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Comparing Neighborhood-Focused Activism and Volunteerism: Psychological Well-Being and Social Connectedness

Megan E. Gilster

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Abstract

Does participating in neighborhood-focused activism confer different benefits than volunteering? The engagement of community members in neighborhood civic life has been identified as an important component of safe and healthy communities. Research on community engagement has encompassed voluntary associations, volunteering, as well as participation in neighborhood activism. A diverse set of research suggests that there are psychological and social benefits to community engagement, but also suggests that there are differences between forms of participation. In order to understand these differences, I examine the relationship of both volunteerism and neighborhood activism to psychosocial outcomes using survey data from a neighborhood-based sample of Chicago residents ($n=3105$). Findings suggest that activism is different—activists have higher neighborhood and personal mastery than those who only volunteer. Participation in neighborhood activism is also associated with an increased likelihood of contact with local officials and social ties in the neighborhood.

Keywords

volunteering; activism; neighborhoods; psychological well-being; social connectedness

The engagement of community members in neighborhood organizational and civic life has been identified as an important component of interventions promoting safe and healthy communities. It has also been the subject of much scholarly debate. Much of the focus of this scholarship has been placed on social ties, participation in voluntary associations, volunteering in organizations, and the amorphous concept of social capital. One form of community engagement which has received much less attention is activism in the neighborhood. Given the increasing attention given to the relationship between neighborhood inequality and well-being, neighborhood-focused activism presents an important form of participation as it has the potential to address neighborhood problems and inequalities. In order to improve our understanding of the differences between forms of community engagement, I examine the association of volunteering and participation in neighborhood activism with psychological well-being and social ties—with particular attention to the differences between the two types of participation.

While there is growing evidence which finds that volunteerism improves the physical and psychological health and social connectedness of volunteers, the same attention has not been given to activism in general, especially participation in neighborhood activism. Empowerment theory suggests that participation in neighborhood activism would be

important for the psychological and social well-being of residents for several reasons. Neighborhood activism is an approach to building empowerment, and as such, is a multilevel approach to addressing the well-being of individuals and communities (Gutierrez, 1990; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). The research on volunteerism has found strong evidence for individual-level effects of volunteering on psychological well-being but has not differentiated between volunteering and activist-specific participation (e.g., Musick & Wilson, 2008). I suggest that participation in neighborhood activism is beneficial to psychological well-being, builds social ties, and is more empowering than volunteering.

The theoretical and empirical background for this project draws from several literatures. First, I compare how scholars have defined and often aggregated volunteering and activism. Then, I describe the literature on the consequences of volunteerism. Finally, I discuss how empowerment informs a comparison of neighborhood activism and volunteerism. Taken together, the literature suggests that there are psychological and social benefits to participation in activism. I examine both volunteering and participating in neighborhood activism in order to understand the unique attributes of neighborhood activism and the differences between these types of participation.

Are Activists Volunteers?

The dearth of literature on the psychological and social consequences of activism makes volunteerism literature a logical starting point for a study of the effects of neighborhood activism. But those who study the effects of volunteerism rarely compare forms of participation. In the volunteerism literature, activism is argued to be a form of volunteering (Wilson, 2000; Musick & Wilson, 2008). I suggest that it is an empirical question: Are volunteering and participating in neighborhood activism the same? Does activism bestow different benefits than volunteering?

Activists seek to create change at the neighborhood, community, or global level. Activists view the social structure as a target of intervention not a framework within which to work. Music and Wilson (2008) suggest that activism is differentiated by *collective action* for a *collective good*. Neighborhood activists therefore work for neighborhood change. Neighborhood activism may be a form of participation in collective action (e.g., Foster-Fishman et al., 2007) though some research has labeled neighborhood activism as community participation for social change (Speer & Peterson, 2000) or participation in community organizing (Christens & Speer, 2011). I define the key feature of neighborhood activism as working towards change in neighborhood conditions—the neighborhood as the collective good.

Volunteers, on the other hand, seek to provide services through formal organizations. For instance, in the three major studies assessing volunteering in the US, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics Philanthropy Module (Wilhelm, 2006), the Current Population Survey's (CPS) Volunteer Supplement (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), and the Independent Sector's *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (2001), volunteering is elicited through questions about the formal organizations one gives time to (e.g., "Have you done any volunteer activities through or for an organization?" U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, p. 7 - 1).

Research supports the conventional wisdom that activists are oriented towards politics and social change whereas volunteers are oriented towards providing services—volunteers distance themselves from the political connotations of activism (e.g., Eliasoph, 1988; Wuthnow, 1991). Certainly, the line between activism and volunteerism is blurred: often activists do volunteer work and volunteers become activists. Despite noting some differences in how volunteers and activists orient their work, John Wilson (2000) argues that volunteerism and activism are the same activity.

Growing attention has been given to differentiating between secular and religious volunteering, but there are no clear theoretical guidelines for distinguishing between types of volunteering (Musick & Wilson, 2003). Church-related volunteering was associated with a greater improvement in depression which they posit can be explained by organizational context—religious organizations reward volunteering more. Yet there are theoretical reasons described above for parsing out volunteerism and activism.

Volunteerism and Well-Being

There is substantial evidence that volunteering positively affects the social and psychological well-being of those who volunteer. Volunteering is thought to be a form of social integration, encouraging the development of social relationships and networks. While the social ties originating from participation may be weak ties, they may help to develop stronger (Kawachi & Berkman, 2001). These relationships have the potential bestow beneficial social support (House, Umberson, & Landis, 1988). Social ties are therefore thought to be a mechanism through which volunteering affects participant mental health (Kawachi & Berkman, 2001; Musick & Wilson, 2003).

There is consistent evidence from the empirical literature that volunteering benefits individual psychological well-being (Wilson, 2000; MORE CITES). The evidence from longitudinal studies suggests that positive effects of volunteering persist for happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem, mastery, and physical health and negative effects persist for depression (Thoits & Hewitt, 2001). But some longitudinal research has found that volunteering is most beneficial to the psychological well-being of older adults (Musick & Wilson, 2003; Willigen, 2000).

Neighborhood Activism and Empowerment

Empowerment often informs interventions that address individual and community well-being. Empowerment is the ability of individuals (as well as groups, neighborhoods, communities) to develop power to act on their own behalf (Parsons, Gutiérrez, & Cox, 1998). Community engagement has been linked to improved personal empowerment (Christens et al., 2001) and political activism has been linked to improved well being (Klar & Kasser, 2008). Neighborhood activism, like other kinds of activism and community engagement, is thought to be important for individual and community empowerment (Speer & Hughey, 1995; Zimmerman, 1995; 2000).

Sense of control, or mastery, is an especially important aspect of empowerment ((Israel, Checkoway, Schulz, & Zimmerman, 1994; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Becker, Israel,

Schulz, Parker, & Klem, 2002; Zimmerman, 2000). Research has found that participation in political activities and organizations is related to improved control at multiple levels (Becker et al., 2002). Some work on empowerment has emphasized the situation-specific nature of empowerment (e.g., Zimmerman, 1995 which suggests that activism focused on the neighborhood would improve one's sense of control over the neighborhood.

Summary and Research Question

In order to understand the different ways in which volunteering and neighborhood activism are experienced by participants, I examine their association with several psychological and social outcomes. First, I examine components of psychological well-being associated with empowerment—neighborhood sense of control and mastery (or personal sense of control). Then I examine other measures of psychological well-being—hopelessness and depressive symptoms—and social connectedness—social ties and contact with officials. I posit that activism bestows the same benefits as volunteerism as well as additional benefits of empowerment. Empowerment theory suggests that activism is an important component of well-being, suggesting that sense of control should be more closely linked to activism than volunteerism. As the present research focuses on neighborhood activism, the context-specific nature of empowerment would suggest that sense of control over neighborhood conditions would be improved by neighborhood activism. Both neighborhood activism and volunteerism would impart psychological and social benefits associated with social integration.

To summarize, I examine the following research questions: Is participation in neighborhood activism associated with higher neighborhood control and mastery than volunteering? Are participation in activism and volunteerism similarly associated with improved psychological well-being? Are participation in activism and volunteerism similarly associated with connectedness?

Methods

Data

Survey data from the Chicago Community Adult Health Study (CCAHS) were used to examine the research questions. Survey respondents in this study are 3105 adults aged 18 or older from a neighborhood-based multistage probability sample of residents of Chicago, IL. One adult was interviewed from each sampled home between 2001 and 2003, with a final response rate of 72%.

Sample weights were used in all data analyses to handle differential rates of selection and participation to be more representative of the City of Chicago. (Women and African Americans were overrepresented in the sample. Men, whites and those making over \$50,000/year were underrepresented (Morenoff et al., 2007; Mair et al., 2010).) Weighted sample characteristics are detailed in Table 1. With weights applied, the sample consisted of 25.8% Latino, 38.4% non-Hispanic White, 32.1% non-Hispanic Black, and 4.8% individuals of other races. The average age of respondents is 42.5 years old. More respondents

volunteered than participated in neighborhood activism (34.6% and 19.3% respectively). Of volunteers, 41.3% also participated in neighborhood activism (14.3% of the entire sample).

Measures

Survey measures are detailed below. Complete listings of questions comprising each measure are listed in Appendix A.

Neighborhood sense of control—Sense of control over one's neighborhood captures empowerment related to participation in neighborhood activism. This construct is measured using one survey question with four response categories: "Overall, how much impact do think people like you can have in making your community a better place to live: no impact at all, a small impact, moderate impact, or big impact?" with 1 being no impact at all and 4 being a big impact. Missing data on this variable were imputed using OLS with age, sex, education, income, race, Latino ethnicity, immigration status, marital status, home ownership, and other psychological resources as predictors. Fifty respondents had missing data on this question.

Mastery—Mastery is measured by survey responses to the 5-item Pearlin Mastery scale (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). This scale also had a potential and actual range of 1 to 4. The scale was constructed from the mean of all items with responses, 18 respondents had less than five responses. Furthermore, two respondents had no responses to the questions on this scale, and the scales for these respondents were imputed using OLS with age, sex, education, income, race, Latino ethnicity, immigration status, marital status, home ownership, and other psychological resources used as predictors.

Hopelessness—Hopelessness is measured by a 4-item scale with a potential and actual range of 1 to 4 where 1 indicates the lowest level of hopelessness. Twenty-eight respondents had scores calculated from fewer than four responses, and three had scales imputed from the same independent variables used in the measure of mastery.

Depressive symptoms—Depressive symptomology is measured by the mean of an 11-item Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression scale (CES-D scale; Radloff (1974)). The possible range on this item is 1 to 4, where 1 indicates no symptoms and 4 indicates the highest frequency of experiencing symptoms, though the actual range on the item is 1.00 to 3.82. The scale was constructed from the mean of all items with responses, 7 respondents had one item missing from the scale.

Neighborhood social ties—Two questions measure the number of friends and kin a person has in their neighborhood. Coding is categorical such that 1=none, 2=one or two, 3=three to five, 4=six to nine, 5=ten or more for each item, and the two items were averaged.

Contact with officials—The measure of contacts with officials is a continuous measure of the types of officials or organizations respondents have had contacts with including a community leader, neighborhood newspaper, or community development organization.

Neighborhood activism—The measure of neighborhood activism comes from two items selected from a civic participation scale. The questions ascertain activities in which respondents participated in the last 12 months: have you participated in a community project; have you participated in any group that took local action for reform? The measure is coded into a dummy variable such that 0 is no participation and 1 is participation in either form of neighborhood activism.

Volunteerism—Volunteerism is a dummy variable derived from a set of questions which asks about a number of organizations to which people might give their time. Respondents who responded that they were associated with any of these organizations were then asked the number of hours of unpaid work they gave to these groups in the last year. Respondents who gave one or more hours of their time were coded as volunteers. For three cases, respondents either did not know if they volunteered, or the information was not ascertained and were coded as non-volunteers.

Sociodemographic variables—Age, gender, socioeconomic status, and race are related psychological well-being, social connectedness, as well as participation. Age is a continuous variable. Although the age quadratic is not used in final models because it was not significant, in preliminary tests the age squared variable was created by mean centering (at 42.5) and squaring the continuous variable. Respondent gender was obtained by interviewer observation. Employment status was asked by the question “are you working now for pay, looking for work, retired, keeping house, a student, or something else?” A total of 134 respondents gave a response of “something else”, and these were recoded into the original categories based on their volunteered responses. Years of education were categorized into less than a high school education (<12 years), a high school diploma (12 years), some college (13–15 years), and a college diploma or beyond (16 years). Marital status is measured by five categories: married, separated, divorced, widowed, and never married.

Income is measured by a categorical variable based on a survey question with five income categories (\$0–5000, \$5000–9999, \$10,000–29,999, \$30,000–49,999, and more than \$50,000). Because many individuals (n=577) were missing on income, another dummy variable is used to identify those with missing income data. Financial stress was also included in addition to income. Two survey questions comprise the financial stress index. Respondents were asked how satisfied they are with their present financial situation and how difficult it is to meet monthly payments on bills. The range on this measure is 1 to 5, where 5 indicate the highest level of financial stress. The alpha for this scale is .644.

Respondent race and ethnicity was ascertained by first asking if the respondent identified as Hispanic or Latino, then a set of race questions were asked to identify as one or more races: White/Caucasian, Black/African-American, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, other race. Because of sample sizes, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian and “other race” were all grouped into an “other” category. The Latino category is comprised of Hispanic/Latinos of any race.

Analyses

The research questions described above are examined using multivariate regression with survey weights. Regression models are estimated for continuous scales of neighborhood sense of control, mastery, hopelessness, depressive symptoms, neighborhood social ties and contacts with outside officials. Models are presented in pairs; in the first model, all sociodemographic characteristics are regressed on each outcome and in the second model, the two independent variables of interest are added to examine mediation and model fit.

Results

Regression results are shown in Table 2. Participation in neighborhood activism has a large, significant positive association with neighborhood sense of control. Those who participate in activism have .372 ($p < .001$) higher neighborhood control ratings while those who participate in volunteerism have just .124 ($p < .01$) higher neighborhood control compared to those who don't participate. Activism and volunteerism mediate the effects of education, retirement, and immigrant status on neighborhood control. Activism and volunteerism are also related to mastery—though only moderately significant. Mastery (or personal sense of control) has a larger association with participation in activism ($b = .070$, $p < .10$) than volunteerism ($b = .060$, $p < .10$). There is little mediation of the relationship of socioeconomic characteristics to mastery by volunteerism and neighborhood activism. Hopelessness is significantly related to volunteering but not activism. Inclusion of participation variables explains part of the impact of retirement, education, and income on hopelessness. Neither activism nor volunteerism is significantly associated with depressive symptoms.

Social connectedness is much higher for those who participate, but especially for those who participate in activism. Neighborhood social ties are highly related to both types of participation. The coefficient is somewhat larger for participating in neighborhood activism than volunteering. Socioeconomic status variables are less predictive of social ties than other outcomes currently examined. Activists are much more likely to have contacts with officials compared to volunteers. In other words, neighborhood activists have contact with almost 1.5 more kinds of officials than non-activists, double the difference attributable to volunteering. Education is especially predictive of contacts with officials, but is mediated by participation. For instance, having a college education is associated with one more contact, but this association is cut in half when both forms of participation are included in the model.

Supplementary analyses were conducted using three categories rather than two to classify participation: activism only, volunteerism only, and both activism and volunteerism. These analyses suggest that for each outcome, the results for only one form of participation are similar and the effects of being *both a volunteer and neighborhood activist* are cumulative. For instance, participating in both volunteerism and neighborhood activism is associated with a .496 ($p < .001$) higher scoring of neighborhood sense of control score (i.e., the sum of the coefficients for activism and volunteerism). Furthermore, three-variable models do not improve model fit (the between-model F-tests are not significant for any dependent variable).

Discussion

As predicted, participation in neighborhood activism is strongly related to well-being, especially neighborhood sense of control and mastery which are important for empowerment. The strong relationship between participation in neighborhood activism and neighborhood sense of control supports the notion that empowerment is context specific. The evidence that activism is more strongly associated with empowerment than volunteerism suggests that activism may, in fact, be a different experience than volunteering. The literature suggests that the key difference between activism and volunteerism is the difference between working for social change and working to help individuals. The current study suggests that working for the collective good is empowering. Working for collective good—neighborhood good in particular—is associated with having a sense of control one's life and the social context in which one lives.

Findings suggest that volunteers and activists have different experiences of their work. While activism is associated with empowerment, only volunteerism was associated with experiencing less hopelessness. While both volunteering and activism are associated with more social ties, activism is particularly linked to contacts with local officials. Taken together, this study supports to the notion that activism and volunteerism are different, and that participation should be disaggregated and investigated as distinct activities.

Furthermore, the finding that neighborhood activism is associated with more social ties within the neighborhood and more contact with outside officials is particularly interesting because of notions that those who participate in activism may either be more antagonistic (and therefore would have trouble with social connections) or that activism might be alienating because it necessitates some degree of confrontation or speaking out about contentious issues. Recent social movement scholarship has noted that activism has become more neighborhood-based and more mundane than the traditional view of activism suggests (McAdam, Sampson, Weffer, & MacIndoe, 2005). That neighborhood activism is often less confrontational may explain these large effects on social connectedness measures. Nevertheless, as the current study focuses on local, and possibly less risky and more mundane neighborhood activism, it particularly striking that differences between activism and volunteerism are found. While the taming of activism may decrease its effectiveness to create large scale social change (McAdam, et al., 2005), this study suggests that individuals benefit from participation in activism.

Because psychological well-being and social connectedness are all generally tied to improved mental health, it is unusual to find that activism and volunteerism are not associated with depressive symptoms. Future research is needed to better understand these unexpected relationships. One possible argument is that there may be some negative effects of participating in activism and volunteerism, such as role strain (Osborne, Baum, & Ziersch, 2009) burnout (Kagan, 2006; Einwohner, 2002; Downtown & Wehr, 1998). The concept of burnout is qualitatively similar to depressive symptomology—burnout consists of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished achievements (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986). Einwohner (2002) suggests that, as a strategy to avoid burnout, activists find small successes to celebrate. This strategy may also foster individual coping resources and

help build the sense of empowerment that is seen among those who participate in neighborhood activism in this study.

A number of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of respondents were controlled for in order to make sure that the effects of activism and volunteerism were not driven by characteristics of those who participate. Those with more educational and economic resources are often found to participate more (Musick et al., 2000; Musick & Wilson, 2008; Verba, 1995; Wilson & Musick, 1998). Markers of socioeconomic status (education and income) and financial stress were particularly strong predictors across most of the outcomes examined here. Most commonly, participation variables mediated some of the effect of higher socioeconomic status on psychological well-being and social connectedness.

A primary limitation of the present analyses is that the data are cross. With cross-sectional regression analyses, the ability to make causal inferences about the processes of interest is impaired because of selection bias. That is, researchers are unable to determine the direction of causal relationships—does activism and volunteering improve well-being or do people with higher levels of well-being participate? Concerns over selection bias have plagued the volunteering literature (Wilson, 2000). Nevertheless, the evidence from longitudinal studies supports a causal link from participation to well-being. Even after controlling for selection, positive effects of volunteering persist for happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem, mastery, and physical health and negative effects persist for depression (Thoits & Hewitt, 2001). Similarly, community participation (e.g., writing a letter to influence policy, attending an event about community services) was related to later psychological empowerment and there was no significant selection (Christens, Peterson, & Speer, 2011). The evidence is therefore not clear that there is a selection problem. If selection bias is present in the current analysis it would upwardly bias the associations between participation and outcomes. Nevertheless, if we assume that activism and volunteerism are equally biased, the comparison between these two independent variables would not be biased.

Another limitation of the data is that although they are representative of Chicago, they are not nationally generalizable. For instance, rates of participation in this sample are higher than those found in the CPS Volunteer Supplement. The national volunteering rate in 2009 was 26.5% and the rate of working with neighbors to fix a community problem was 7.9% within the last year. In the present study, 34.6% of respondents volunteered and 25.2% participated in neighborhood activism.

Another limitation of this study is in the measurement of some key variables. The reliability coefficient for neighborhood activism before the dummy transformation is fairly low (.56), though we would not expect it to be as high as a psychological measurement scale because activists may be highly involved in one project, not different kinds of projects. This is one of the reasons the measure was converted to an indicator variable. The items were selected on face validity and confirmed with community practitioners. Likewise, the measure of neighborhood control is a single item, whereas previous research has used multi-item scales which include multi-level concepts of control (Becker, et al., 2002; Zimmerman et al., 1992). Future research would benefit from community survey data that inquires about neighborhood activism, other types of activism, and other informal forms of participation

along with improved empowerment outcome measures. Despite these limitations this work is a unique effort to compare volunteerism and neighborhood activism in large scale survey research.

Future research should improve upon this research by improving measurement of neighborhood-activism while including questions about psychological and social well-being of participants and non-participants. The categories of activist and volunteer, and the myriad labels given to community participation, mean that research which seeks to understand these behaviors often develops in distinct disciplinary tracts (Hustinx, Cnann, & Handy, 2010). Research that cuts across disciplines and forms of participation is important for advancing theory and research on participation.

I find that activism is important for the psychological and social well-being of neighborhood residents. Including neighborhood-focused activism in future research is therefore important for improving our understanding of the psychological and social resources available to residents. Future research that seeks to understand neighborhood activism as a risk or protective factor against neighborhoods disadvantage may improve interventions in communities.

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APPENDIX A: Scale Composition

	Questions
Financial Stress Index	Now, I'd like to ask a few questions about (your/your family's) financial situation. How satisfied are you with (your/your family's) present financial situation – completely, very, somewhat, not very or not at all satisfied? How difficult is it for (you/your family) to meet the monthly payments on your (family's) bills? Is it extremely difficult, very difficult, somewhat difficult, or not difficult at all?
Neighborhood Activism	Which of the things listed have you done in the past twelve months? Worked on a community project Participated in any group that took local action for reform
Volunteerism	Thinking of all of the organizations that you just told me you are associated with, such as (<i>fill—see below</i>), during how many weeks in the last twelve months did you do unpaid work for <u>any</u> of these organizations? During a typical week that you did this work, about how many hours did you spend doing unpaid work for these organizations?
Neighborhood Sense of Control	Overall, how much impact do think people like you can have in making your community a better place to live – no impact at all, a small impact, moderate impact, or big impact?
Mastery	I have little control over the things that happen to me. There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life. I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life.
Hopelessness	I feel it is impossible for me to reach the goals that I would like to strive for.

Questions	
	The future seems hopeless to me and I can't believe that things are changing for the better. I don't expect to get what I really want. There's no use in really trying to get something I want because I probably won't get it.
Depressive Symptoms (CES-D)	Now I am going to read some statements about how people sometimes feel. After each statement, please indicate how often you felt that way DURING THE PAST WEEK. I felt depressed. I felt that everything I did was an effort. My sleep was restless. I was happy. I felt lonely. People were unfriendly. I enjoyed life. I did not feel like eating. My appetite was poor. I felt sad. I felt that people disliked me. I could not get "going."
Social Ties	Not counting those who live with you, how many of your relatives or in-laws live in your neighborhood? How many friends do you have who live in your neighborhood? Would you say none, one or two, three to five, six to nine, or ten or more?
Official Contacts	During the last year, that is from [MONTH OF INTERVIEW] to now. Please... tell me which of these you have had direct contact with during the last year. By direct we mean contact by telephone, in writing, or in person: a school principal, a chair of a local school council, a religious leader in the community, a director of a neighborhood business association or local chamber of commerce in the community, an editor of a neighborhood newspaper, an alderman, a ward committeeman, an officer of the Chicago Police Department, a director of a community development organization

Appendix B. Correlation matrix of continuous variables (n=3105)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)						
Neighborhood activism (1)													
Volunteerism (2)	0.388 ***												
Neighborhood sense of control (3)	0.237 ***	0.212 ***											
Mastery (4)	0.127 ***	0.168 ***	0.191 ***										
Depression (5)	-0.013	-0.059 **	-0.065 ***	-0.393 ***									
Hopelessness (6)	-0.139 ***	-0.205 ***	-0.205 ***	-0.650 ***	0.363 ***								
Neighborhood social ties (7)	0.122 ***	0.126 ***	0.144 ***	0.049 **	-0.075 ***	-0.036 *							
Contact with officials (8)	0.421 ***	0.395 ***	0.299 ***	0.148 ***	-0.040 *	-0.167 ***	0.226 ***						
Age (9)	-0.010	-0.040 *	0.001	-0.146 ***	-0.042 *	0.164 ***	-0.020						
Financial stress (10)	-0.010	-0.023	-0.059 **	-0.194 ***	0.320 ***	0.193 ***	-0.070 ***						

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Table 1**Weighted Sample Characteristics (N=3105)**

	Mean/Percent	Range
Female	52.6%	
Age	42.5	18–92
Race/Ethnicity		
Latino	25.8%	
Non-Hispanic White	38.4%	
Non-Hispanic Black	32.1%	
Non-Hispanic Other	3.8%	
First generation immigrant	26.9%	
Employment Status		
Employed	64.4%	
Job seeking	8.8%	
Retired	15.7%	
Family Work	7.8%	
Student	3.4%	
Education		
Less than a high school education	23.4%	
High School	23.8%	
Some College	24.9%	
College +	27.9%	
Income		
<5K	5.2%	
5–15K	14.9%	
15–40K	26.4%	
40K +	34.9%	
Missing	18.6%	
Marital Status		
Married	41.8%	
Separated	4.0%	
Divorced	10.8%	
Widowed	6.7%	
Never married	36.7%	
Financial Stress Index	2.49	(1–5)
Neighborhood Activism	25.2%	
Volunteerism	34.6%	
Neighborhood Sense of Control	2.78	(1–4)
Mastery	3.19	(1–4)
Hopelessness	1.75	(1–4)
Depressive symptoms	1.82	(1–4)
Social Ties	2.63	(1.42–5)

	Mean/Percent	Range
Official Contacts	3.95	(0–9)

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Table 2
Weighted regression models predicting neighborhood control and individual mastery (N=3105)

	Neighborhood Control		Mastery	
	b	b	b	b
Female	0.076 *	0.069 +	-0.037	-0.040
Race/Ethnicity (non-Hispanic White reference)				
Hispanic	0.195 ***	0.190 ***	0.059	0.058
non-Hispanic African American	0.136 **	0.156 **	0.114 **	0.119 **
Other non-Hispanic	0.050	0.043	-0.175 +	-0.178 +
First generation immigrant	-0.338 ***	-0.266 ***	-0.073 +	-0.053
Age	0.004 *	0.004 *	-0.002	-0.002 +
Marital Status (Married reference)				
Separated	-0.157	-0.148	0.001	0.003
Divorced	-0.050	-0.077	0.067	0.061
Widowed	-0.171 +	-0.172 +	0.007	0.006
Never married	-0.183 ***	-0.176 ***	0.030	0.032
Employment status (employed reference)				
Unemployed	0.003	0.014	-0.045	-0.042
Retired	-0.264 ***	-0.215 **	-0.313 ***	-0.299 ***
Home caregiver	-0.019	-0.015	-0.028	-0.026
Student	0.165	0.123	0.141 +	0.129 +
Education (less than high school reference)				
High school	0.047	0.033	0.176 ***	0.173 ***
Some college	0.181 **	0.114 *	0.255 ***	0.235 ***
College plus	0.341 ***	0.235 ***	0.379 ***	0.349 ***
Income (40K + reference)				
<5K	-0.077	-0.076	-0.248 ***	-0.245 ***
5-15K	-0.116 +	-0.099	-0.220 ***	-0.213 ***
15-40K	-0.067	-0.063	-0.065	-0.062
Missing	-0.163 **	-0.143 *	-0.166 ***	-0.160 ***

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	Neighborhood Control			Mastery		
	b	b	b	b	b	b
Financial Stress	-.042	*	-.048	*	-.126	***
Participation						-.127
Volunteerism			0.124	**		0.060
Neighborhood Activism			0.372	***		0.070
Intercept	2.697	***	2.649	***	3.493	***
R-squared	.081		.116		.157	.160

+ $p < .10$,
* $p < .05$,
** $p < .01$,
*** $p < .001$

Table 3
Weighted regression models predicting hopelessness and depressive symptoms (N=3105)

	Hopelessness		Depressive Symptoms			
	b		b	b	b	b
Female	-0.001		0.004	0.079	**	0.08 **
Race/Ethnicity (non-Hispanic White reference)						
Hispanic	0.055		0.056	-0.014		-0.015
non-Hispanic African American	-0.015		-0.019	0.006		0.007
Other non-Hispanic	0.092		0.098	0.032		0.033
First generation immigrant	0.089 *		0.063	-0.115 **	**	-0.115 **
Age	0.003 *		0.003 **	-0.003	**	-0.003 **
Marital Status (Married reference)						
Separated	-0.082		-0.084	0.112 +	0.113 +	
Divorced	-0.065		-0.059	0.157 ***	0.155 ***	
Widowed	0.012		0.014	0.142 **	0.143 **	
Never married	-0.087 *		-0.088 *	0.128 ***	0.129 ***	
Employment status (employed reference)						
Unemployed	0.107 +		0.103 +	0.027	0.027	
Retired	0.192 ***		0.173 **	0.2 ***	0.2 ***	
Home caregiver	0.027		0.024	0.154 **	0.153 **	
Student	-0.310 ***		-0.295 ***	-0.041	-0.041	
Education (less than high school reference)						
High school	-0.192 ***		-0.188 ***	-0.028	-0.028	
Some college	-0.329 ***		-0.303 ***	-0.054	-0.053	
College plus	-0.53 ***		-0.490 ***	-0.102 **	-0.102 **	
Income (40K + reference)						
<5K	0.263 ***		0.255 ***	0.073	0.069	
5-15K	0.189 ***		0.178 **	0.056	0.053	
15-40K	0.032		0.025	0.063 *	0.06 *	
Missing	0.113 *		0.104 *	-0.027	-0.028	
Financial Stress	0.112 ***		0.114 ***	0.149 ***	0.149 ***	

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	Hopelessness		Depressive Symptoms	
	b		b	
Participation				
Volunteerism	−0.115	***	−0.033	
Neighborhood Activism	−0.042		0.047	
Intercept	1.519	***	1.546	***
			1.476	***
			1.481	***
R-squared	.202		.207	
			.157	
			.158	

Weighted regression models predicting neighborhood social ties and contacts with officials (N=3105)

Table 4

	Neighborhood Social Ties			Contacts with Officials		
	b		b	b		b
Female	-0.148	***	-0.161	***	0.081	0.037
Race/Ethnicity (non-Hispanic White reference)						
Hispanic	0.159	*	0.155	*	0.357	**
non-Hispanic African American	-0.024		-0.007		0.329	**
Other non-Hispanic	-0.014		-0.026		-0.281	+
First generation immigrant	-0.121	+	-0.041		-0.741	***
Age	0.000		-0.001		0.010	**
Marital Status (Married reference)						+
Separated	-0.138		-0.129		-0.618	***
Divorced	-0.039		-0.063		-0.183	*
Widowed	0.042		0.038		-0.585	***
Never married	-0.059		-0.052		-0.574	***
Employment status (employed reference)						***
Unemployed	0.085		0.097		-0.022	0.0300
Retired	0.055		0.110		-0.244	-0.004
Home caregiver	0.148	+	0.155	+	0.141	0.166
Student	-0.035		-0.080		0.064	-0.137
Education (less than high school reference)						
High school	0.177	**	0.163	*	0.384	***
Some college	0.140	*	0.064		0.944	***
College plus	0.042		-0.076		1.085	***
Income (40K + reference)						***
<5K	0.065		0.077		-0.331	*
5-15K	0.009		0.035		-0.227	+
15-40K	0.006		0.017		-0.066	-0.03
Missing	0.002		0.027		-0.042	0.062
Financial Stress	-0.072	**	-0.078	***	0.034	0.004

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	Neighborhood Social Ties			Contacts with Officials		
	b	b	b	b	b	
Participation						
Volunteerism		0.237 ***		0.823 ***		***
Neighborhood Activism		0.273 ***		1.483 ***		***
Intercept	2.818 ***	2.751 ***	1.134 ***	0.872 ***		***
R-squared	.023	.054	.118	.285		