to public resources to resolve neighborhood problems. For example, the
local problem solving organization was able to close down a local bar known for
attracting problematic behavior by using its ties to the local alderman and city liquor
commission to initiate a vote to revoke the bar’s license. As Carr stated, “The new
parochialism is that set of practices that creates solutions at the parochial level but owes
its existence and its efficacy to the intervention of institutions and groups from outside
the neighborhood” (p. 1252).

Carr (2003) identified three historical trends that led to the new parochialism
replacing traditional private and parochial controls in Beltway. First, nationally there
were an increasing number of women joining the labor force. With more women in the labor force there were fewer people at home to engage in traditional forms of private and parochial controls. Second, there was the national rise of teenage delinquency and the formation of gangs in the mid 1980s and early 90s. With the rise of teenage delinquency, adults became more fearful of teenagers and less willing to monitor their behavior around the block and intercede when they were misbehaving. Third, there was the initiation of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) program in the mid 1990s. CAPS was a city wide initiative that attempted to stimulate local problem solving efforts by encouraging resident participation and given them direction. And while the CAPS program was isolated to Chicago, it may be a model for other cities to eventually follow once it is established that this new parochialism is a viable social control mechanism in other neighborhoods besides Beltway.

Overall, Carr’s research highlights the ability of residents in Beltway to use local organizations as an effective means of social control when strong social ties and traditional private and parochial forms of social control are not present. Indeed, Carr’s findings strongly suggest that social ties may no longer play a prominent role in controlling crime in today’s neighborhoods. Carr’s work also implies that researchers should consider the use of local organizations. Specifically, are local organizations being used to address local problems? As Peterson et al. (2000) starkly point out, not all local institutions are beneficial to a community’s well being.

While the new parochialism discussed by Carr referred to indirect forms of social control and the measurement of collective efficacy primarily referred to direct forms of social control, such as the supervision and monitoring of neighborhood children and
youth, not much attention has been given to the question, why do some individuals decide to pursue direct forms of social control rather than indirect forms of social control and vice versa in order to resolve a problematic situation. Warner (2007) asked this question. To be more specific, she asked, why do some individuals decide to directly resolve disputes with neighbors by directly dealing with the other individual and why do other individuals choose to indirectly resolve disputes by letting someone else deal with it such as the landlord or the police.

Warner (2007) used data from 66 neighborhoods in two southern cities to examine which neighborhood-level and individual-level factors precipitated individuals to choose either direct or indirect forms of intervention to resolve disputes with neighbors. The neighborhood-level factors included disadvantage, mobility, social ties, social cohesion and trust, and faith in the police. The individual-level factors were disadvantage, mobility, and age. Warner reported four key findings. First, the effect of neighborhood disadvantage on both direct and indirect forms of intervention was non-linear. In other words, individuals in the poorest and most affluent neighborhoods were less likely to engage in both forms of intervention. Second, social ties positively affected the direct intervention, but they did not affect the indirect intervention. To some extent this finding corroborates Morenoff et al.’s (2001) finding that social ties positively affected collective efficacy. Also, it further suggests, like Carr (2003), that social ties are not related to the more indirect forms of social control that are becoming increasingly common in today’s society. Third, social cohesion and trust did not affect direct intervention and decrease the probability of indirect intervention. And fourth, neighborhood residential mobility did not affect direct intervention, but increased the
likelihood of indirect intervention. Overall, Warner demonstrated that neighborhood-level organizational factors affected different types of social control processes differently, suggesting that some types of social control may be more effective in some types of neighborhoods than others.

**CONCLUSION**

The present chapter presented the literature review for this research. The literature was presented in chronological order as much as possible, but due to the substantive concerns of this thesis, it was not always possible. The first section discussed classical social disorganization theory as presented by Shaw and McKay. The second section looked at the reasons why the theory fell out of prominence in criminological thought and then discussed the revitalization of the theory and the systemic model of crime. The central tenet of the systemic model was that strong neighborhood-level social ties and networks led to the reduction of crime and deviance by strengthening informal social control processes. The third section examined critiques of the systemic model. Overall, the analysis of the central tenet of the systemic model yielded mixed support. No doubt partly as a result, many theorists including Sampson, one of the pioneers of the systemic model, began to question the central tenet of the model. The fourth section examined research that attempted to expand social disorganization theory by focusing on social control processes that may effectively operate without the support of strong social ties. Sampson’s theory of collective efficacy and Carr’s work on the new parochialism were also discussed in this section.
Overall, the literature indicates that there is still much work that needs to be done within the social disorganization perspective. There are still many lingering questions that need to be answered. Most research on the systemic model of crime has focused on social ties exclusively and has ignored the informal social control processes that social ties are purported to support. That is, most research on the systemic model of crime has measured social ties such that it was not only indicative of the concept it was suppose to represent, but also the informal social control mechanisms that it was supposed to facilitate. Likewise, the more recent research that has focused on informal social control processes has largely ignored the potential role that social ties may still play in today’s society. As a result there is a need to more fully integrate these two largely separate research agendas in order to answer some of the lingering questions that still pervade the perspective. This is especially the case given that Carr’s work, in particular, suggests that social ties may no longer play a prominent role in neighborhood regulation. Furthermore, no one to date has attempted to assess any aspect of Carr’s work on the new parochialism, which may represent an important new source of social control, given the changing structure of our society.
CHAPTER 3

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

The four theoretical models that will be combined to address the research questions of this thesis are presented in this chapter in four sections – one for each theory. In each section a brief overview of the theory is presented and then hypotheses from each of the theories are discussed. The first theory presented is the classical social disorganization model. Unlike the other three theories presented, the classical social disorganization model does not contain any mediating variables. While this model is not entirely true to Shaw and McKay’s (1969) original vision, it is representative of the early research conducted on the theory. The second theory presented is the systemic model of crime. This theory is also not true to the hypotheses associated with the model. Instead, it is representative of the bulk of research conducted on the model. The third theory presented is the theory of collective efficacy. And the fourth theory presented is the integrated and expanded model. This final theory integrates aspects of the other theories and expands the perspective to include the concept of organizational activism, which was derived from Carr’s (2003) recent work on the new parochialism.

The primary focus of this research is to determine the basic relationships among the mediating factors of social ties, collective efficacy, and organizational activism within the social disorganization framework. It is not the intent of this research to consider all possible relationships and hypotheses within the social disorganization perspective, but
rather to simply help establish the main relationships amongst these three factors. To be more specific, the present research attempts to answer the following questions:

- Is organizational activism an important new source of crime control in today’s neighborhoods?
- What is the relationship between organizational activism and collective efficacy in urban neighborhoods?
- Do strong social ties play a central role in preventing crime by leading to the development of informal social control processes, such as collective efficacy and organizational activism as the systemic model of crime predicts?
- Or is the development of informal social control processes that prevent crime not hindered by the presence of weak social ties as the more recent research of Sampson and Carr implies?
- Does the inclusion of social ties, collective efficacy, and organizational activism as intervening factors mediate the effects of the exogenous variables on crime in social disorganization theory?

THE CLASSICAL SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION MODEL

The classical social disorganization model presented here is derived from research on Shaw and McKay’s social disorganization theory of crime (see Shaw and McKay 1969). Shaw and McKay suggested that the ecological processes of urbanization and industrialization led to adverse conditions such as poverty, residential mobility, and ethnic/racial heterogeneity in some parts of a city, which in turn, through various
mechanisms increased crime and deviance. Unfortunately, Shaw and McKay were not theoretically consistent in their description of the processes that mediated the effect of the exogenous variables (e.g., poverty and residential mobility) in their theory on crime and deviance. Furthermore, the initial research on the theory was limited by available data, which did not provide good measures of some of their proposed mediating processes. As a result, much of the initial research on Shaw and McKay’s theory focused on the effects of the exogenous variables on crime and did not attempt to assess the mediating processes discussed in their work (see Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1 The Classical Social Disorganization Model**

![Diagram of the Classical Social Disorganization Model]

- Concentrated Disadvantage
- Immigrant Concentration
- Residential Stability
- SD1
- SD2
- SD3
- Crime and Violence
Concentrated disadvantage is a measure of extreme poverty composed of several indicators. Due to these indicators’ high correlation with percent Black, percent Black is also included in the measure. Poverty is a mainstay of ecological research. It was discussed extensively by Shaw and McKay (1969). One of their key findings was that delinquency decreased as you moved away from the central business district in Chicago. This finding has often led people to assert that Shaw and McKay argued that crime was correlated with poverty, since poverty also decreased as you moved away from the central business district. But this was not the case. Shaw and McKay stated that the same ecological forces that caused crime also caused poverty. Nevertheless, concentrated disadvantage is thought to be positively correlated with crime. Poor neighborhoods lack the resources needed to effectively prevent crime. Such neighborhoods tend to have weak organizational bases from which to organize and have problems bringing in outside resources to help resolve problems.

Sampson and colleagues in their study of collective efficacy have used the measure of concentrated disadvantage extensively. They have found that the measure positively affects crime and deviance both directly and indirectly (Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001). In related research, Warner and Pierce (1993) and Warner and Rountree (1997) reported that poverty positively affects crime. Both studies also indicated that the effect of poverty on crime was moderated by residential stability and ethnic/racial heterogeneity. Rountree and Warner (1999), however, reported that poverty does not directly or indirectly affect crime. Sampson and
Groves (1989) and Bellair (1997) found that SES has both direct and indirect effects on crime. But, Veysey and Messner (1999), using a measure of SES, and Markowitz et al. (2001), using a measure of median income, reported only indirect effects on crime.

**SD2. Immigrant concentration should positively affect crime and violence.**

The variable immigrant concentration in social disorganization theory is an indicator of cultural and ethnic diversity. The theory predicts that immigrant concentration leads to crime in a neighborhood by impeding residents’ ability to achieve a consensus opinion on how to deal with a problem. Ultimately, immigrant concentration impedes the ability of residents to communicate with each other due to their different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This is the case even when residents have similar beliefs. In recent literature there are two variables commonly used to tap this dimension of social disorganization theory: immigrant concentration and ethnic/racial heterogeneity. The variable immigrant concentration is used for this research. The variable immigrant concentration was introduced into the literature by Sampson et al. (1997) in conjunction with the variable concentrated disadvantage.

Overall, research indicates that there is a direct and indirect relationship between this dimension of social disorganization theory and crime. But evidence for a positive direct relationship between this dimension and crime has not always been found when this dimension is measured as immigrant concentration. Sampson et al. (1997) reported that immigrant concentration positively affected multiple measures of crime and violence. However, when the variable collective efficacy was entered into the model the
effect of immigrant concentration on the different measures of crime was largely mediated. Similar findings were reported by Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) and Morenoff et al. (2001). Some more recent research, however, has found that immigrant concentration is negatively associated with crime – contrary to the predictions of social disorganization theory (see Stowell et al. 2009 for a summary). A leading explanation for these findings is that individuals who immigrate to the United States do so to improve themselves and thus may be less prone to criminality.

Several studies have found a positive relationship between racial/ethnic heterogeneity and different types of crime and this relationship tends to hold when mediating variables are included in the analysis (see Sampson and Groves 1989; Warner and Pierce 1993; Warner and Rountree 1997; Bellair 1997; Rountree and Warner 1999; Markowitz et al. 2001). Of the literature reviewed, only Veysey and Messner (1999) did not find a direct relationship between ethnic/racial heterogeneity and crime, but they did find an indirect one. Also, other studies indicated that the effect of ethnic/racial heterogeneity is conditioned by poverty. These studies found that the effect of ethnic/racial heterogeneity is greatest in more affluent neighborhoods (Warner and Pierce 1993; Warner and Rountree 1997).

**SD3. Residential stability should negatively affect crime and violence.**

The relationship between residential stability and crime was originally discussed by Shaw and McKay (1969). The authors suggested that residential mobility (the converse measure) increases crime by disrupting social networks in a neighborhood.
Elaborating, Bursik and Grasmick (1993) outlined two ways by which residential mobility leads to crime and deviance. First, by disrupting social networks, social control processes such as monitoring local youths and looking after each other’s home are also disrupted because individuals within the neighborhood do not know each other as well (see Barry and Kasarda 1977). Second, when residents in a neighborhood are constantly moving, it is difficult to establish local institutions such as churches and schools that facilitate internal control processes (see Kornhauser 1978).

Research on the exact nature of the relationship between residential stability and crime is inconclusive. While many studies have found a direct negative relationship between residential stability and crime (Sampson and Groves 1989; Warner and Pierce 1993; Warner and Roundtree 1997; Sampson et al. 1997; Bellair 1997; Rountree and Warner 1999), some of the same studies have suggested that the effect is at least partially mediated by other factors such as social ties and collective efficacy (Sampson and Groves 1989; Bellair 1997; Rountree and Warner 1999; Sampson et al. 1997). Furthermore, other studies have found that residential stability has only an indirect effect on crime (Veysey and Messner 1999; Markowitz et al. 2001) and Warner and Pierce (1993) found that residential stability is actually positively correlated with assault. However, Warner and Peirce suggested that this latter finding was probably due to the multipurpose composition (mixed land use of business, institutional, and residential properties) of some of the neighborhoods included in their sample.
The systemic model of crime derives from the work of Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) (see Figure 3.2). It was extrapolated from the writings of Thomas (1967), Park and Burgess (1921), and Park, Burgess, and McKenzie (1925). The “systemic model” describes modern urban communities “as a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and on-going socialization processes” Kasarda and Janowitz 1974:329). In this formulization, length of residency was the most important factor in community organization, since the longer residents stayed in a community, the more social ties they developed. Notably, the role of poverty is not addressed in their initial research. Social ties, in turn, were hypothesized to reduce crime by increasing informal social control processes. As the theory developed over time, the variable social ties became synonymous with the informal social control processes that it was supposed to facilitate because of limitations in existing data (e.g. Sampson and Groves 1989; Warner and Rountree 1997). As a result, social ties were hypothesized to mediate the effects of all of the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory on crime. However, most research suggests that social ties do not mediate the effect of all of these factors. Little empirical and theoretical evidence suggests that social ties mediate the effect of concentrated disadvantage on crime. Hence, this potential hypothesis has been excluded from the model presented here. This exclusion also emphasizes a strong critique of the systemic model made by Warner (1999) and illustrated by her and her colleagues’ exploration of interaction effects within the social disorganization framework (see Warner and Pierce 1993; Warner and Rountree
1997). Warner (1999) argued that the systemic model’s focus on social ties and those processes that affect it relegates poverty, a key dimension in Shaw and McKay’s original formulation, to a subsidiary role in community crime control, despite its continued strong predictive power of crime. Both the theory of collective efficacy and the integrated and expanded model presented later, reincorporate the role of poverty (i.e., concentrated disadvantage) into social disorganization theory.

**Figure 3.2 The Systemic Model of Crime**

**SM1. Immigrant concentration should negatively affect social ties.**

Immigrant concentration is hypothesized to be negatively related to social ties because individuals with different backgrounds have a more difficult time
communicating with each other. That is, individuals from different backgrounds have a more difficult time relating to each other than people with similar backgrounds, even when they share similar beliefs. Research on this relationship is inconclusive. No research to date has studied the direct effect of immigrant concentration on social ties. But Warner and Rountree (1997) and Bellair (1997) both found a direct negative relationship between ethnic/racial heterogeneity and social ties. However, Sampson and Groves (1989) did not find a relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, Rountree and Warner (1999) did not find a relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and male social ties, but they did find a relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and female social ties.

**SM2. Residential stability should positively affect social ties.**

As discussed earlier, Kasarda and Janowitz (1974), the founders of the systemic model, suggested that residential stability was a key factor in community organization, because residents who stayed in their community longer tended to develop more social ties than individuals who moved frequently. Social ties and networks, in turn, led to community attachment, a form of social control that reduced crime. Most research supports the hypothesis that residential stability is positively related to social ties (see Sampson and Groves 1989; Warner and Rountree 1997; Veysey and Messner 1999; Warner 2003). Of the literature reviewed, only Bellair (1997) found no relationship between residential stability and social ties. Furthermore, Rountree and Warner (1999)
only found a direct effect between residential stability and female social ties, but not male social ties.

**SM3. Social ties should negatively affect crime and violence.**

Social ties are hypothesized to be negatively related to crime and violence by facilitating informal social control processes that inhibit crime. Sampson and Groves (1989) point out that social ties enhance informal social control processes in two respects. First, residents with strong local social ties are better able to identify strangers and odd behavior in a community because of their familiarity with their neighbors. This recognition increases their ability to engage in guardianship behavior such as questioning a stranger on the street about their business or alarming local officials of potential burglaries and thefts. Second, dense local social ties also inhibit residents from engaging in inappropriate acts through the increased ability of other residents to impose informal sanctions such as shame and embarrassment.

Sampson and Groves (1989) found that social ties negatively affected some types of crime and violence and that the variable partially mediated some of the effects of the exogenous factors on crime. Veysey and Messner (1999) confirmed that social ties negatively affected crime, but suggested that its ability to mediate the effect of the exogenous factors was overstated. Bellair (1997) also found that social ties negatively affected some types of crime and violence. On the other hand, Rountree and Warner (2003) found that only female social ties affected crime, not male. Both Bellair (2000) and Warner (2003) found that social ties positively affected informal social control
processes as the original theory suggests. Curiously, Warner and Rountree (1997) reported that social ties negatively affected assault as predicted, but positively affected burglary. They suggested that this result might be due to causal order. When there are burglaries in a neighborhood, residents may increase their interaction with each other in attempt to prevent more burglaries from occurring. Overall, there is only mixed support for the hypothesis that increases in social ties should directly inhibit crime. This suggests, at least partially, that social ties should not be considered an indicator of informal social control processes as many of the empirical tests of the systemic model have assumed.

**THE THEORY OF COLLECTIVE EFFICACY**

The theory of collective efficacy was developed by Robert Sampson and his colleagues (see Figure 3.3). Unlike the systemic model that focuses on social ties, the theory of collective efficacy focuses on an informal social control process. Sampson and colleagues defined collective efficacy as a mutual trust among neighbors combined with their willingness to act on behalf of the common good for shared expectations of informal social control in the community. This theory marked an important shift within the social disorganization research framework, because the theory asserts that communities may develop high levels of collective efficacy without having strong social ties. Hence, the theory directly challenges the central tenant of the systemic model that social ties are crucial for the development of informal social control processes. Furthermore, Sampson and colleagues hypothesized that collective efficacy should mediate the effects of the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory.
CE1. Concentrated disadvantage should negatively affect collective efficacy.

According to Sampson et al. (1997), concentrated disadvantage should negatively affect collective efficacy in two respects. First, communities that lack resources are often isolated and have less means to support collective informal social control efforts. Second, and more important, individuals who live in economically deprived communities often experience a sense of powerlessness, “The alienation, exploitation, and dependency wrought by resource deprivation act as a centrifugal force that stymies collective efficacy” (p. 919). As result of this sense of powerlessness, individuals who live in economically deprived communities may simply not try to enforce informal social control processes out of a sense of hopelessness.
Sampson et al. (1997) found that concentrated disadvantage was negatively correlated with collective efficacy. Also Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) and Morenoff et al. (2001) reported a direct negative relationship between concentrated disadvantage and collective efficacy.

**CE2. Immigrant concentration should negatively affect collective efficacy.**

Immigrant concentration should be negatively related to collective efficacy because individuals from different backgrounds often have a more difficult time relating to each other and developing a mutual trust. The articles that have examined the theory of collective efficacy have used a measure of immigrant concentration rather than ethnic/racial heterogeneity as an exogenous factor, because the variable concentrated disadvantage contains the measure percent Black. All three articles that have considered the effect of immigrant concentration on collective efficacy found a significant direct negative relationship between the two variables (see Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001). Overall, there is strong evidence that suggests that ethnic/racial heterogeneity should negatively affect collective efficacy.
CE3. Residential stability should positively affect collective efficacy.

Residential stability is expected to positively affect collective efficacy, because individuals who have lived in a neighborhood a long time have a greater opportunity to bond with their neighbors and have more motive to act on behalf of the public good, due to their investment in the neighborhood. The three articles that have examined the relationship between residential stability and collective efficacy have found support for the hypothesis (see Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001).

CE4. Collective efficacy should negatively affect crime and violence.

Not only should collective efficacy negatively affect crime, but it should also mediate much of the effects of the traditional exogenous factors associated with social disorganization theory. Research by Sampson et al. (1997), Sampson and Raudenbush (1999), and Morenoff et al. (2001) indicated that high levels of collective efficacy are effective at inhibiting crime and violence in a community. However, results for the measure’s ability to mediate the effects of the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory are mixed. Sampson et al. (1997) reported that collective efficacy mediated much of the effects of the exogenous variables on crime and violence. But Morenoff et al. (2001) reported more modest findings regarding the ability of the variable to mediate the effects of the exogenous factors. This was especially the case for concentrated disadvantage.
INTEGRATED AND EXPANDED MODEL

The following model integrates aspects of the classical social disorganization model, systemic model of crime, and the theory of collective efficacy and expands the social disorganization perspective by including the concept organizational activism derived from Carr’s work on the new parochialism (see Figure 3.4). Using Hunter’s (1985) typology, Carr describes the new parochialism as a measure of both the parochial and public spheres of control. In comparison, Sampson et al.’s (1997) concept of collective efficacy may best be described as a measure of the private and parochial levels of control. An important aspect of Carr’s concept is that individuals in today’s society prefer to deal with local problems indirectly rather than directly in order to mitigate potential harm to themselves. To do this, individuals utilize local organizations that have access to resources outside of the neighborhood to solve problems such as problematic youths and disruptive businesses. The present research focuses on this aspect of Carr’s study by examining the concept organizational activism. The concept of organizational activism derives directly from Carr’s work on the new parochialism, but it is not intended to fully encompass Carr’s thoughts. Rather the concept of organizational activism refers specifically to obtaining outside resources and using organizations to indirectly solve local problems such as crime. In this respect, the concept organizational activism also represents a more refined way to think about the role of local organizations and institutions in communities.

The concept organizational activism is measured along two dimensions. The first dimension is neighborhood activism. Neighborhood activism refers to indirect problem
solving behavior by individuals, such as talking to a local politician about a neighborhood problem or attending a meeting of a local organization about a neighborhood problem. The second dimension is organization participation. This dimension is meant to capture the usage of local organizations in the community. A potential problem with the measurement of this concept is that access to resources outside of the neighborhood is not directly measured. However, in many instances, albeit not all, local politicians and organizations may have access to outside resources.

This model also looks at the relationship between two forms of social control in a community. The model hypothesizes that organizational activism should positively affect collective efficacy. All of the hypotheses from the theory of collective efficacy have been integrated into this model. Only two hypotheses from the systemic model of crime have been (SM1 and SM2). Much research on the systemic model of crime was plagued by data limitations. As a result, social ties were often specified as indicators of the social control processes that they were hypothesized to predict. The present model corrects this limitation by hypothesizing that social ties should only negatively affect crime indirectly by positively affecting both collective efficacy and organizational activism. Overall, there are 13 hypotheses associated with the integrated and expanded model presented here. However, six of these hypotheses are associated with theories that were previously discussed. In order to avoid redundancy, only the seven hypotheses uniquely associated with the integrated and expanded model are discussed below.
IE1. Concentrated disadvantage should negatively affect organizational activism.

Concentrated disadvantage should negatively affect organizational activism because communities without economic resources cannot maintain effective organizational structures. Local organizations require resources to operate and sustain themselves. Of the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory, concentrated disadvantage should have the greatest impact on organizational activism. Many studies have found evidence of a strong relationship between SES (a similar measure to concentrated disadvantage) and organizational participation including Sampson and Groves (1989).
IE2. Immigrant concentration should negatively affect organizational activism.

Immigrant concentration should negatively affect organizational activism because individuals with different backgrounds often have a more difficult time cooperating with each other due to lack of mutual understanding and trust. This is the case even when they share similar goals.

IE3. Residential stability should positively affect organizational activism.

Residents who have lived in a community for an extended period of time have more invested in the community and as a result will be more likely to attempt to improve the community. Conversely, residents who have not live in a community for long or who are planning to move may be less concerned about local issues, because of their lack of attachment to the neighborhood. Hence, residential stability should positively affect organizational activism.

IE4. Social ties should positively affect collective efficacy.

The systemic model of crime predicts that social ties negatively affect crime by facilitating informal social control processes. Hence, social ties should positively affect collective efficacy because interaction with neighbors should build social cohesion and familiarity, which should make individuals more prone to look after each other’s property and monitor individuals in the neighborhood. As previously noted, most studies of the
systemic model of crime have not examined this relationship. Instead they have used social ties as an indicator of the social control processes they are suppose to facilitate. Although, Morenoff et al. (2001) provided evidence that suggested that social ties positively affect collective efficacy.

IE5. Social ties should positively affect organizational activism.

This hypothesis represents a test between the systemic model of crime and the emerging line of thought that suggests that social ties are not related to the more modern forms of social control processes (e.g., organizational activism) that are becoming increasingly prevalent in today’s neighborhoods. One of Carr’s (2003) observations from Beltway was that social ties were not related to the development of the informal social control processes used to regulate the neighborhood. With that stated, the present study hypothesizes that social ties should positively affect organizational activism by facilitating community attachment. Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) argued that the primary reason social ties inhibit crime is because social ties with neighbors leads to community attachment. That is, as individuals become more familiar and involved with their neighbors, they are more likely to develop an affinity for their community and want to look after it.
IE6. Organizational activism should positively affect collective efficacy.

Organizational activism should strengthen collective efficacy within a community. That is, organizational activism should positively affect collective efficacy because neighborhood activism and participating in local organizations should reinforce neighborhood social cohesion and the common goal of neighborhood betterment.

A limitation to prior research within the social disorganization framework is that most studies have concentrated on only one social control process as a mediating factor. For example, the work on collective efficacy focused almost exclusively on the informal social control process collective efficacy. In reality, there are multiple forms of social control processes that may operate within a neighborhood. Much like when Veysey and Messner (1999) pointed out that the concept of social disorganization represents multiple mechanisms rather than a single construct, the same holds true for social control processes within a neighborhood. The police monitoring a neighborhood is an example of a social control process that takes place beside other control processes such as the internalization of common values through strong and cohesive organizational structures. It is important to understand how different social control processes work together in the same context to control crime.

IE7. Organizational activism should negatively affect crime and violence.

Organizational activism should negatively affect crime and assist in mediating the effects of the exogenous factors of social disorganization theory on crime. While there
are no prior studies that have examined the effect on organizational activism on crime, several studies have looked at the affect of organizations and organizational participation on crime. Overall, these studies have produced mixed results. For example, Sampson and Groves (1989) reported that organizational participation does reduce some types of crime. But Morenoff et al. (2001) reported that the presence of local organizations and organizational participation did not reduce neighborhood homicide rates. However, it should be noted that both of these studies limited the measurement of organizations to the mere presence of and attendance at organizations. Neither of the studies ascertained whether or not people in the community were using local organizations to deal with problems.

A NOTE ON THE CRIME AND VIOLENCE OUTCOME VARIABLE

While all of the figures presented here only include one crime and violence variable, the empirical analyses will include four separate measures of crime and violence (see next chapter). The models were presented as is for the sake of convenience. The classical social disorganization model, the systemic model of crime, the theory of collective efficacy, and the theory of the new parochialism do not predict different effects for different crime and violence outcomes. A brief review of the literature shows that this is to some extent justified. This is especially the case for the variable collective efficacy. The variable collective efficacy, in the few articles that have examined it, has proven a robust predictor of all forms of crime and violence variables, including both property and violent outcomes (see Sampson et al. 1997; Morenoff et al. 2001). Concerning, the other
theoretical models, things are less clear. The variable organizational activism has never been empirically examined and examinations of the classical social disorganization model and the systematic model of crime have produced mixed results in regard to their predictive abilities. However, no predictive pattern has emerged concerning different types of outcomes for the classical social disorganization model and the systemic model of crime. That is, neither model has been shown to predict one type of crime and violence variable better than another. The mixed results produced by these models were largely responsible for researchers to seek out alternative criminological explanations such as collective efficacy and the new parochialism. Hence, for the purposes of this thesis, no specific predictions have been made in regard to the effect of the explanatory variables on the crime and violence measures.

CONCLUSION

This chapter summarized the four theoretical models of interest. The first model was the classical social disorganization model. The second model was the systemic model of crime. The third model was the theory of collective efficacy. And the final model integrated aspects of the first three social disorganization models and expanded the framework by incorporating the concept organizational activism. Ultimately these four theoretical models will be “combined” to address the research questions presented at the beginning of the chapter. The combined model makes three important contributions to the social disorganization literature. First, it incorporates the new concept of organizational activism, which is derived from Carr’s work and represents a new way of examining the
role of local organizations. Second, the model examines multiple mediating factors including two informal social control processes along with social ties in order to disentangle their effects at the neighborhood level. And third, by simultaneously examining the direct, indirect, and total effects of these different processes using structural equations, the combined model may identify previously unknown relationships that were masked by single equation models that are not capable of examining the various effects together.
CHAPTER 4

DATA AND METHODS

In this chapter the data and methods used for this project are discussed. The first section identifies and describes the data set that will be used in this study. The second section examines the measures for each of the concepts employed in this study in three parts: exogenous variables, endogenous mediating variables, and endogenous variables. The third section reports descriptive statistics. The fourth section presents the analytic strategy used to test the hypotheses. This chapter concludes by briefly outlining the organization of the next two chapters.

DATA

Social disorganization theory originated at the Chicago school of sociology. Many of the early theorists that influenced the development of social disorganization theory, W.I. Thomas, Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, Clifford Shaw, and Henry McKay, were associated with this school of thought. Furthermore, Shaw and McKay (1969) in their seminal work, *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas*, used data from the city of Chicago. The present study will also use data from the city of Chicago. To be more specific, the present study will use data from the PHDCN: Community Survey, 1994-1995 (Earls et al. 2007). However, the main reason for the use of this data is not its historical relevance. One of the primary questions that the PHDCN sought to answer was
“Why does one community have a high rate of crime, violence, and substance abuse, while a similar nearby community is relatively stable” (p. iv of data set description that came with the computer file). The community survey collected data on several topics that are directly related to this study’s research questions including “measuring how neighborhood social organization related to crime, violence, and victimization” (p. iv of data set description). More specific topics included “the dynamic structure of the local community, organizational and political structure, cultural values, informal social control, formal social control, and social cohesion” (p. iv of data set description). Apart from the data collected on the topics mentioned above, the community survey instrument also included measures of crime and the respondent’s demographic characteristics. As a result, the PHDCN’s community survey is an ideal data set for the present study because it provides measures for all of the key concepts of this study including the concept of collective efficacy, which was previously defined using measures exclusively found in this data set.

The PHDCN community survey is a cross-sectional survey of Chicago residents conducted in 1994 in conjunction with a longitudinal cohort study on risk factors for antisocial behavior and substance abuse. The sample of 8,782 Chicago residents is representative of 343 neighborhood clusters (NCs). The NCs were constructed by combining Chicago’s 825 populated census tracts. Contiguous census tracts were combined based on factors such as ethnic/racial mix, SES, housing density, family organization, natural boundaries (e.g., railroad tracks and freeways), and prior knowledge of the area. The goal was to ensure that the NCs were internally homogenous and
Table 4.1 displays the compositional breakdown of the NCs by ethnic/racial mix and SES based on census data (see Earls et al. 2007).

### Table 4.1 Compositional Breakdown of PHDCN Neighborhood Clusters by Ethnic/Racial Stratum and Socioeconomic Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic/Racial Stratum</th>
<th>Socioeconomic Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75% Black</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75% White</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;75% Latino</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥20% Latino and ≥ 20% White</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥20% Latino and ≥ 20% Black</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥20% Black and ≥ 20% White</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCs not classified above</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The basic sampling strategy consisted of three stages. However, because of a longitudinal cohort study, 80 NCs were oversampled. The target sample for the 80 NCs that were a part of the longitudinal cohort study was 50, whereas the target sample for all of the other NCs was 20. The first stage consisted of a sample of city blocks within each of the NCs, the second stage consisted of a sample of dwelling units from within the previously selected city blocks, and the third stage consisted of a sample of one adult resident (18 years of age or older) from each of the selected dwelling units. The final response rate was 75%.
MEASURES

In this section the measures of the concepts are presented in three parts: exogenous variables, endogenous mediating variables, and endogenous variables. The units of analyses for this thesis were the 343 NCs described in the previous section. Due to missing data for one of the neighborhoods, only 342 of the NCs were used in the analysis. The exogenous variables included in the analysis were provided by Robert Sampson, one of the principal investigators of the PHDCN community survey. These variables were derived from 1990 census data. All other indicators for this analysis were derived directly from the PHDCN community survey. All of these measures were created at the individual-level, and then the neighborhood-level variable was created by averaging the individual measures within each NC. While this methodology was not ideal because of the questionable reliability of aggregated data, this approach has often been used in the past (see Sampson and Groves 1989, and more recently Sampson et al. 1997 for examples). The reliability of the aggregated data was especially a concern for the NCs with a targeted sample size of 20. But, Raudenbush and Sampson (1999) argued that a sample size of 20 is adequate for producing reliable aggregate-level measures because a sample size of 20 produced reliability scores ranging from .7 to .9 (on a scale of 0 to 1 with 1 being completely reliable) for variables constructed from the PHDCN community survey. Furthermore, they reported that larger sample sizes produced diminishing returns in regards to reliability.
Exogenous Variables

In order to replicate previous research as closely as possible, the three exogenous variables included in the analysis were constructed outside the structural equation modeling framework. Ten variables measuring social composition were constructed from 1990 census tract level data. Then, following Sampson et al. (1997), an alpha-scoring factor analysis with an oblique rotation was performed on the variables to produce the three dimensions of social composition described below. A principal components analysis produced similar results. Table 4.2 displays the total variance explained by the three factors. The first factor, concentrated disadvantage, accounted for almost 54% of all of the variance in the 10 variables included in the analysis. The second factor, immigrant concentration, accounted for 23% of the variance and the third factor, residential stability, accounted for 10%. The fourth factor’s Eigenvalue was below 1 and consequently was excluded from the analysis. Together, all three factors included in the final analysis accounted for 87% of the total variance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Eigenvalues</th>
<th>% of Total Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>5.395</td>
<td>53.946</td>
<td>53.946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>2.312</td>
<td>23.122</td>
<td>77.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>10.164</td>
<td>87.232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three exogenous variables are defined below and Table 4.3 shows the factor pattern matrix.
Concentrated Disadvantage. The first factor was primarily defined by the measures percent below poverty line, receiving public assistance, female-headed families, unemployed, younger than age 18, and Black.

Immigrant Concentration. The second factor was defined by the percent Latino and the percent foreign born.

Residential Stability. The third factor was defined by the percent living in the same residence for the last five years and the percent of owner-occupied homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Concentrated Disadvantage</th>
<th>Immigrant Concentration</th>
<th>Residential Stability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below Poverty Line</td>
<td>0.933</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>-0.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Public Assistance</td>
<td>0.936</td>
<td>-0.136</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-headed Households</td>
<td>0.858</td>
<td>-0.337</td>
<td>-0.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>-0.115</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger than Age 18</td>
<td>0.944</td>
<td>0.454</td>
<td>0.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0.594</td>
<td>-0.558</td>
<td>0.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.882</td>
<td>-0.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign-born</td>
<td>-0.278</td>
<td>0.703</td>
<td>-0.255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same House as in 1985</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>-0.145</td>
<td>0.767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied House</td>
<td>-0.466</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>0.854</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Endogenous Mediating Variables

Social Ties. The variable social ties was created by averaging the responses to two questions: (1) “how many of your relatives or in-laws live in your neighborhood?” and
(2) “how many friends do you have in your neighborhood?” (see questions 17a and 17b). The answer for each question had five response categories: none, one or two, three to five, six to nine, and 10 or more (coded 1 through 5 respectively). Each individual’s score within a neighborhood was then averaged to create the neighborhood level measure.

Collective Efficacy: Informal Social Control and Social Cohesion. The variable collective efficacy was created by combining two scales (see Sampson et al. 1997). To be more specific, the variable was created by averaging the responses to the questions that made up both of the scales. Afterwards, each individual’s score within a neighborhood was average to create the neighborhood-level measure. The first scale measured informal social control. Five questions were used to create this scale: (1) “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 about it?” (2) “If some children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it?” (3) “If a child was showing disrespect to an adult, how likely is it that people in your neighborhood would scold that child?” (4) “If there was a fight in front of your house and someone was being beaten or threatened, how likely is it that your neighbors would do something about it?” and (5) “Suppose that because of budget cuts the fire station closest to your home was going to be closed down by the city. How likely is it that neighborhood residents would organize to try to do something to keep the fire station open?” (see questions 12a, 12b, 12c, 12e, and 12f). The response choices for each question ranged in value from very likely to very unlikely on a five-item Likert-type scale (coded 5 through 1, respectively). The second scale measured social cohesion. The
answers to five statements were used to create this scale: This is a close-knit neighborhood. (1) “This is a close-knit neighborhood.” (2) “People around here are willing to help their neighbors.” (3) “People in this neighborhood generally don’t get along with each other.” (4) “People in this neighborhood do not share the same values.” (5) “People in this neighborhood can be trusted.” (see questions 11b, 11e, 11f, 11k, and 11m). The response choices for each variable ranged in value from strongly agree to strongly disagree on a five-item Likert-type scale (coded 5 through 1, respectively). However, questions number 3 and 4 were reversed coded in order to conform with the meaning of the other questions.

Organizational Activism: Neighborhood Activism and Organizational Participation. Like the variable collective efficacy, the variable organizational activism was created by averaging the responses to questions that made up two scales. The score for each individual within a neighborhood was then averaged to create a variable for each neighborhood cluster. The first scale measured neighborhood activism. Two questions were used to create this scale: (1) “Have you (or any member of your household) spoken with a local politician like your Ward committee person or an elected official like your alderperson about a neighborhood problem?” and (2) “Have you (or any member of your household) attended a meeting of a block or neighborhood group about a neighborhood problem or neighborhood improvement?” (see questions 13a and 13c). The answers to each question were coded yes and no (coded 1 for yes and 0 for no). The second scale measured organizational participation. The scale was created from six questions: (1) “Do you (or any household members) belong to a church, synagogue, or any other religious
organization?” (2) “Do you (or any member of your household) belong to any kind of neighborhood watch program?” (3) “Do you (or any member of your household) belong to a block group, tenant association, or community council?” (4) “Do you (or any member of your household) belong to a business or civic group such as the Masons, Elks, or Rotary Club?” (5) “Do you (or any member of your household) belong to an ethnic or nationality club in the neighborhood?” and (6) “Do you (or any member of your household) belong to a neighborhood Ward Group, or other local political organization?” (see questions 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28). The answers for each question were coded 1 for yes and 0 for no.

**Endogenous Variables**

*Perceived Neighborhood Violence.* The variable perceived neighborhood violence was created by averaging the responses to five questions: (1) “During the past six months, how often was there a fight in this neighborhood in which a weapon was used? Would you say often, sometimes rarely or never?” (2) “During the past six months, how often was there a violent argument between neighbors?” (3) “Gang fights?” (4) “A sexual assault or rape?” and (5) “A robbery or mugging?” (see questions 30a, 30b, 30c, 30d, and 30e). The response choices for each question ranged in value from often to never on a four-item Likert-type scale (coded 4 through 1, respectively). Each individual’s score within a neighborhood was then averaged to create a variable for each NC.
Violent Victimization. The variable violent victimization was created from a single question: “While you have lived in this neighborhood, has anyone ever used violence, such as in a mugging, fight, or sexual assault, against you or any member of your household anywhere in your neighborhood?” (see question 31). The answer to this question was coded 1 for yes and 0 for no. Each individual’s score within a neighborhood was then averaged to create the neighborhood level measure.

Burglary. The variable burglary was created from one question: “While you have lived in this neighborhood, has your home ever been broken into?” (see questions 32). The answer to the question was coded 1 for yes and 0 for no. The score for each individual within a neighborhood was then averaged to create a variable for each NC.

Delinquency Rate. The variable delinquency rate was created by averaging the responses to three questions: (1) “How much of a problem is graffiti on buildings and walls? (Would you say it is a big problem, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem in your neighborhood?),” (2) “How much of a problem is groups of teenagers or adults hanging out in the neighborhood and causing trouble?” and (3) “During the past six months, how often was there…Gang fights?” (see questions 29b, 29f, and 30c). The responses to the first two questions were coded 1 for “a big problem” and 0 otherwise and the responses to the later question were coded 1 for “often” and 0 otherwise. Each individual’s score within a neighborhood was then averaged to create a variable for each NC.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 4.4 presents descriptive statistics. Of the three mediating variables, which are the focus of this analysis, all show good variability across the 342 NCs. For example, the variable organizational activism has a mean of .20 and ranges in value from .02 to .46 on a possible scale of 0 to 1. This indicates that there is enough variation in the mediating variables that their effects on the endogenous variables should be discernable in the analysis. Looking at the minimum and maximum value for each variable included in the analysis suggests that a few of the endogenous factors may have some extreme values. For example, the maximum value for burglary was .75. This indicates that 75% of the homes in one of the neighborhoods have been burglarized (the next closest value was .46). However, an examination of the scatter plots between the endogenous factors and the exogenous and mediating factors suggests that these outliers will not substantively affect the analysis. Furthermore, when the results presented in Table 5.2 (see next chapter) were replicated without the extreme observation for burglary none of the tests of significance or directions for any of the coefficients changed.

The functional form of the variables was also considered. While the critical ratios for skewness and kurtosis were significant for many of the variables, only the skewness and kurtosis for the measures of violent victimization and burglary were large enough to warrant attention. The measure of skew for violent victimization was greater than one and the measures of kurtosis for both of the variables were greater than two. An examination of the histograms for both variables confirmed that they were both skewed to the right and somewhat peaked. However, scatter plots of the bivariate relationships between the
two variables and the exogenous and mediating factors included in the analysis revealed that none of the relationships was non-linear. Thus, neither of the variables was transformed for the analysis. The histograms for all of the variables included in the analysis and scatter plots for all of the bivariate relationships between the endogenous variables and the exogenous and mediating variables are located in the appendix at the end of the chapter.
Table 4.4 Descriptive Statistics (N = 342)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>C.R. for Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis*</th>
<th>C.R. for Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.994</td>
<td>-1.656</td>
<td>3.809</td>
<td>0.976</td>
<td>7.397</td>
<td>1.085</td>
<td>4.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.971</td>
<td>-1.629</td>
<td>3.067</td>
<td>0.700</td>
<td>5.310</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.984</td>
<td>-2.189</td>
<td>2.324</td>
<td>0.267</td>
<td>2.028</td>
<td>-0.614</td>
<td>-2.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ties</td>
<td>2.603</td>
<td>0.387</td>
<td>1.615</td>
<td>4.147</td>
<td>0.499</td>
<td>3.785</td>
<td>0.908</td>
<td>3.454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td>3.453</td>
<td>0.352</td>
<td>2.705</td>
<td>4.471</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.821</td>
<td>-0.464</td>
<td>-1.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Activism</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.464</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>4.598</td>
<td>0.958</td>
<td>3.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Violence</td>
<td>1.911</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>3.038</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>1.383</td>
<td>-0.629</td>
<td>-2.391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Victimization</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.639</td>
<td>1.235</td>
<td>9.366</td>
<td>2.675</td>
<td>10.173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>0.910</td>
<td>6.903</td>
<td>2.525</td>
<td>9.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency Rate</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.152</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.730</td>
<td>0.744</td>
<td>5.643</td>
<td>0.215</td>
<td>0.816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excess kurtosis reported.
Given the questionable reliability of the aggregate measures and that the sample within each NC sometimes varied greatly due to the sampling strategy, descriptive statistics for NCs with less than 20 respondents were compared to the descriptive statistics of NCs with 20 or more respondents (see Tables 4.5 and 4.6 in the Appendix at the end of the chapter). Ninety-five percent confidence intervals were formed around the mean for each of the variables in both subsamples in order to determine whether or not the estimates varied significantly between the two subsamples. Except for the variable concentrated disadvantage, there was no significant variation between the two sets of descriptive statistics for the aggregated measures. The measure for concentrated disadvantage was significantly lower for the data set comprised of neighborhoods with less than 20 respondents. The means for the other variables included in the analysis did not significantly differ from each other. In order to further investigate this issue the results presented in Table 5.2 (see next chapter) were replicated for both subsamples. The magnitudes and directions of the effect for concentrated disadvantage were consistent across the two subsamples. Albeit, in one instance the effect of concentrated disadvantage was no longer significant, but this was probably mainly a function of sample size. Furthermore, the key findings discussed in the conclusion held true for both subsamples. Thus, this variation was not problematic.

**ANALYTIC STRATEGY**

In this section, the analytic strategy used to examine the hypotheses and answer the research questions is presented. The primary method used is structural equation
models (see Bollen 1989; Jaccard and Wan 1996). Unlike, multivariate regression, spatial regression, and hierarchical linear models among others, structural equations allow for the simultaneous estimation of direct, indirect, and total effects. Given the multitude of direct and indirect effects implied by the theoretical models, this technique is ideal. Also, while there are four distinct theoretical models of interest, only one structural equation model will be estimated. The combined model will estimate all of the hypotheses associated with the four theories. This approach will allow the theories and hypotheses to be directly compared with each other and facilitate answering the research questions.

The line equations used to test the four theories and hypotheses are presented below. These equations will be estimated simultaneously using a maximum likelihood algorithm. Also, while not shown below, the exogenous variables for the model will be allowed to co-vary. This acknowledges that the exogenous factors are related, but does not posit how they are related. That is, neither the direction nor the temporal order of the variables is modeled.

*The Combined Model:*

\[
\text{Perceived Violence} = \beta_1(\text{Collective Efficacy}) + \beta_2(\text{Organizational Activism}) + \\
\beta_3(\text{Social Ties}) + \beta_4(\text{Concentrated Disadvantage}) + \beta_5(\text{Immigrant Concentration}) \\
+ \beta_6(\text{Residential Stability}) + \varepsilon_1 ,
\]
Violent Victimization = $\beta_7$(Collective Efficacy) + $\beta_9$(Organizational Activism) + $\beta_9$(Social Ties) + $\beta_{10}$(Concentrated Disadvantage) + $\beta_{11}$(Immigrant Concentration) + $\beta_{12}$(Residential Stability) + $\epsilon_2$ ,

Burglary = $\beta_{13}$(Collective Efficacy) + $\beta_{14}$(Organizational Activism) + $\beta_{15}$(Social Ties) + $\beta_{16}$(Concentrated Disadvantage) + $\beta_{17}$(Immigrant Concentration) + $\beta_{18}$(Residential Stability) + $\epsilon_3$ ,

Delinquency Rate = $\beta_{19}$(Collective Efficacy) + $\beta_{20}$(Organizational Activism) + $\beta_{21}$(Social Ties) + $\beta_{22}$(Concentrated Disadvantage) + $\beta_{23}$(Immigrant Concentration) + $\beta_{24}$(Residential Stability) + $\epsilon_4$ ,

Collective Efficacy = $\beta_{25}$(Social Ties) + $\beta_{26}$(Organizational Activism) + $\beta_{27}$(Concentrated Disadvantage) + $\beta_{28}$(Immigrant Concentration) + $\beta_{29}$(Residential Stability) + $\epsilon_5$ ,

Organizational Activism = $\beta_{30}$(Social Ties) + $\beta_{31}$(Concentrated Disadvantage) + $\beta_{32}$(Immigrant Concentration) + $\beta_{33}$(Residential Stability) + $\epsilon_6$ ,

Social Ties = $\beta_{34}$(Immigrant Concentration) + $\beta_{35}$(Residential Stability) + $\epsilon_7$ .
OVERVIEW

This chapter presented the data, measurements, and analytic strategy for the analysis. While four theoretical models will be evaluated in the analysis, only one structural equation model will be used to evaluate them. The next chapter will present the results. The results chapter will focus on examining the hypotheses. This chapter will also compare and evaluate the four theories included in the analysis. The subsequent and final chapter will attempt to answer the research questions and discuss future directions in research.
CHAPTER 4 APPENDIX

Histograms

Figure 4.1 Concentrated Disadvantage

Figure 4.2 Immigrant Concentration

Figure 4.3 Residential Stability

Figure 4.4 Social Ties

Figure 4.5 Collective Efficacy

Figure 4.6 Organizational Activism
Figure 4.7 Perceived Violence

Figure 4.8 Violent Victimization

Figure 4.9 Burglary

Figure 4.10 Delinquency Rate
Scatter Plots

Figure 4.11 Delinquency Rate by Concentrated Disadvantage

Figure 4.12 Delinquency Rate by Immigrant Concentration

Figure 4.13 Delinquency Rate by Residential Stability

Figure 4.14 Delinquency Rate by Social Ties

Figure 4.15 Delinquency Rate by Collective Efficacy

Figure 4.16 Delinquency Rate by Organizational Activism
Figure 4.23 Violent Victimization by Concentrated Disadvantage

Figure 4.24 Violent Victimization by Immigrant Concentration

Figure 4.25 Violent Victimization by Residential Stability

Figure 4.26 Violent Victimization by Social Ties

Figure 4.27 Violent Victimization by Collective Efficacy

Figure 4.28 Violent Victimization by Organizational Activism
Figure 4.29 Perceived Violence by Concentrated Disadvantage

Figure 4.30 Perceived Violence by Immigrant Concentration

Figure 4.31 Perceived Violence by Residential Stability

Figure 4.32 Perceived Violence by Social Ties

Figure 4.33 Perceived Violence by Collective Efficacy

Figure 4.34 Perceived Violence by Organizational Activism
Figure 4.41 Collective Efficacy by Residentail Stability

Figure 4.42 Collective Efficacy by Social Ties

Figure 4.43 Collective Efficacy by Organizational Activism

Figure 4.44 Social Ties by Immigrant Concentration

Figure 4.45 Social Ties by Residential Stability
Table 4.5 Descriptive Statistics (Respondents ≥ 20) (N = 190)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>C.R. for Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis*</th>
<th>C.R. for Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td>-1.601</td>
<td>3.809</td>
<td>0.963</td>
<td>5.461</td>
<td>1.445</td>
<td>4.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>1.040</td>
<td>-1.629</td>
<td>3.067</td>
<td>0.683</td>
<td>3.876</td>
<td>-0.130</td>
<td>-0.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td>-2.189</td>
<td>2.324</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.947</td>
<td>-0.473</td>
<td>-1.349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ties</td>
<td>2.616</td>
<td>0.367</td>
<td>1.791</td>
<td>4.147</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>3.336</td>
<td>1.066</td>
<td>3.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td>3.417</td>
<td>0.325</td>
<td>2.718</td>
<td>4.446</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>1.141</td>
<td>-0.317</td>
<td>-0.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Activism</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.455</td>
<td>0.520</td>
<td>2.950</td>
<td>0.926</td>
<td>2.639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Violence</td>
<td>1.956</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>1.169</td>
<td>2.876</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
<td>-0.159</td>
<td>-0.693</td>
<td>-1.974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Victimization</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.101</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.639</td>
<td>1.523</td>
<td>8.640</td>
<td>4.072</td>
<td>11.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>0.163</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>1.308</td>
<td>7.416</td>
<td>5.339</td>
<td>15.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency Rate</td>
<td>0.219</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.730</td>
<td>0.470</td>
<td>2.664</td>
<td>-0.148</td>
<td>-0.423</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excess kurtosis reported.
Table 4.6 Descriptive Statistics (Respondents < 20) (N = 152)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>C.R. for Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
<th>C.R. for Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>-0.187</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td>-1.656</td>
<td>3.209</td>
<td>1.110</td>
<td>5.639</td>
<td>0.988</td>
<td>2.528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>-0.075</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>-1.535</td>
<td>2.727</td>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>3.211</td>
<td>-0.036</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>-0.090</td>
<td>0.966</td>
<td>-1.894</td>
<td>2.174</td>
<td>0.397</td>
<td>2.018</td>
<td>-0.735</td>
<td>-1.879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ties</td>
<td>2.588</td>
<td>0.411</td>
<td>1.615</td>
<td>4.022</td>
<td>0.444</td>
<td>2.258</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td>1.941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td>3.498</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>2.705</td>
<td>4.471</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
<td>-0.301</td>
<td>-0.581</td>
<td>-1.486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Activism</td>
<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.464</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>3.356</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>2.163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Violence</td>
<td>1.854</td>
<td>0.434</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>3.038</td>
<td>0.459</td>
<td>2.334</td>
<td>-0.394</td>
<td>-1.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Victimization</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.594</td>
<td>0.965</td>
<td>4.906</td>
<td>1.478</td>
<td>3.778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.460</td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>2.766</td>
<td>-0.093</td>
<td>-0.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delinquency Rate</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.710</td>
<td>1.156</td>
<td>5.875</td>
<td>1.107</td>
<td>2.831</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excess kurtosis reported.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The results of the analysis are examined in this chapter. The first section examines the correlation matrix associated with the combined model. Next, the results of the structural equation model for the combined model are presented. This section is broken down into three parts. Each part directly addresses a particular aspect of the model. The first part address the goodness-of-fit of the model. The second part, labeled direct effects, examines each of the hypotheses. The third part examines the direct, indirect, and total effects of the predictor variables and considers the magnitudes of the different effects. Finally, the overall results are discussed.

CORRELATION MATRIX

This section examines the correlation matrix associated with the combined model (see Table 5.1). Once more, the combined model includes all of the hypothesized relationships from the four theoretical models discussed in Chapter 3 and is used to evaluate those models and answer the research questions. While most of the bivariate relationships confirm previous research, there were some exceptions. The bivariate relationships for the exogenous variable of immigrant concentration, in particular, appeared to contradict previous work. Previously, Sampson and colleagues found that immigrant concentration was generally positively associated with measures of crime and
violence and collective efficacy. Contrary to those findings, immigrant concentration was not significantly related to collective efficacy, perceived violence, violent victimization, or burglary. The correlations for residential stability also did not fully corroborate Sampson and colleagues’ findings. Residential stability was not significantly related to either violent victimization or burglary, as expected. It should be noted, however, that the findings previously reported by Sampson and colleagues on immigrant concentration and residential stability were from multivariate analyses and do not directly correspond to the bivariate relationships reported here (see Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001).

The variable organizational activism, which has not been previously analyzed, was significantly correlated with three of the crime and violence variables. Organizational activism was not correlated with violent victimization and the direction of the relationship with burglary was different from expectations. This latter finding is somewhat analogous to Warner and Rountree’s (1997) finding that social ties positively affected burglary. Warner and Rountree’s explanation for the finding was that burglaries within a neighborhood cause individuals to rally together to better defend themselves against future crimes.
### Table 5.1 Correlation Matrix for Combined Model

<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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>-0.217</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Residential Stability</td>
<td>-0.042</td>
<td>-0.215</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(0.439)</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Social Ties</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(0.889)</td>
<td>(0.094)</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Collective Efficacy</td>
<td>-0.575</td>
<td>-0.072</td>
<td>0.374</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.183)</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Organizational Activism</td>
<td>-0.239</td>
<td>-0.270</td>
<td>0.413</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.454</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Perceived Violence</td>
<td>0.665</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
<td>-0.311</td>
<td>-0.062</td>
<td>-0.692</td>
<td>-0.244</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.482)</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Violent Victimization</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.074</td>
<td>-0.060</td>
<td>-0.348</td>
<td>-0.014</td>
<td>0.406</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
<td>(0.969)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Burglary</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>-0.070</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>-0.127</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td>0.296</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>(.&lt;.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Delinquency Rate</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.299</td>
<td>-0.223</td>
<td>-0.021</td>
<td>-0.661</td>
<td>-0.295</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td>0.378</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: level of significance for a two-tailed test shown in parentheses.*
THE COMBINED MODEL

Goodness-of-fit Measures

Table 5.2 displays the results of the analysis for the combined model along with four goodness-of-fit measures. There are several goodness-of-fit measures available for evaluating structural equation models. However, each measure has limitations and some measures are better suited for certain conditions than others. Jaccard and Wan (1996) recommend reporting at least one goodness-of-fit measure for each of the three classes of fit indices. The three major classes of fit indices are absolute fit indices, absolute fit indices with a penalty for lack of parsimony, and comparative fit indices (see Garson 2009 for a discussion of goodness-of-fit indices for structural equation models).

Both chi-square and the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) are absolute fit indices. Absolute fit indices compare predicted and observed values in order to determine if a model is a good fit. The value of chi-square for the combined model is 135.67, which is statistically significant. This indicates that the combined model is not a good fit. However, the other absolute fit index reported, the GFI, indicates that the combined model is a good fit. The value of the GFI is .93. A GFI value above .90 indicates a good model fit.

The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is an absolute fit index with a penalty for lack of parsimony. The value of the RMSEA for the combined model is .23. Since the value is greater than .08 the RMSEA indicates that the combined model is not a good fit. As the name suggests, the comparative fit index (CFI) is a measure of
comparative fit. Comparative fit indices compare the research model with an alternative model. Like most comparative fit indices, the CFI compares the research model to the “independence model.” The value of the CFI for the combined model is .91 indicating a good model fit (i.e., >.90).

Overall, the goodness-of-fit measures for the combined model were inconclusive on whether or not the model is a good fit. However, Bollen (1989) argues that the best way to evaluate a model’s fit is to compare it to previous work in the field since general rules-of-thumb for a model being a good fit (e.g., .90) are largely arbitrary. When Veysey and Messner (1999) replicated Sampson and Groves’ (1989) classic study using structural equation models they reported that the GFI was .73 – considerably lower than the GFI for the combined model. Furthermore, when the combined model was compared to an analysis of the fit of the four theoretical models discussed in Chapter 3, the combined model was a better fit than each of those models for all of the indices discussed above. So while the goodness-of-fit indices were mixed for the combined model, compared to Sampson and Groves’ classic study and the theoretical models discussed earlier the combined model is an improvement.
### Table 5.2 Direct Effects for Combined Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous Variables</th>
<th>Social Ties</th>
<th>Collective Efficacy</th>
<th>Organizational Activism</th>
<th>Perceived Violence</th>
<th>Violent Victimization</th>
<th>Burglary</th>
<th>Delinquency Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>-0.199*</td>
<td>-0.021*</td>
<td>0.180*</td>
<td>0.019*</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.080*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.007)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>0.057*</td>
<td>-0.046*</td>
<td>-0.021*</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.064*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>0.096*</td>
<td>0.080*</td>
<td>0.021*</td>
<td>-0.079*</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.021)</td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.016)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td>(0.006)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ties</td>
<td>0.187*</td>
<td>0.043*</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>-0.009</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.036)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.040)</td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.015)</td>
<td>(0.014)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.523*</td>
<td>-0.095*</td>
<td>-0.075*</td>
<td>-0.163*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.057)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td>(0.022)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Activism</td>
<td>0.691*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.747*</td>
<td>0.308*</td>
<td>0.460*</td>
<td>0.258*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.227)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.244)</td>
<td>(0.092)</td>
<td>(0.094)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: unstandardized coefficients are shown with standard errors in parentheses.

* \( p < 0.05 \) for a 1-tailed test

**Goodness-of-fit measures**

- Chi-square = 135.674, df = 7, \( p < 0.001 \)
- GFI = 0.927
- RMSEA = 0.232
- CFI = 0.905
Direct Effects

This section examines all of the direct effects hypothesized by the four theoretical models presented in Chapter 3. The hypotheses associated with the classical social disorganization model are considered first. Subsequently the hypotheses associated with the systemic model of crime, the theory of collective efficacy, and the integrated and expanded models are discussed.

The classical social disorganization model: (SD1) concentrated disadvantage should positively affect crime and violence; (SD2) immigrant concentration should positively affect crime and violence; and, (SD3) residential stability should negatively affect crime and violence.

The results of the analysis did not lend much support for the classical social disorganization model. The majority of the hypotheses for the model were not supported. The hypotheses associated with the variable concentrated disadvantage received the most support. Concentrated disadvantage significantly affected three of the four crime and violence measures (perceived violence, violent victimization, and delinquency rate). The only measure that was unrelated to concentrated disadvantage was burglary. Previous research by Sampson and colleagues also found concentrated disadvantage to be a strong and consistent predictor of crime and violence (Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001). These findings also echo Warner’s (1999) observation that while recent social disorganization theories of crime have focused on
mediating processes, extreme poverty remains a consistent, direct, and robust predictor of crime and violence.

Both immigrant concentration and residential stability were significantly related to one crime and violence measure. Immigrant concentration was positively associated with delinquency and residential stability was negatively related to perceived violence. While both of these findings support the theory, the lack of significant effects on the other crime and violence measures does not. The results for residential stability were especially surprising since several studies have found a direct effect between residential stability and crime (see Sampson and Groves 1989; Warner and Rountree 1997; Veysey and Messner 1999; Warner 2003).

The systemic model of crime: (SM1) immigrant concentration should negatively affect social ties; (SM2) residential stability should positively affect social ties; and, (SM3) social ties should negatively affect crime and violence.

Contrary to the hypothesis, the effect of immigrant concentration on social ties was positive and significant. The reason for this finding may be that ethnic communities are often isolated from other communities and, as a result, residents in these communities interact with each other more. The other exogenous factor, residential stability, positively affected social ties as anticipated. However, social ties did not significantly affect any of the crime and violence measures. Social ties would have been significantly related to perceived violence for a 1-tailed test of significance if the direction of the relationship were in the predicted direction. Overall, these findings were consistent with past research.
that found social ties to be an inconsistent predictor of crime and violence (see Sampson and Groves 1989; Warner and Rountree 1997; Bellair 1997; Veysey and Messner 1999; Warner 2003).

The theory of collective efficacy: (CE1) concentrated disadvantage should negatively affect collective efficacy; (CE2) immigrant concentration should negatively affect collective efficacy; (CE3) residential stability should positively affect collective efficacy; and, (CE4) collective efficacy should negatively affect crime and violence.

The structural equation model completely supported the theory of collective efficacy confirming previous research by Sampson and colleagues (Sampson et al. 1997; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999; Morenoff et al. 2001). Concentrated disadvantage negatively affected collective efficacy, immigrant concentration negatively affected collective efficacy, and residential stability positively affected collective efficacy. In turn, collective efficacy negatively affected all of the crime and violence measures.

The integrated and expanded model: (IE1) concentrated disadvantage should negatively affect organizational activism; (IE2) immigrant concentration should negatively affect organizational activism; (IE3) residential stability should positively affect organizational activism; (IE4) social ties should positively affect collective efficacy; (IE5) social ties should positively affect organizational activism; (IE6) organizational activism should positively affect collective efficacy; and, (IE7) organizational activism should negatively affect crime and violence.
Only the hypotheses that are unique to the integrated and expanded model are discussed in this section. The integrated and expanded model introduces the variable organizational activism, which was derived from Carr’s (2003) work on the new parochialism. All three of the exogenous factors associated with the classical social disorganization model affected organizational activism as predicted. Both concentrated disadvantage and immigrant concentration negatively affected organizational activism and residential stability positively affected organizational activism. The mediating variable social ties also behaved as expected, positively affecting both collective efficacy and organizational activism. Thus, while social ties did not prove a strong predictor of crime and violence, social ties appear to facilitate other social control processes as the original theory suggested (see Kasarda and Janowitz 1974). The finding that social ties positively affected organizational activism also contradicts the more recent line of thought that suggests that social ties should not be related to more modern forms of social control processes. The effect of organizational activism on crime and violence was not expected, however. Organizational activism significantly and positively affected all of the crime and violence measures. The only other variable in the combined model to significantly affect all of the crime and violence measures was collective efficacy.

The unexpected direction of the relationship between organizational activism and crime and violence may be due to temporal order. A potential problem with cross-sectional data is temporal order. The integrated and expanded model predicts that organizational activism should lower crime and violence. However, the temporal order of organizational activism and crime and violence may be questionable. For example, if a community begins suffering from a serious crime problem, many residents may react by
attending local organizations to discuss and attempt to resolve the problem. Hence, the negative effect of organizational activism on crime and violence may not be observable until a subsequent time point. That is, organizational activism and crime may be reciprocally related to each other over time.

**Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects**

In this section the direct, indirect, and total effects of each explanatory variable in the combined model are examined in order to more fully understand the community-level processes at work. Standardized coefficients are used to compare the effects of one variable to another (see Table 5.3). Significance tests for the direct, indirect and total effects were conducted using a bootstrap method. Bootstrapping was also used to form 95% confidence intervals around the standardized coefficients to test the differences in the magnitudes of the effects – when the confidence intervals do not overlap the difference between the coefficients is significant at the 95% level (see Table 5.4).

The two variables hypothesized to affect social ties were significant, but in the case of immigrant concentration the effect was in an unexpected direction. The difference in the magnitudes of these effects was not significant. The effects of the exogenous factors and social ties on organizational activism behaved as predicted. All of the hypothesized direct and implied indirect and total effects were statistically significant. The direct effects of all three exogenous factors were similar in absolute magnitude and somewhat greater than the direct effect of social ties on organizational activism, but not significantly so. When the indirect effects were also taken into account, the total effect of
residential stability on organizational activism was the largest. However, once more the magnitude of this effect was not significantly greater than the next largest total effect. Most of the hypothesized and implied relationships between the exogenous factors and the other mediating factors on collective efficacy were also supported by the analysis. The lone exception was the indirect effect of immigrant concentration. The magnitude of the direct effect of concentrated disadvantage on collective efficacy was twice the strength of the next largest direct effect. The magnitude of the total effect of concentrated disadvantage also almost doubled the next largest effect. Both of these differences were statistically significant.

Overall, the effects of the exogenous and mediating factors on the crime and violence variables were more complex than the effects of the exogenous factors on the mediating factors. This was especially the case for the variable organizational activism. In terms of magnitude, the effect of collective efficacy on perceived violence was the largest, followed by the effect of concentrated disadvantage. The difference in these two effects was not statistically significant, however. In contrast, the total effect of concentrated disadvantage on perceived violence was significantly greater than the total effects of all of the other variables. The negative direct, indirect, and total effects of residential stability were also significant as was the negative indirect effect of social ties. The negative indirect effect of social ties on perceived violence strongly suggests that while social ties may not directly affect crime like many research models have posited, it may indirectly affect it like the original theory suggests (see Kasarda and Janowitz 1974).

The effect of organizational activism on perceived violence was more complex. While the direct effect of organizational activism on perceived violence was positive, its
indirect effect through collective efficacy was negative. That is, organizational activism inhibits crime in a community by strengthening collective efficacy, despite directly facilitating it. Not surprisingly given the opposing effects, the total effect of organizational activism on perceived violence was not significant. These countervailing effects may also explain why previous research on organizations has produced mixed results. However, it should be noted that while the direct effect of organizational activism was positive on all of the crime and violence measures and its indirect effects were negative, the total effect of organizational activism on violent victimization and burglary was positive and significant despite the countervailing processes.

The effects of the other intervening variables on violent victimization, burglary, and the delinquency rate were similar to their effects on perceived violence. However, the ability of the intervening variables to mediate the effects of the exogenous factors varied for the different crime and violence measures. Figures 5.1 through 5.4 show the significant direct and indirect effects on each of the crime and violence measures. Much like its effect on perceived violence, the direct effect of concentrated disadvantage on delinquency was large and its total effect was significantly greater than any other variable included in the model. Interestingly, the direct and total effect of immigrant concentration on delinquency was also large. But concentrated disadvantage did not have a significant direct effect on burglary and its direct effect on violent victimization was considerably lower than its direct and total effects on perceived violence and delinquency. Thus while the intervening variables mediated all of the effects of the exogenous factors on burglary, and almost all of them on violent victimization, they were not as successful at mediating the effects of the exogenous factors on perceived violence and delinquency.
Table 5.3 Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects for Combined Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous Variables</th>
<th>Social Ties</th>
<th>Collective Efficacy</th>
<th>Organizational Activism</th>
<th>Perceived Violence</th>
<th>Violent Victimization</th>
<th>Burglary</th>
<th>Delinquency Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>-0.559*</td>
<td>-0.291*</td>
<td>0.433*</td>
<td>0.180*</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.524*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>0.143*</td>
<td>-0.127*</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.292*</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>0.243*</td>
<td>0.221*</td>
<td>0.287*</td>
<td>-0.189*</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ties</td>
<td>0.204*</td>
<td>0.235*</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td>-0.449*</td>
<td>-0.321*</td>
<td>-0.258*</td>
<td>-0.380*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.380*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Activism</td>
<td>0.137*</td>
<td>0.127*</td>
<td>0.206*</td>
<td>0.312*</td>
<td>0.119*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: standardized coefficients are shown.
Key: direct effects are shown in first row, indirect effects are shown in second row, and total effects are shown in third row for each variable.
* p < 0.05 for a 1-tailed test
Table 5.4 Confidence Intervals for Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects for Combined Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous Variables</th>
<th>Social Ties</th>
<th>Collective Efficacy</th>
<th>Organizational Activism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>-0.633 to -0.478</td>
<td>-0.387 to -0.188</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.074 to -0.010</td>
<td></td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.661 to -0.523</td>
<td>-0.387 to -0.188</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>0.031 to 0.230</td>
<td>0.209 to -0.038</td>
<td>-0.380 to -0.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>0.006 to 0.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.031 to 0.230</td>
<td>-0.210 to -0.057</td>
<td>-0.346 to -0.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>0.121 to 0.345</td>
<td>0.134 to 0.307</td>
<td>0.183 to 0.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>----</td>
<td>0.046 to 0.141</td>
<td>0.027 to 0.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.121 to 0.345</td>
<td>0.217 to 0.385</td>
<td>0.250 to 0.420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ties</td>
<td>0.126 to 0.271</td>
<td>0.155 to 0.315</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.006 to 0.061</td>
<td></td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.060 to 0.313</td>
<td>0.155 to 0.315</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Activism</td>
<td>0.033 to 0.248</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.033 to 0.248</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 95% confidence intervals for standardized coefficients are shown for effects that are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$ for a 1-tailed test).
Key: direct effects are shown in first row, indirect effects are shown in second row, and total effects are shown in third row for each variable.
Table 5.4 Confidence Intervals for Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects for Combined Model (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous Variables</th>
<th>Perceived Violence</th>
<th>Violent Victimization</th>
<th>Burglary</th>
<th>Delinquency Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated Disadvantage</td>
<td>0.328 to 0.531</td>
<td>0.025 to 0.227</td>
<td>0.415 to 0.611</td>
<td>0.121 to 0.260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.151 to 0.302</td>
<td>0.035 to 0.321</td>
<td>0.647 to 0.771</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.607 to 0.715</td>
<td>0.231 to 0.393</td>
<td>0.121 to 0.260</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Concentration</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>0.330 to 0.512</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>0.362 to 0.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Stability</td>
<td>-0.132 to -0.030</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.264 to -0.112</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-0.126 to -0.022</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.346 to -0.201</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-0.154 to -0.048</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Ties</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-0.126 to -0.022</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.121 to -0.030</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective Efficacy</td>
<td>-0.548 to -0.336</td>
<td>-0.470 to -0.159</td>
<td>-0.473 to -0.291</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.548 to -0.336</td>
<td>-0.470 to -0.159</td>
<td>-0.473 to -0.291</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Activism</td>
<td>0.045 to 0.213</td>
<td>0.080 to 0.331</td>
<td>0.049 to 0.191</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.110 to -0.017</td>
<td>-0.076 to -0.013</td>
<td>-0.110 to -0.017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 95% confidence intervals for standardized coefficients are shown for effects that are statistically significant (p < 0.05 for a 1-tailed test).

Key: direct effects are shown in first row, indirect effects are shown in second row, and total effects are shown in third row for each variable.
Figure 5.1 Significant Direct and Indirect Effects on Perceived Violence

Figure 5.2 Significant Direct and Indirect Effects on Violent Victimization
Figure 5.3 Significant Direct and Indirect Effects on Burglary

Figure 5.4 Significant Direct and Indirect Effects on Delinquency Rate
CONCLUSION

The present chapter presented the results of the analysis and focused on examining the hypotheses associated with the four theoretical models presented in Chapter 3. Of the three theories that were previously examined in the literature, the theory of collective efficacy received the most support. All of the hypothesized effects associated with the theory were supported. In contrast, the majority of the hypotheses associated with the classical social disorganization model and the systemic model of crime were not supported. However, the effect of concentrated disadvantage on crime and violence was greater than any other variable included in the analysis. To be more specific, the total effect of concentrated disadvantage on perceived violence and delinquency was significantly greater than any other variable including collective efficacy.

In regard to the integrated and expanded model, while the majority of the hypotheses were supported (when the hypotheses that were not unique to the model were taken into account), the effect of the variable organizational activism on crime was much more complex than expected. The indirect effect of organizational activism on crime and violence was negative, but the direct effect was positive. This was the case for each of the crime and violence measures. The possibility of a reciprocal relationship between organizational activism and crime may explain this finding. In the next chapter this relationship will be further discussed along with the research questions that guided this thesis.
CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

While the previous chapter focused on empirically evaluating the individual hypotheses associated with the four theoretical models derived from the social disorganization perspective, this chapter assesses the broader issues that drove this analysis. The first section discusses the key findings in relationship to the research questions posed in the opening chapter of this thesis. The second section examines the limitations of the present research. And the conclusion discusses future directions in research.

KEY FINDINGS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions: Is organizational activism an important new source of crime control in today’s neighborhoods? What is the relationship between organizational activism and collective efficacy in urban neighborhoods? Do strong social ties play a central role in preventing crime by leading to the development of informal social control processes, such as collective efficacy and organizational activism as the systemic model of crime predicts? Or is the development of informal social control processes that prevent crime not hindered by the presence of weak social ties as the more recent research of Sampson and Carr implies? And, Does the inclusion of social
ties, collective efficacy, and organizational activism as intervening factors mediate the effects of the exogenous variables on crime in social disorganization theory?

In a 2003 ethnographic study of a Chicago neighborhood, Carr described an emerging new source of crime control in today’s society as the new parochialism. The new parochialism represented a merging of the parochial and public spheres of control. This merging was in part brought about by two national trends. First, more and more women were working outside the home. This move towards dual-earner families meant fewer individuals were around to monitor the neighborhood. Second, the rise of gang violence in the 1980s made individuals fearful of confronting teenagers who were misbehaving in the neighborhood. As a result, individuals increasingly sought indirect ways to regulate their neighborhood. One such way was through the use of local organizations with access to public resources – organizational activism.

Organizational activism is characterized by two dimensions: neighborhood activism and organizational participation. The first dimension, neighborhood activism, refers to indirect problem solving behavior by individuals, such as talking to a local politician about a neighborhood problem or attending a meeting of a local organization about a neighborhood problem. The second dimension, organizational participation, is meant to capture the usage of local organizations in the community. In this respect, the concept of organizational activism also represents a new way to think about the role of local organizations and institutions.

The present study revealed that the role of local organizations in community crime control is much more complex than previously thought. By using simultaneous
equation models, the analysis exposed the countervailing effects of organizational activism on crime and violence. While organizational activism appears to directly facilitate crime it also indirectly inhibits it by strengthening collective efficacy within a community. These countervailing influences may explain why previous research on local organizations that has relied on single equation models such as multiple regression has produced inconsistent findings. Hence, Morenoff et al.’s (2001) conclusion that “perhaps criminological theory has overstated the benefits to be derived from local forms of institutional organization” appears to be premature (p. 553). If nothing else, the results of this analysis strongly suggest that the role of local organizations and Carr’s thoughts on the new parochialism should be further explored.

There are several possible explanations for why organizational activism might positively affect crime. For example, Messner, Baumer, and Rosenfeld (2004) suggest that “activism” may be an expression of group conflict and subsequently result in more violence. However, a more plausible explanation for the present finding is that the positive direct effect is due to the temporal order of the two variables in question. If a community begins suffering from a serious crime problem, many residents may react by attending local organizations to discuss and attempt to resolve the problem. Hence, the negative effect of organizational activism on crime and violence may not be observable until a subsequent time point since it takes time to martial resources within and outside a neighborhood, but organizational activism could immediately bolster social cohesion and informal surveillance activities (i.e., collective efficacy) within a neighborhood.

Another salient contribution the present study makes to the current literature is the finding that social ties positively affect organizational activism. The hypothesized
A third contribution, or in this case, reaffirmation the present study makes is in regard to the role of poverty and concentrated disadvantage more generally in community-level crime control. Ever since Shaw and McKay (1969) observed that both crime and poverty decreased as a population moved away from the zone in transition, poverty and social disorganization theory have been linked. Although Shaw and McKay never asserted that poverty affected crime, many researchers made this assumption and the relationship and trying to explain it became the focus of social disorganization theory. In the 1980s, social ties became the answer, and subsequently, other explanations such as Sampson’s collective efficacy arose. And while at times variables suggested by these
explanations have appeared to partially mediate the effects of poverty on crime, they have never completely answered the question.

As Warner (1999) laments, “It is becoming increasingly clear that poverty must once again be given a central role in social disorganization theory” (p. 111). The results from this analysis largely support her argument that poverty remains a leading factor in predicting crime. The total effect of concentrated disadvantage on crime was significant for all four crime and violence measures examined in this thesis, and for two of those measures, the total effect of concentrated disadvantage on crime was significantly stronger than any other explanation, including collective efficacy. Furthermore, the intervening factors of the model did not completely mediate the effect of concentrated disadvantage on the four crime and violence measures. While the direct effect of concentrated disadvantage on burglary was not significant and the magnitude of its direct effect on violent victimization was small, the direct effect of concentrated disadvantage on both perceived violence and delinquency was substantial. Hence, while much of the focus in the literature, and in this thesis, has been on the mediating factors of social disorganization theory, concentrated disadvantage remains a leading cause of crime and the explanations for this relationship continue to be inadequate.

LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH

There were several limitations to the present research. A potential limitation with any empirical study that may affect the results is the variables used to measure the key concepts. It is possible that the variables used to measure organizational activism were
not fully satisfactory. One aspect of organizational activism that was not directly measured because of the variables available was links to resources outside the neighborhood. Instead, such linkages had to be assumed. Several different measurements of the concept organizational activism were considered. Apart from the variables included in the final measurement, variables relating to talking to a local religious leader about a problem, talking to a neighbor who is causing a problem, and getting together with neighbors to solve a problem, were also considered. All of the different configurations consistently replicated the key findings of the analysis, however. To be more specific, the different measures consistently found that directly organizational activism was positively related to crime and indirectly it was negatively related to crime through collective efficacy. Another limitation to the present study was the cross-sectional data used for the analysis. The most likely explanation for the unexpected finding that organizational activism positively affects crime is that there is a reciprocal relationship between organizational activism and crime over time. Longitudinal data are needed to more fully explore this relationship, but such data were not available at the time of the analysis. A final limitation to the present study was the sample. The data were drawn exclusively from the city of Chicago, thus, the generalizability of the results from the analysis must be questioned. Would the results be the same if the sample were from New York or Oklahoma City?
CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH

Overall, much research still needs to be done in order to understand the social control mechanisms at work in today’s neighborhoods. Apart from addressing the limitations of the present research, I suggest further moving away from the “urban village” model of urban neighborhoods that has dominated sociological thought. While researchers are beginning to understand the limitations of this model, most theories and surveys are still designed around it. In order to address these limitations, researchers must seriously begin investigating inter-neighborhood linkages rather than empirically, if not also theoretically, treating neighborhoods as isolated entities. As Sampson (2006b) suggests, “From the standpoint of a theory of mechanisms, it is thus important to account for social and institutional ties that link residents across neighborhoods” (p. 43). One could go a step further and also suggest that it is equally important to understand how social and institutional ties are linked to public agencies such as government and law enforcement. One aspect of the current social disorganization literature that is severely lacking is research on the role of formal social control process, such as law enforcement in community-level crime control.

This thesis also points out the need to give concentrated disadvantage a larger role in social disorganization theory. Since the 1980s, most research has focused on social ties, collective efficacy, and other mediating mechanisms in social disorganization theory. But this focus has not successfully explained the effect of concentrated disadvantage on crime and violence. Warner (1999) suggests that focusing on “cultural attenuation” brought about by extreme conditions such as poverty would give
concentrated disadvantage a more central role in social disorganization theory. Unfortunately, not much research has addressed cultural attenuation in social disorganization theory, but Sampson and Bartusch (1998) found that residents in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty have higher levels of legal cynicism, dissatisfaction with the police, and tolerance of deviance. More research in this vein may not only provide a better explanation for why concentrated disadvantage affects crime, but also broaden the social disorganization perspective to include more culturally related explanations like Shaw and McKay (1969) discussed in their classic work. Overall, the goal of this research was to shed more light on the mediating mechanisms of social disorganization theory, but like much research, the present study has arguably generated more questions than answers. This is especially the case for the variable organizational activism, but it is also the case for the need to readdress the role of poverty within the perspective.
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