THE DECISION TO MOVE: AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE GHETTO

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THE DECISION TO MOVE: AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE GHETTO

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SOCIOLOGY

The decision to move among African Americans in a poor community encompasses individual, household, and neighborhood characteristics. Previous research focuses on the frequently studied middle class. Meanwhile substantive analyses on African Americans from poor communities remain largely understudied. The current study uses data from a low income African American community to study residential mobility decisions. A systematic, random sample of respondents completed a survey concerning their residential situation. Data were triangulated to add reliability and richness to the findings. The results show that the decision to move is not a function of residential satisfaction, but is influenced by neighborhood and sociodemographic factors. It is suggested that future research focuses on policy intended to increase homeownership and informal social control. Future research should also concentrate on the health consequences associated with movement behavior.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

What are the factors that impact the decision to move among African Americans in the ghetto? What do these factors say about the neighborhood, as well as the individuals and residential structures in these places? The decision to move among poor African American residents is influenced by the socioeconomic characteristics of the individual as well as factors related to their housing and neighborhood (Speare, 1974). The ghetto represents a uniquely challenging residential environment. Characteristics of the ghetto often include a dearth of economic and political power among residents, social isolation, fragile network ties, illicit institutions, and concentrated deviance. These social characteristics suggest that movement behavior in the ghetto likely develops from within a different context than such behavior among the frequently studied middle class.

A ghetto is a section of a city occupied by a specific racial or ethnic group who lives there especially because of social, economic, or legal pressure (American Heritage Dictionary, 2007). More specifically, Paul Jargowsky (1994) defines a high poverty ghetto as an ethnically homogeneous neighborhood where 40% or more of its inhabitants live in poverty. Using Census data he finds that African Americans constitute the largest percentage of ghetto inhabitants.
The Social Character of the Modern Ghetto

Ghetto Pathology

What is the social character of the modern African American ghetto? In *When Work Disappears* (1996), William Julius Wilson gives a detailed description of the contemporary high poverty ghetto. His description is based on data collected in the Chicago area at a time when the national economy was thriving under the Clinton administration. One theme that emerges from this work is that modern ghetto conditions breed a type of pathology that is counter to mainstream social functioning. That is, many ghetto inhabitants participate in a subculture with rules and norms that are oppositional to those of the larger culture.

Wilson explains that due to the out-migration of central city jobs to the suburbs and foreign countries, many inner city neighborhoods were left in economic ruin. Many of the companies that provided these jobs relocated to areas where they capitalized on cheap labor and land. Furthermore, the switch from a liberal New Deal philosophy to a conservative policy (New Federalism) also had a negative impact on the ghetto in that decision makers became less inclined to promote progressive policy to aid poor residents (Wilson 1996, p.49). Wilson contends that many ghetto residents were left unemployed after these transitions. The absence of jobs left these neighborhoods vulnerable to adverse social effects. What are the problems that develop from this situation?

Wilson maintains that an important ingredient of a successful community and its inhabitants is social organization. According to Wilson, social organization has the following three elements: First is the presence and strength of social networks. Second is the level in which community residents are proactive in their community or, in other
words, the degree residents are involved in addressing neighborhood problems. Third is the degree to which community residents are integrated into neighborhood organizations and institutions such as schools and churches (Wilson 1996, p.20).

Wilson maintains that areas that possess few employment opportunities will experience social disorganization. The social character of many African American ghettos is defined by scarce employment opportunities within the community and unreliable transportation to employment centers outside of the community, two factors that add to unemployment in these communities. The low levels of social organization contribute to several neighborhood problems. Wilson lists crime, violence, and family disorder as factors that emerge when low levels of social organization exist within the community. He also states that these areas exhibit limited opportunity for quality education and external networking. Pointedly, the inhabitants of these communities are socially “constrained” from participating in the United States opportunity structure.

Wilson suggests that this combination has led to the adoption of “ghetto related” behavior (Wilson 1996, p.53). These behaviors are the foundation for the ghetto pathology that marginalizes many residents of low-income urban areas, namely African American males. Therefore, ghetto pathology can be defined as a social condition where urban low-income people are bonded to a subculture that adversely affects vertical mobility in the U.S. opportunity structure. This bond may be highly valued among ghetto citizens. Meanwhile the attributes of this bond will, in many cases, be counter to mainstream values.

Wilson speaks of several characteristics that are attributable to the ghetto pathology. Specifically, he states that the absence of a legitimate economy leads to unemploy-
ment and participation in informal economic activities. These activities range from babysitting to the sale of hard narcotics, such as crack and heroine, to various forms of prostitution.

He also states that violent crime, low levels of bridging capital, and limited academic achievement are all contributors to and characteristics of ghetto related behavior. He notes that violent crime is often due to the heavy concentration of hard-narcotics and the low levels of informal social control possessed by ghetto citizens. The low levels of bridging capital limit the resources that enter into the community. This restricts potential capital-based improvements that result from financial and intellectual investments. Another characteristic of ghetto-related behavior that breeds a pathological circumstance is the limited value placed on education. Wilson maintains that these characteristics are the result of historical subjugation leading to limited access to institutions that confer vertical mobility.

Another visible aspect of life in the ghetto, Wilson argues, is family disorganization. Here Wilson highlights the disproportionate amount of single-parent homes and absentee fathers in the ghetto as evidence of family disorganization. Family disorganization not only involves deviation from the traditional family structure, but in many cases, it speaks of the lack of social stability afforded to ghetto residents through the family structure. This suggests that the family is not a reliable institution in the ghetto in terms of providing inhabitants with opportunities for mainstream success.
Broken Windows

The social character of the ghetto is also described in the “broken window” hypothesis (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). This thesis states that minor forms of observable disorder in a neighborhood, such as broken windows or vandalism, are evidence that the people in the neighborhood fail to enforce norms of social control over their territory. This lack of territorial functioning is usually associated with higher levels of crime. Criminals see such conditions as an invitation to participate in illegal activity without sanction. Disorder increases in the neighborhood as more criminals take advantage of this circumstance (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004). Dan Kahan (2002) gives an account of this hypothesis:

Public drunkenness, prostitution, aggressive panhandling, and the like are cues that a community is unable and unwilling to enforce basic norms of civility. A community that cannot do that, individuals infer, is likely to be powerless to prevent more serious crimes. Through the mechanism of social influence, many individuals who draw this inference will themselves engage in crime, reinforcing the disposition of others to do the same. Committed law abiders, if they have the resources, are likely to leave a neighborhood that is pervaded by disorder (p.1528).
Kahan goes on to say that the departure of law-abiding residents may increase the concentration of deviant behavior. Law-abiding residents who remain are likely to be dispersed in the neighborhood. As a result, they may have limited interaction with other law-abiding citizens. This limited interaction combined with the heightened visibility of criminal behavior leads to increasing distrust among residents as well as fractured social bonds. Such places represent high-risk areas for victimization, limited social support, and further physical deterioration.

Ghetto communities thus display visible signs of disorder. Assuming that the broken window hypothesis is correct, the social character of neighborhoods that exhibit disorder will be breeding grounds for crime, vandalism, and poor upkeep (Wilson and Kelling, 1982; Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999; Quillian and Pager, 2001; Kahan, 2002; Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004). These communities that already have high levels of transience are further hurt by the exodus of positive residents that could potentially stabilize the community. Furthermore, the broken windows hypothesis, which is a model representing perceived disorder, has been connected to declines in health, depression, psychological distress, and limited mastery (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004, Mitchell and LaGory, 2002, Ross et al., 2000). In this case the neighborhood becomes a stressor that leads to health and mental problems (Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004).

How has the Ghetto Changed? What is it Like Now?

In the early to mid 20th century African American communities across the United States resembled ethnic enclaves. Wilson (1982) notes that although these communities depended heavily on resources external to the community, many small businesses still
operated within the community. Thus, these communities were self-sustainable providing amenities such as African American owned grocery stores, insurance companies, doctor and dentist offices, and restaurants. In this era of de jure segregation, African Americans of all classes lived in close proximity to each other. Newly arrived migrants from the South moved into these enclaves. They depended on a community network that consisted of institutions, family and friendship ties, and community oriented recreation. Although, as Wilson notes, most people in these communities were employed outside of the neighborhood, much of their capital remained within the community because the businesses they depended on for everyday living were located there.

Over time this began to change. Due to political and economic transitions, the African American ghettos began to resemble less and less the ethnic enclaves of the early to mid 20th century. Middle and upper middle class African Americans began moving out of the ghetto. African American-owned businesses and institutions also began closing or leaving the ghetto. Poor, socially isolated residents were left behind in these communities as a result.

As it has been shown, the African American ghetto has changed from a relatively vibrant community with a strong social and economic life to a center of isolated poverty. What are the factors that caused this social transition? There are three main hypotheses used to explain this social dynamic (Small and Newman, 2001).

The first hypothesis arises from William Julius Wilson’s *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987). Wilson maintains that the civil rights legislation of the 1960’s and 1970’s that outlawed de jure residential segregation provided an opportunity for middle and upper middle class African Americans to leave the ghetto. As affluent blacks began leaving en
masse, these communities were left with only the residents that could not afford to move. This led to a loss of role models for those left behind. Meanwhile, businesses and institutions began to disappear and the money base shrank. What remained was the socially and economically isolated ghetto of today.

The second hypothesis is derived from the work of Massey and Denton (1987, 1993) on residential segregation. Massey and Denton argue that enforcement of the fair housing laws was not strong enough to prevent housing segregation based on race. They also maintain that poverty among African Americans in urban areas grew at an alarming rate during the 1970’s and 1980’s. The population growth of the urban poor along with the obstacles that poor people faced in acquiring quality housing led to higher concentrations of poverty in highly segregated urban areas (Massey and Denton 1987, 1993; Small and Newman, 2001).

The third hypothesis involves William Julius Wilson’s aforementioned theory of minority joblessness. Wilson maintains that the economic transformation in the United States from a manufacturing-based economy to a service-based economy had detrimental effects on employment for African American males. Wilson notes that the few low-skill service jobs available in the ghetto were usually offered to females, which left low-skilled males with limited employment prospects. As a whole, the concentration of poverty increased due to the overall absence of employment opportunities in such areas.

How else has the ghetto changed over the years? According to Jargowsky (1994), the geographical size of ghettos in most cities has increased. He argues that size affects individual perceptions of the problem. The overall image of a metropolitan area worsens as the geographical size of its ghettos increase. Furthermore, because of the outmigration
of middle class residents and businesses, larger ghettos correspond with an increase in abandoned buildings and vacant houses, places that can be used for crack distribution, prostitution, and other forms of criminal behavior. Larger ghettos also mean that police have more difficulty effectively patrolling an area. Most importantly however, is the loss of a feeling for community that many ghetto residents experience as a result of ghetto expansion and the growing deterioration of the area.

Jargowsky (1994) also found that the African American ghetto is no longer a phenomenon restricted to the large cities of the North like New York and Chicago. In fact he found that the amount of African Americans residing in the ghettos of New York City actually decreased between 1980 and 1990. Instead, the prevalence of ghetto communities and the number of people living in these communities grew in rust belt industrial cities like Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburg. Interestingly, Birmingham has recently been shown to resemble northern rust belt cities demographically and economically (Hannon, 2005).

**Limited Residential Stability**

Research shows that many of these communities are unstable due to a high level of residential turnover (Wilson, 1996). High levels of transience in a neighborhood are associated with negative health, economic, and social consequences (Wilson, 1996; Sampson et. al., 1997; Ross et al., 2000). It is, therefore, important to understand the factors that influence this transience in order to promote protective policies and interventions.
Low-income residents are typically renters. Neighborhoods with a high population of poor people will have a high concentration of rental units and this significantly increases the number of transients (Speare, Goldstein, and Frey, 1975). How do such high levels of residential turnover affect the community? Commitment to a particular place takes time. Residents who consistently move are not settled in one place long enough to develop a commitment to a particular neighborhood. This lack of commitment may be reflected in territorial functioning and a lack of concern for the neighborhood given that they will not be there for an extended period of time. Also high levels of residential transience prevent the establishment of relationships built on trust among residents. As a result, norms of informal social control cannot be established if residents are not settled long enough to benefit from them.

Sampson (1988, 1991) argues that residential stability has a positive impact on local friendship ties, collective attachment, and rates of local social participation. All three of these factors are vital to the positive functioning of any neighborhood. They determine a community’s level of social cohesion, which is defined as the level of solidarity possessed by a given community. Sampson notes that the individual and contextual effects of residential stability promote local social ties which increase social cohesion. Areas with high levels of social cohesion often have greater levels of individual attachment to the community (Sampson, 1988, 1991).

Residential stability also promotes collective efficacy. Collective efficacy is the joint effort among residents in a community to maintain social control. Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) argue that length of residence is a key determinant of collective efficacy. Neighborhoods consisting of residents who move frequently typically maintain low
levels of collective efficacy. Sampson and Raudenbush’s (1999) findings suggest that concentrated disadvantage, a trait of modern high poverty ghettos, was inversely associated with residential stability and collective efficacy.

Others make similar arguments. Kaplan (1975) maintains that constant residential movement fosters extreme negative self-attitudes or self-derogation. According to the author, residential changes interrupt interpersonal relationships. Given that these relationships are best formed in stable neighborhoods, African American ghettos maintain high levels of self-derogation which affects neighborhood character.

In addition, Browning and Cagney (2003) maintain that residential stability in ghetto neighborhoods is inversely associated with poor perceived health. After controlling for individual demographic factors, the researchers found that while neighborhood poverty had no effect on self-rated health, a high level of residential transience was a significant predictor of self-rated health in ghetto neighborhoods. Transience was inversely related to self-rated health. Conversely, the researchers note that a high level of residential transience in affluent communities was not negatively associated with self-rated health. The authors suggest that this discrepancy is due to poor resident’s inability to maintain critical health-related institutions in the community in the absence of residential stability.

Much of the transience may be attributed to what this analysis calls non-traditional housing. This includes half-way houses, dope houses, temporary housing offered by family members, and boarding houses (rooms within a house rented out by the householder for extra money). These types of housing accommodations are typically found in the ghetto. Residents of non-traditional housing are usually in transit from one area to
another. Thus their stay is usually ephemeral. A neighborhood containing a large num-
ber of such residents will have high levels of transience thereby increasing its residential
instability.

These studies and others demonstrate the importance of residential stability as a
protective factor in urban ghettos. African American ghettos that experience high levels
of residential turnover are expected to have limited amounts of social cohesion and col-
lective efficacy. Extreme transience in these communities is also associated with poor
health and destructive levels of self-derogation.

Problem and Importance

The central research question for this dissertation asks what factors influence the
decision to move among African Americans in the ghetto. Are these factors different
from the ones commonly identified for the general population? Does residential satisfac-
tion play as prominent a role in the movement decisions in African American ghettos as it
does in other residential areas?

Social Isolation Has Harmful Effects

The relationship between place and poverty is a matter of great importance in low-
income African American communities. Between 1970 and 1990 the number of high
poverty neighborhoods in the United States nearly doubled and high poverty neighbor-
hoods where African Americans were the majority grew faster than others (Massey,
Residents in these communities are socially isolated and feel alienated from the American political structure. They have been ignored by conservative policy that often ignores domestic issues. Furthermore, these residents have few connections that are external to the local community. Most of the social capital maintained by ghetto residents exists inside of the community, such “bonding capital” is at best translated into survival resources (Colclough and Sitaraman, 2005) and these resources are usually limited to family and friendships.

Social capital and financial capital are tied together. Socially isolated neighborhoods lack adequate financial capital to sustain businesses that benefit the local community. In this case, banks are replaced by currency exchange centers, such as pawn shops, payday lending stores, and title loan companies. Grocery stores either relocate or close completely. The businesses within the community that remain rarely provide employment and social resources for local residents. Rarely do the remaining businesses provide the range of services and goods necessary for a viable and healthy community.

Facilitated by their isolation, ghetto residents often formulate values and norms that counter mainstream culture (Merton, 1932; Wilson, 1996). While these cultural norms are not all harmful, many of them are not valued within mainstream culture and many of them lead to negative perceptions of the neighborhood.

The Need to Update the Existing Literature

Most of the scholarship on residential satisfaction and the decision to move is now old, confined to a period stretching from 1955-1980. Although there have been recent studies dedicated to the decision to move (e.g. Lu, 1999a; Joong-Hwan Oh, 2003) most of
the extant scholarship on the topic is based on data at least a quarter-century old. While the vanguard models have proven to be robust in the ability to predict mobility, the fact that urban neighborhood structures are diverse and changing suggests a need for current studies on the topic (Joong-Hwan Oh, 2003). This dissertation fills this need by exploring residential movement from the perspective of poor residents countering the tendency in earlier studies to focus on the middle class.

We know little about the individual values and expectations of ghetto residents. It is unlikely that these residents share the same values and expectations as middle class residents. Ghetto residents live under a special set of ecological conditions with higher risks and hazards; they typically have different cultural norms, and less social and economic resources than middle class residents (Fitzpatrick and LaGory, 2000). Furthermore, we know little about how the values and expectations of African American ghetto residents influence their conceptualization of the ghetto. Are they satisfied with neighborhood conditions typical of the ghetto? Do these conditions act as stressors and motivators for movement?

Also, we know little about why some persons of higher social standing remain in the ghetto. Although their numbers are low, there is evidence that some middle class persons stay behind (Wilson, 1996). Often these are the residents that have the ability to enforce norms of informal social control and protect important institutions. They are more likely to have higher levels of bridging capital. By understanding what keeps such residents in the ghetto, strategies can be created to increase resident retention in these neighborhoods. This may help lower transience and “black flight” from these communities.
Relevance for Policy

Although residential movement is a normal facet of the American landscape and the problems of the ghetto are often discussed by social scientists, there is little debate concerning the relationship between place and movement behavior within the context of poor African American neighborhoods. Such knowledge is vital for policy intended to mitigate the factors that inhibit social, mental, and economic well-being in the ghetto.

In terms of policy, an assessment of residential movement can provide methods of increasing residential stability in the ghetto. By understanding who moves and why they move, policy can be tailored to entice positive role models and more resourceful residents to remain in the community. These residents are expected to increase the level of informal social control in ghetto communities. Improvements as such may attenuate transience among ghetto residents dissatisfied with the lack of social organization in their community. Addressing these needs would enhance the ability and desire of ghetto residents to promote community progress. This may include programs to reorganize the activities of gangs, economic and educational assistance for impoverished residents, and the establishment of proactive neighborhood organizations designed to improve community social well-being.

The next chapter will analyze the scholarship surrounding the decision to move. This includes the background factors that influence residential satisfaction. The literature review will be followed by the theoretical framework used for this analysis. The theory section presents a model that explains the relationship between the background factors and the outcome variables. Relevant hypotheses will be made in order to construct a model that is germane to ghetto residents.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

In traditional models designed to explain why people move, residential satisfaction is argued to be the primary determinant of residential movement (Wolpert, 1965, Speare 1974). The assumption is generally made that residents have the ability and desire to act on their dissatisfaction. Therefore, situations where residential satisfaction is irrelevant to the movement behavior of residents are rarely studied. This chapter reviews literature on residential satisfaction and the decision to move.

Residential Satisfaction

Research demonstrates that movement decisions are a function of the individual’s level of residential satisfaction (Rossi, 1955; Speare, 1974; Bach and Smith, 1977; South and Deane, 1993; Lee et al., 1994; Lu, 1999a; Joong-Hwan Oh, 2003). The concept of residential satisfaction is derived from the stress-threshold theory of human mobility (Wolpert, 1965; Brown and Moore, 1970) which contends that a household can only tolerate a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the residence before the decision is made to move. The theory argues that there is a relationship between household needs and the ability of the residence to meet those needs. Stressors in the environment act as obstacles to the acquisition of household needs. Stressors include those factors inside and outside of the household that “strain” the living situation (Wolpert, 1965). These include a decrease or increase in household spaces due to family growth or decline, deteriorating
structures, and the expense of maintenance; as well as factors outside of the house such as crime, neighborhood deterioration, or the lack of local amenities. The combination of stressors creates strain on a household. Each household has a limit to the amount of strain it is willing to endure. The more a household is unable to meet its expectations regarding factors inside and outside of the home, the closer that household moves toward the threshold of dissatisfaction. A move is likely to occur once this threshold is passed.

Subsequent research takes the basic principle of the stress-threshold theory of dissatisfaction and conceptualizes it as the central determinant of the decision to move (Speare, 1974; Bach and Smith, 1977; Newman and Duncan, 1979; Deane, 1990). In a model proposed by Alden Spear (1974), residential satisfaction acts as an intervening variable between background factors and the decision to move. The model contends that the influence of individual, housing and neighborhood background factors do not directly impact movement behavior; neither do the social bonds created by residents. They do however directly impact residential satisfaction.

According to this model, residential satisfaction is evaluated by the resident within a subjective context. Like the threshold of dissatisfaction, residential satisfaction is developed from the expectations and values of the resident (Moore, 1972), the sociological and economic background of household members, and characteristics of the house and neighborhood.

An important caveat to Speare’s model is that every resident who is dissatisfied does not move and all satisfied residents do not stay (LaGory and Pipkin, 1981). These exceptions are important. Residents may choose to move or stay for reasons other than residential satisfaction. Some moves are involuntary where the resident has no alterna-
tive but to move (Speare, 1974, LaGory and Pipkin, 1981). Evictions, job losses or transfers, and disasters are representative of these cases. Evictions are particularly important to consider since they tend to occur in poor neighborhoods. Additionally, some residents may treat residential satisfaction as a secondary factor in the decision to move. In such cases, the impetus to move emanates directly from background factors. For example, an individual who is satisfied with his or her residence may move to a new location to 1) accommodate a new spouse, 2) to become physically closer to aging family members, 3) to take advantage of an unforeseen opportunity, such as a deal on a foreclosed home, or 4) to take advantage of opportunities outside of the neighborhood. Similarly, an individual who is dissatisfied with his or her residence may decide to stay because 1) he or she cannot afford to move, 2) he or she is emotionally tied to the neighborhood, 3) there is a belief that the current dissatisfaction will wane in the future due to potential neighborhood improvements, or 4) a residence at another location will not be viewed as any better than the current one.

The examples given above do not cover all the reasons why residential satisfaction may not always predict movement behavior. The expectations and values of residents are varied. It is likely that some residents prioritize residential satisfaction below other background factors. Residents, in many cases may be forced to ignore their dissatisfaction vis-à-vis other factors that may be influencing their lives. A poor resident, for example, could be dissatisfied with his or her residence, but have no real options for a new apartment or house that improves their housing situation. Constrained by income, credit score, social standing, and family commitments; dissatisfied ghetto residents are deterred from
making moves based solely on a psychological conflict between household expectations and the failure of the residential milieu to meet these expectations.

Individual Demographic Factors

Sociodemographic factors play a role in residential dissatisfaction and predisposing certain individuals to move. The sociodemographic factors relevant to residential mobility include age, income, marital status, single parenthood, and education (Rossi, 1955; Moore, 1972; Speare, 1974; DeVanzo, 1977; LaGory and Pipkin, 1981; McAuly and Nutty, 1985; South and Deane, 1993; South and Crowder, 1998; Crowder, 2001).

Age

Age is a major predictor of the decision to move because of life cycle considerations that increase or decrease the likelihood of movement (Rossi, 1955; Goldscheider, 1971; Michelson, 1977, LaGory and Pipkin, 1981; McAuley and Nutty, 1982; Lee et al., 1994; Lu, 1999a, 1999b). Research suggests that the highest percentage of moves involves people between the ages of 18 and 34 (LaGory and Pipkin, 1981). Due to a prevalence of life events associated with residential strain, such as marriage, employment changes, and the birth of children; younger individuals are more likely to move than older residents (Bach and Smith, 1977; Connerly, 1986; Lee et al., 1994). At this stage of the life cycle, an individual is expected to leave his or her parent’s home, marry, and have children. Also during this period, the resident is typically completing formal education or starting a career. Furthermore, younger residents are more likely to live in rental units.
and cities, both of which are associated with a higher likelihood of movement (Speare, 1974).

Younger residents experience life events and circumstances that may cause them to become dissatisfied with their residence. Having children, for example, often limits household space leading to dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction with a current residence may grow as younger residents gain employment or promotions, or as they are more capable of realizing their long-term housing goals. The lack of certain amenities may increase dissatisfaction among younger residents (Moore, 1972). Often it is a mixture of these factors that occur among younger people that encourage movement based on dissatisfaction (Moore, 1972).

Residents are less likely to move during later stages of the life cycle. People in later stages of the life cycle typically experience a different set of life events, such as health issues and retirement. These residents are more settled in their jobs, homes, and communities. In addition, older residents are less likely to move because of the friendship, familial, and emotional ties that they have developed after years of living in a particular community (Goldscheider, 1971; Ward, LaGory, and Sherman, 1988). While the literature suggests that older residents usually choose to remain at a particular location because they are satisfied (Goldscheider, 1971; Speare, 1974; McAuley and Nutty, 1982), aging people may stay in a neighborhood because their older home is less likely to retain its value, limiting their ability to move. This often creates a situation in which elders are left behind (Ward et al., 1988).

In poor African American neighborhoods, age somewhat defies the general trends surrounding movement behavior. Younger African Americans are least likely to be mar-
ried and they tend to have children at earlier ages (Crane, 1991; Tucker, 1995; Wilson, 1996; South and Baumer, 2000). Younger African Americans in poor neighborhoods are also more likely to have children without securing a college education (Crane, 1991; Wilson, 1996). In many cases, these factors along with limited incomes prolong the decision to move from a parent’s household. Thus age is expected to play a different role in the moving decisions of poor African Americans.

**Income**

Income is a primary factor in determining whether an individual has the ability to move (Rossi, 1955; South and Deane 1993, Wilson, 1996; South and Crowder 1998). As might be expected, individuals with high income are generally more likely to move than those with low income (Rossi, 1955; South and Deane 1993). An individual’s income is often related to education, employment type, and his or her social network. Individuals with higher incomes are typically more satisfied with their residence due to their ability to move to a location that they like. Also important is having the financial ability to make adjustments to the residence to suit the needs of the inhabitants. These adjustments may include, but are not limited to, making structural additions to the home, remodeling rooms in the home, or improving the landscape of the home. Making such adjustments can improve residential satisfaction.

African Americans who reside in poor neighborhoods tend to have lower incomes which probably affects the likelihood of moving; or when a move does occur, it affects the type of move that is made. Poor ghetto residents typically move from one ghetto to another (Rossi, 1955; South and Deane 1993, Wilson, 1996; South and Crowder 1998).
The ones who are residentially stable may not be financially able to deal with their dissatisfaction by making residential adjustments.

Income can be misleading when considering the amount of liabilities that an individual has. For example, the power of income to produce a move is likely reduced when considering the number of dependents attached to the individual, the number of bills that a person is responsible for, credit problems, and economic obligations to other family members. Particularly, African American householders in poor neighborhoods, most of whom are females, tend to take on the responsibility of caring for parents, children, and bills without the aid of a spouse, thereby reducing the power of their income to produce a move (Tucker, 1995; South and Baumer, 2000; U.S. Census, 2003).

Marital Status

Marital status is associated with the life cycle. One of the many lifestyle modifications that accompany marriage is a change in residence to accommodate the new social arrangement (Rossi, 1955; Williams et al, 1986). On the other hand, married couples at advanced stages of the life cycle tend to be more residentially stable and satisfied with their residence (Rossi, 1955). What this suggests is that getting married rather than being married prompts movement. While getting married is a life event that spurs residential movement, it should be noted that the impetus to move may be just as strong for divorce or remarriage. Since the marriage rate in poor African American communities is lower than the national average (U.S. Census, 2003) this event is often irrelevant to ghetto African Americans.
While there is some scholarship suggesting that education has an “ambiguous” effect on the decision to move (Bartel, 1979), most studies show that it has a significant effect on residential satisfaction (Speare, 1974; Morris et al., 1976; Bach and Smith, 1977; Heaton, 1979; Speare et al., 1982; Deane, 1990). Education is related to other forms of capital. It helps access income and wealth, as well as social networks which possess valuable resources. It provides a network of acquaintances that can assist in career mobility (Lin, 2001). Education also provides an avenue for securing valuable information related to the moving decision, such as information on housing and investments (in most cases, an individual can use his or her education as a resource in accessing job opportunities regardless of place. This loosens the economic ties that often bind individuals to a certain location).

In poor neighborhoods especially, years of education is expected to have an inverse association with residential satisfaction (Crane, 1991; South and Crowder, 1997, Crowder, 2001). Highly educated individuals are likely to feel more dissonance when their residential area experiences decline. On the other hand, low levels of education will be associated with more unintended moves, moves that are not planned (Lu, 1999b). Thus, in poor neighborhoods where the level of education among inhabitants is usually lower, it is expected that more people will make more unintended moves that are not tied to residential satisfaction.
Social Capital

Local social bonds also affect the decision to move. Social bonds are a form of capital. They are a critical resource to both maintain and improve quality of life (Putnam, 2001). Social capital theory can be used to describe how residents turn local social relations into resources increasing residential satisfaction and quality of life. According to Putnam (1995) social capital “refers to the collective value of all social networks and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other.” Thus social capital is usually exchanged for something of value. As a result, residents can theoretically exchange social capital for residential satisfaction. How then, according to the literature, is social capital related to residential satisfaction and the decision to move?

Certain background characteristics that increase residential satisfaction are functions of social capital. These characteristics include social trust, and social activism, increased participation in neighborhood associations, social support, family and friendship ties.

Research shows that the more socially integrated a resident is within a particular community, the higher the residential satisfaction and the less likely he or she is to move (Speare, 1974). These ties equate to assets invested in the community. Residents increase their stake in a particular place by increasing their involvement in community-related organizations, by establishing long-term friendships in the community, and by fostering kinship networks in the community (Speare, 1974; Putnam, 2000; Lin, 2001).
Putnam (1995) distinguishes between two types of social capital, bridging and bonding. Bonding social capital involves relationships with family, coworkers, and friends. Bridging capital involves relationships with “distant others.” These include indirect ties with individuals and groups who are not members of a resident’s immediate circle of associates (Putnam, 1995; Messner and Baumer, 2004).

In order to distinguish the two types of social capital, Brisson and Usher (2007) ask “do relationships bond community members or do relationships bridge community members to extra-community resources?” Brisson and Usher argue that bonding social capital involves relationships between members of the same community or intra-community relationships where bridging social capital involves relationships between constituents of different communities or extra-community resources. Thus the outcomes of both forms of capital are distinct. Bonding capital helps an individual sustain their current lifestyle using ties from within a community. This includes, but is not limited to, social support from family and friends. This kind of support often amounts to such resources as financial assistance, transportation, moral support, and protection. Bonding capital is defined by greater amounts of trust based on personal interaction. Meanwhile, bridging capital helps individuals improve their current social standing by tapping into resources that are not found in the individual’s immediate social circle, such as access to government officials and maintaining an influence in large organizations. The trust involved in these relationships is usually indirect and not based on personal interactions (Putnam, 1995).
According to the literature, neighborhoods where residents utilize both bridging and bonding capital have higher levels of informal social control, lower levels of crime, stable institutions, limited residential transience, and access to external resources through formal interactions (Kavanaugh, Reese, Carroll and Rossom, 2005). These attributes fuel effective collective action directed at individual- and community-level progress. As a result, inhabitants of these communities are more satisfied with their residence and have a higher quality of life. These communities are usually composed of middle or upper middle class residents (Kavanaugh, et al., 2005).

Residents in ghetto communities, however, usually rely heavily on bonding social capital (Dawkins, 2006). Their interactions are generally confined to family and friends who exchange scarce resources (Colclough and Sitaraman, 2005). Few in these communities have the ability to access resources external to the community. It is unclear from the literature whether the bonding social capital that exists in poor neighborhoods decreases residential dissatisfaction. It is known that limited bridging capital restricts the flow of external resources into the community weakening organizations and institutions that help stabilize the neighborhood which may increase dissatisfaction. Residents of these communities, for example, have limited access to policy makers and reduced control over a range of community resources. Also, they have limited access to external resources to improve failing schools and businesses (Dawkins 2006).

**Bonding Capital**

Although social capital can indirectly affect the decision to move through the mediating influence of residential satisfaction, it can also directly affect the decision to move
with residential satisfaction having little influence on such decisions. For example, some residents may be heavily invested in kinship ties within a neighborhood. They may develop a type of network that prevents a move because their livelihood is dependent upon the sharing of resources produced from social capital within the network. Although they may or may not be satisfied with the residence, the decision to move lies within the context of the network in which they are members. Such examples are common in poorer communities (Colclough and Sitaraman, 2005).

Coleman (1988) defines social capital by its function to be “productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible.” Accordingly, residents employ community and kinship social bonds to meet these “ends” which often increase residential satisfaction. This form of localized social capital is described by Putnam (1995) as “the course of informal social interactions of families, churches, and social groups that people participate in everyday.” Both Coleman and Putnam suggest that norms of trust, obligation, and expectations are products of social capital. These norms are employed in the building of personal residential satisfaction where each individual uses social capital as a method of manifesting personal interests.

The major social capital factors discussed in the literature related to the decision to move are family and friendship ties in the community, length of residence, participation in neighborhood organizations/associations, and trust in neighbors. These factors are related to bonding social capital. This is so because Speare’s model of residential satisfaction deals exclusively with local bonds. It is suggested that these factors work to improve collective efficacy and informal social control which increases residential satisfaction, thereby decreasing the likelihood of movement. However, this may not be the case in
ghetto communities where these bonds may not be significant enough to overcome the lack of bridging capital and the negative sociodemographic and neighborhood conditions that exist in these places (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974; Toney, 1976, Fischer, 1982, Oropesa, 1989; Sampson, 1988; Rankin and Quane, 2000; Myers, 2000; Spilimbergo and Ubeda, 2002; Joong-Hwan Oh, 2003; Kang and Kwak, 2003; Saegert and Winkel, 2004).

Residents who have formed significant family and friendship ties in a particular community are less likely to move than those who have not (Toney, 1976; Fischer, 1982; Sampson, 1988; Spilimbergo and Ubeda, 2002; Kang and Kwak 2003). Research shows that nuclear and extended family networks have a strong impact on the decision to move among African Americans (Spilimbergo and Ubeda, 2002; Dawkins, 2006). Not only are African Americans more likely to move to a neighborhood where these networks already exist, they are also more likely to remain in a community where these networks exist (Spilimbergo and Ubeda, 2002). The presence of family and friends can be seen as factors that increase residential satisfaction among individuals in a particular community. Other than the tangible resources that family and friends can offer, such as shelter, loans on household items, childcare, and gifts; family and friends also provide intangible resources such as information, entertainment, and communication (Sampson, 1988). Further, family and friends in the neighborhood also provide emotional resources in the form of social support.

*Length of Residence*

Length of residence is a major background factor that indicates not only the probability of close family and friendship ties, but also the formation of emotional attachment
to a particular place (Toney, 1976; Fischer, 1982; Sampson, 1988; Spilimberto and Ubeda, 2002; Kang and Kwak 2003). The longer an individual has been in a certain community, the more likely he or she will be emotionally tied to that community. This type of emotional tie has a positive impact on residential satisfaction and the decision to move (Speare, 1974, Toney 1976). Length of residence is also positively associated with neighborhood association participation (Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974). Individuals with extensive lengths of residence have developed coping mechanisms to deal with community issues and are more likely to remain (Speare, 1974; Landale and Guest, 1985; Lee et al., 1994). Whether they participate in organizations that address such problems, rely on their family network for social support, or simply ignore the problems; they are successful in maintaining and sustaining levels of residential satisfaction.

Participation in Neighborhood Associations

Residents who participate in neighborhood associations and organizations demonstrate a concern for the well-being of their community. They exhibit what sociologists refer to as local territorial functioning, showing concern and care for the neighborhood (Fitzpatrick and LaGory, 2000). This translates into improved individual residential satisfaction among neighbors. Thus, it can be viewed as a social capital resource in that relationships are formed around organizations to accomplish certain ends (Oropesa, 1989; Putnam, 1995; Wilson, 1996; Rankin and Quane, 2000; Saegert and Winkel, 2004). Research has shown that participation in civic organizations is a protective factor in neighborhoods that aids in the reduction of crime and social disorder (Kavanaugh, et al., 2005; Wilson, 1996, Sampson, 1988).
Trust in Neighbors

The level of trust that residents have in their neighbors is a factor that speaks of the quality of relationships that exists among individuals in a neighborhood. Individuals who say they can trust their neighbors exhibit confidence in other residents of the community that they will go about their daily business with the best interest of the neighborhood in mind (Coleman, 1988). It has been shown that a high level of trust is commensurate with increased levels of neighborhood satisfaction (Joong-Hwan Oh, 2003). In poor neighborhoods residents often exhibit a lack of trust (Wilson, 1996). This affects their ability to unify under the best interests of the community (Wilson, 1996; Rankin and Quane, 2000; Ross et al, 2001) and reduces residential satisfaction. Trust also is likely to translate into a desire to stay in a place where neighbors can be counted on.

Housing Factors

The quality of one’s housing is a factor in the decision to move (Rossi, 1955; Moore, 1972; LaGory and Pipkin, 1981; Crowder, 2001). Moore (1972) refers to this as the “site and situational” characteristics of the home. The major housing factors appearing in the literature include the physical condition of the household, household space, and whether the residence is rental or owner occupied (Rossi, 1955; Leslie and Richardson, 1961; Morris and Winter, 1976; McHugh et al., 1990).

Physical Condition

Dissatisfaction rises as the physical condition of the home worsens (Rossi, 1955; Morris and Winter, 1976; Crowder, 2001). Dilapidated residential conditions generally
decrease residential satisfaction (Morris and Winter, 1976), but do not necessarily indicate that a move will occur. Poor housing conditions are often a prominent feature of economically deprived neighborhoods. To a small degree, the condition of housing is perceived differently by each household based on the expectations and values of the household (Moore, 1972). Inhabitants of rental property, especially apartment dwellers, typically have little control over household improvements. Those with higher income, especially those who own their homes, have more options in satisfying expectations and values concerning the quality of their housing. Rosenbaum (1996) points out that African Americans are more likely to live in low-quality housing. She suggests that this finding is partially a function of many African American’s preference to live apart from whites and from the fact that African Americans are often directed by agents toward areas where housing quality is declining.

Rentals vs. Homeownership

There are generally significant differences between the housing situation of renters and homeowners. Renters have little invested in the property and limited control over the quality of the residence. In addition, renters are bound to the residence by a lease for only a specified period of time. Because of these factors, renters are more likely to move frequently (McHugh et al., 1990). On the other hand, African American homeowners in poor neighborhoods are less likely to move (South and Crowder, 1997). Homeowners have more invested in the residence. They have more control over the quality of the property and they are bound by a mortgage. For these reasons, homeowners will generally be
less likely to move than renters (Rossi, 1955; Speare, 1974; Deane, 1990; McHugh et al., 1990).

*Household Space*

Cramped living quarters are a factor that decreases residential satisfaction (Rossi, 1955; Leslie and Richardson, 1961; Speare, 1974; Morris et al., 1976; McCarthy and Saegert, 1978; Landale and Guest, 1985). In turn, residents who report adequate living space are less likely to move (Lu, 1999b). Fitzpatrick and LaGory (2000) maintain that adequate household space is important because of the individual need for privacy which allows for reflection and self-development. Sufficient household space also increases the level of intimacy needed for family bonding. According to Fitzpatrick and LaGory (2000) sufficient living space where one can be alone with his or her thoughts, work, possessions, loved ones, and ideas is a part of the American ethos of individualism. It is suggested that suburban homes are more likely to provide adequate space for its inhabitants. However, because of poor design, the economic efficiency of erecting high density housing, along with the outdated architecture in older and poorer parts of the city, residents of the inner city are more likely to experience cramped conditions (Fitzpatrick and LaGory, 2000). Overcrowding and housing size contribute to cramped conditions. Overcrowding is a situation where household comfort begins to decrease due to the number of people living in the home relative to available space. However, a house that is physically small by normal standards may cause cramped conditions regardless of the number of people residing in the home. A combination or variation of these two factors can lead to residential dissatisfaction (Rossi, 1955; Leslie and Richardson, 1961; Morris et al., 1976).
Demand for space increases as the family expands and the children age. The effect of this on residential satisfaction is contingent upon the family situation of each individual household. Large households that contain several children are more likely to move than those with fewer children (Rossi, 1955; Leslie and Richardson, 1961). Due to limits on space, the addition of children into a household, especially the first child, usually decreases residential satisfaction (Moore, 1972).

It should also be noted however that families with large household sizes may not be able to move because of the cost. Poor families are likely to have more children and residents in low-income neighborhoods typically live in smaller houses than their wealthier counterparts (U.S. Census, 2005). As a result, they exhibit more instances of household crowding than middle and upper class communities. Poor residents with several children may not have the resources to move to a larger home. When moves do occur, they usually do not cover great geographic or socioeconomic distances meaning that they may actually be within the same low-income community (South and Deane, 1993).

**Neighborhood Factors**

Research shows that the majority of residents would rather have a less desirable house in a very good neighborhood rather than a very good house in a less desirable neighborhood (Lee et al., 1994). The premium placed on neighborhood quality speaks of the importance of place as a factor that determines residential satisfaction and movement intentions. Neighborhood disorder is a concept used to examine the perceived presence of unfavorable elements in a community, such as graffiti, drugs, vandalism, and crime. It also measures the lack of mitigating forces, such as trust in neighbors and neighborhood
upkeep (Ross et al., 2001). The measure of neighborhood disorder is based on individual values and expectations, objective aspects of the neighborhood, and other non-tangible characteristics that factor into the formation of perceptions (Moore, 1972). Generally, a resident with a negative overall perception of the neighborhood will have a higher probability of being dissatisfied with the residence and will be more likely to move (Rossi, 1955; Speare, 1974; Heaton, et al., 1979; Sirgy and Cornwell, 2002).

**Territorial Functioning**

Territorial functioning is a place-based concept described by Taylor (1995) as “a bridge between the individual household and street-block society.” It can be defined as a system of norms, values, emotions, and behaviors that is ‘highly place specific’ shared among members of a neighborhood who are concerned with the overall upkeep and ‘expressiveness’ of the community (Taylor, 1988; Fitzpatrick and LaGory, 2000). Thus, territorial functioning is a neighborhood-level concept that measures how well individuals maintain and beautify their homes, how clean yards and curbs are kept, and the level of residential participation in supporting neighborhood rules designed to preserve the value of the area. Fitzpatrick and LaGory (2000) note that higher levels of territorial functioning leads to ‘healthier social environments;’ specifically, it contributes to higher levels of neighborhood participation, productive grassroots organizing, improved health, and empowerment.
Neighborhood Disorder and Neighborhood Rating

The impact of neighborhood disorder and neighborhood rating on the decision to move is based on the expectations and values of the household (Moore, 1972). Residents are receptive to social phenomena that impact their livelihood. Accordingly, a neighborhood with high crime rates could negatively influence individual perceptions. Even in places where the crime rate is low, a major isolated incident can negatively impact perceptions.

However, since perceptions are based on values, expectations, experiences, and other subjective criteria, it is not a given that neighborhood problems will affect residential satisfaction and movement behavior. Residents of poor communities may become desensitized to criminal activity in the neighborhood and learn to accept it as a part of life in the ghetto. Other background factors, such as length of residence, could override neighborhood problems in determining residential satisfaction and whether a resident chooses to move or not. Also, the comparative rate of disorder in urban poor neighborhoods may be sensationalized by the media. Residents close to the situation are aware of this as they form opinions based on experience rather than media hype.

Nonetheless, poor urban communities have higher incidents of disorder than middle or upper class communities (Wilson, 1987; Sampson and Groves, 1989; Wilson, 1996; Quane and Rankin, 1998; Haynie et. al, 2006, Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004). This is expected to at least impact residential satisfaction and the decision to move among young residents who have not formed substantial bonds to the community.

Pollution, traffic, location, crime, parks, and a number of other neighborhood characteristics work in concert to mold the opinions of residents. Housing stock, a pri-
mary factor influencing the perceptions of residents, also suffers in poor communities due to a lack of resources and the predominance of absentee landlords. Residents form perceptions of the neighborhood and act off of these perceptions. Here, the “broken windows” theory, which suggests that blight engenders more disorder and blight, is appropriate (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). Residents treat their community the way they perceive it. Generally, a resident with a negative overall perception of the neighborhood will have a higher probability of being dissatisfied with the community (Heaton et al, 1979; Wilson, 1996; Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999; Sirgy and Cornwell, 2002; Sampson and Raudenbush, 2004)

Summary

Although residential satisfaction is an important factor in determining the probability of movement, it is not the only predictor of whether a move will occur or not. Several background factors are listed as having a major impact on the decision to move. Age, income, education, marital status, and length of residence; as well as space, homeownership, social capital, and neighborhood factors affect movement behavior.

In low-income African American neighborhoods, the power of residential satisfaction to predict movement is modified by forces affecting the ability to move. Although an individual may be dissatisfied with his or her residence and may desire a change, being poor limits his or her ability to do so. In turn, many residents who are satisfied with their residence cannot afford to stay. Residential satisfaction as an indicator of movement intentions is not only limited by income, but also by the amount of time that an individual has resided in the community. Longer lengths of residence are associated with
lower probabilities of movement. Independent of whether an individual is satisfied or not with the residence, the emotional bond with the neighborhood that he or she develops has a strong impact on the decision to move. Further, the influence of social capital on the resident can have a significant impact on the decision to move regardless of the resident’s level of satisfaction. In poor African American neighborhoods, social capital is often a resource that aids in basic survival and in sustaining current lifestyle practices, but it is not instrumental in encouraging moves out of the ghetto. Residents in these communities, whether satisfied or not, depend on their local social networks and cannot afford to relinquish these ties, ties that are often exclusive to the neighborhood.

Given these potential weaknesses in the power of residential satisfaction to predict movement behavior when studying movement decisions in high poverty areas, attention should be given to background characteristics that have a direct impact on the decision to move. The research suggests that neighborhood disorder, household space, social isolation, and education are factors that hold a unique presence in poor African American communities. As a result, the direct impact that these factors have on the decision to move in these communities should be examined.

The scholarship on the decision to move also illuminates the affect of objective and subjective criteria on the decision to move. Age, income, length of residence, education level, and neighborhood disorder are objective factors that influence residential satisfaction (which is a subjective factor) and the decision to move. Perceptions of neighborhood quality and neighborhood disorder are subjective variables that are theorized as impacting the decision to move concerning low-income African Americans. Thus, the lit-
erature suggests that both objective and subjective factors should be weighed in examining the movement behavior of residents.

Finally, there is a dearth of current literature on the factors surrounding the decision to move for persons living in high poverty ghettos. The existing theoretical works provide a mainstream perspective that is not helpful in understanding movement behavior among African Americans in poor neighborhoods. Most of the theoretical works appeared during the burgeoning era of white flight from the inner city (Rossi, 1955; Wolpert, 1965; Moore, 1972; Speare, 1974). There have been very few updates that encompass the decision to move within the context of modern urban issues, such as the social isolation of poverty, the impact of urban renewal programs, and the flight of middle class African Americans from urban cores.
CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The model used for this study is based on Speare’s (1974) model of residential satisfaction. It presents residential satisfaction as an intervening variable between various background characteristics and the decision to move. Speare suggests that such characteristics do not have a direct impact on the decision to move. With modification, Speare’s model is general enough to be used on different populations. A modified version of this theory is therefore used to explain the decision to move among African Americans in the ghetto. This chapter is structured to accomplish the following: describe the origin of Spear’s model; summarize the model; apply the model to the current study. Hypotheses are proposed that reflect relevant modifications of the original model.

Stress-Threshold Theory of Human Mobility

The concept of residential satisfaction is derived from the stress-threshold theory of human mobility (Wolpert, 1965; Brown and Moore, 1970) which contends that a household will only tolerate a given amount of dissatisfaction with a residence and neighborhood before a decision is made to move. The stress-threshold theory describes migration as a response to environmental stress (Deane, 1991). Wolpert (1965) maintains that “environment” is used to describe factors, internal and external to the home, that influence household opinion of the residence. The environment is dynamic, having various impacts on dissatisfaction at different intervals of the life cycle. For example, the birth of
a child may limit household space, or the closing of a factory in the neighborhood may lead to unemployment, both of which could potentially lead to dissatisfaction with the current residence. The theory argues that every household has values. Expectations and needs are developed from these values. The household seeks to meet these needs and expectations by interacting with the environment. If a household values high levels of territorial functioning, then that household will seek neat lawns, an active neighborhood association, litter-free yards, and the removal of junk cars from the environment. Stress develops when the environment fails to meet the needs of the household decision makers. Using Wolpert’s (1965) terms, “stresses” are relative to the internal value structure of each household. Internal values are the aspects of a neighborhood and home that are deemed important by the householders.

Wolpert argues that “strain” develops when stresses begin to outweigh the positives of the residence. Strains exceed the threshold of tolerance and are likely to trigger dissatisfaction. Strains, as a result, ignite movement away from the residence. A household that values safety, clean sidewalks, and neighborhood collective efficacy will view factors such as crime, litter, and inactive neighbors as stressors. Thus, there is a threshold dividing stresses and strains that when crossed, determines movement behavior. The threshold of dissatisfaction is exceeded if a disparity arises between household needs and the environment’s ability to meet these needs (Wolpert, 1965; Brown and Moore, 1970). Therefore, a functional relationship exists between household needs and environmental characteristics.

Wolpert explains his theory using an analysis of costs and benefits. The total assessment of the cost/benefit analysis is the net utility of the residence, which Wolpert
terms as “place utility.” The actual place utility of the current residence is compared to its expected utility. According to Wolpert, if place utility does not match expected utility, then a move is more likely to occur (Wolpert, 1965; Landale and Guest, 1985).

Speare’s Model of Residential Satisfaction

Just as the stress-threshold model focuses on the production of stressors relative to each household, Speare’s model (1974) is also based on the resident’s subjective response to factors that affect values and expectations. Speare jettisons such terms as “stresses”, “strains”, and “threshold” and employs residential satisfaction as the concept describing a household’s subjective opinion of the residence. According to Speare this opinion is influenced by individual, location, and social bond characteristics.

Individual characteristics include age, income, and duration of residence. Speare suggests that these “variables should not directly affect the decision to move” (Speare, 1974). Instead, he maintains that these factors directly impact residential satisfaction, which directly impacts the decision to move. Speare argues that an increase in age corresponds to job security and salary increases which are likely to increase satisfaction. Older people are able to afford the types of houses that meet their satisfaction. In addition, older residents will have a higher degree of familiarity with a particular area and stronger social bonds.

Location characteristics include the general condition of housing in the area, employment availability, neighborhood attributes, and the region or geographic location of the household relative to other places in the city. Speare maintains that these characteristics directly impact residential satisfaction. In his model, urban residents are less satis-
fied than suburban residents and residence in neighborhoods with poor infrastructure, limited amenities, and few job opportunities reduce residential satisfaction (Speare, 1974).

Social bonds are formed among the residents in the community. Residents are connected to one another through elements that require collective participation or those that bring people together under a common interest. These community elements include, but are not limited to; friends, amenities, organizations, and institutions. Social bonds may also include emotional ties to the current residence, commitment to familial responsibilities, and jobs. Speare theorizes a positive relationship between the strength of these bonds and the level of satisfaction in the current residence.

Speare’s primary assertion is that residential satisfaction is the primary determinant of whether a resident will decide to move or not. Individuals with a relatively high degree of residential satisfaction will probably stay at their residence. Those with low residential satisfaction have a higher probability of moving. He maintains that a resident with a high level of satisfaction will not consider moving even if he or she stands to benefit from the move (Speare, 1974).

The data used to test Speare’s original model consist of a representative sample from Rhode Island taken in 1969. Although 1,081 individuals participated in the study, data for the model were restricted to 724 individuals between the ages of 21 and 65. The number was further reduced to 700 after subtracting the quantity of respondents who did not complete the study. Inclusive in this final number are individuals who are currently or were ever married, are not in the military, and are head or the spouse of the head of household.
Military families were excluded because their movement is mostly involuntary. Rhode Island was selected because of its small geographic size. With 83% of the people of Rhode Island living in the Providence area, they were less likely to change residential location due to in-state job changes (Speare, 1974).

The Providence Metropolitan Statistical Area today, however, is not representative of the nation’s urban areas and is particularly unrepresentative of the target population for this study. The 2000 Census reveals that only 4 percent of Providence’s total population is African American. Furthermore, the median household income in Providence is $52,297. The median value for owner occupied housing in Providence is $132,700. Woodlawn, meanwhile, is 84 percent African American with a median household income of $21,095. The median value for owner occupied housing in Woodlawn is $40,100 (U.S. Census, 2000).
Ghetto Conditions Require Modification of Speare’s Model

Why are modifications to Speare’s model required to better understand movement behavior in African American ghettos? As noted previously, poverty in the United States has become increasingly concentrated over the past 30 years. This trend has changed the urban landscape since Speare’s model was introduced. Inner-city areas now experience higher levels of social isolation, neighborhood disadvantage, and racial homogeneity (Wilson, 1987, 1996; Massey, 1990; Rankin and Quane, 2000; Ross et al., 2001). Wilson (1987) defines social isolation as “the lack of contact or of sustained interaction with individuals and institutions that represent mainstream society.” This leads to a disadvantaged position for socially isolated residents as they are not able to access resources that exist outside of the community. The social isolation of poverty is a function of the effects of middle class flight from urban neighborhoods (Wilson, 1987), racial segregation (Massey and Denton, 1987), and political-economic transitions (Wilson, 1987, 1996).

These social transitions, discussed in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, left urban neighborhoods vulnerable to adverse social effects. These social effects had a negative impact on educational opportunities, income, and family relationships (Wilson, 1996; Rankin and Quane, 2000). As a result, increases in crime, delinquency, and vandalism along with declines in educational opportunities, informal social control, and morale became characteristics of African American ghettos. Residential satisfaction is adversely affected by these ghetto trends. However, many ghetto residents do not have the financial means to act upon their dissatisfaction. Further, some residents may have psychological or social reasons for not wanting to make a move based solely on satisfaction.
In these cases it is possible that dissatisfaction will not correlate with movement. Speare does not account for this in his model.

The Modified Model

The effects of life in the ghetto are illustrated by the movement behavior of residents. The background factors bring to light the demands of day to day living. The urgency for low-income residents to react to background characteristics stems from their poverty. Poor people’s intentions to move will be more sensitive to background characteristics than to residential satisfaction. Many poor residents with limited income, education, and social capital cannot afford to move while others cannot afford to stay, regardless of their level of satisfaction. Homeowners or potential homeowners may value their ownership status over residential satisfaction. Paying bills, preserving family ties, and the increased physical maintenance that comes with aging are other issues that may take precedence over residential satisfaction. Furthermore, residents may remain in the ghetto, despite their level of satisfaction with the residence, to preserve an income or lifestyle that is accepted only in the ghetto (e.g. operating a half way house or narcotic operation). This example is articulated by Kenneth Clark (1965) in a quote that still rings true:

Wealth that comes from illicit or marginal activities such as
the numbers racket, however, does tend to maintain its
residential roots within the ghetto. The source of wealth
determines the level of social acceptance; Negroes whom
the Negro suburban ‘upper class’ would refuse to accept stay in the ghetto (p.190).

In addition, some residents will feel compelled to remain in the ghetto regardless of their level of satisfaction because they are culturally tied to the community. For example, gang members, civil rights activists, and class-based activists may view living in the ghetto as a sacrifice made for their causes.

Nonetheless, in most cases, basing a move on residential satisfaction is a luxury that many ghetto residents do not possess. For many, reduced residential satisfaction is just another form of dissonance. Residents with means who are not emotionally tied to the ghetto can make voluntary decisions to act on their dissatisfaction. However, as Kenneth Clark (1965) states, this is not usually the case: “The ghetto fails to prepare one for voluntary sacrifices precisely because it demands so many involuntary ones.” Ghetto residents are likely to be more concerned with the background factors that impact their daily lives. Acting purely on residential satisfaction is a step that comes with increased socio-economic standing.

In addition, it should be expected that some residents who are satisfied with the community may decide to move because of “pull” factors that exist outside of the community (Moore, 1972). The model employed here gives no attention to these types of situations. Because of data limitations, it places a focus only on the factors that exist within the neighborhood that either increase or decrease the likelihood that a move will occur. If, for example, a resident decides to move to another neighborhood because it is closer to a shopping district, then that is considered a pull factor because the resident is
being drawn away. However, if a resident states intentions to move or stay because of living space, the quality of housing in the community, or a change in income; then such cases are of interest to this study because they represent factors that are germane to the community.

The modified model incorporates theory relevant to the residential area and population. It takes into account that attention must be given to the caveat that every resident who is dissatisfied does not move and all satisfied residents do not stay (LaGory and Pipkin, 1981). Movement behavior is influenced by the social circumstance that surrounds residents. The proposed model assumes that background factors will have a profound effect on the lives and behavior of residents and they will have a stronger effect on the decision to move. Thus, the central proposition of this study is:

H1: Background factors will be directly related to the decision to move.

Moreover, results are expected to demonstrate the effect of limited socioeconomic and human capital resources influencing the decision to move. Movement behavior, therefore, is a function of a resident’s ability to move as well as their desire to move relative to the social circumstances that surround them. As a result, the model used for this analysis predicts that residents with low SES will be less likely to move.

H2: Low income residents will be more likely to state intentions to stay.

H3: Higher education will be positively associated with intentions to move.
Residents of poor neighborhoods typically do not translate social capital into economic resources that facilitate moves out of the neighborhood. The social capital that typically develops in these communities is meant to sustain current lifestyle and to help residents survive in the ghetto – what Putnam (2000) calls “bonding social capital.” This equates to poor people networking with other poor people. Accordingly, social capital in the ghetto is reflective of limited socioeconomic resources.

Moreover, residents may maintain strong ties within the community. They are retained by factors other than residential satisfaction. Often, these residents have lived in the ghetto for many years. The may have significant family ties. Some of them participate in neighborhood organizations to combat negative aspects of the community or to
preserve what they believe is good about the community. These residents maintain im-
portant investments in the community and are less likely to move.

H4: Social capital variables will be inversely associated with intentions to move.

Additions to a household typically reduce residential satisfaction. Households
with large amounts of children or older family members are more likely to experience
crowding. These additions often symbolize entrance into various life cycle stages. Hav-
ing a child signifies motherhood or fatherhood, a significant life cycle event. These cir-
cumstances often increase the probability that a resident will move from his or her house-
hold because of inadequate space. The lack of space that results from overcrowding or
housing that is too small is a factor that reduces residential satisfaction and encourages
movement.

H5: Those who claim that household space is a problem will be more likely to state
intentions to move.

Homeowners are bound to the community through their investment in a home.
Moving, regardless of satisfaction level, may be more difficult among this group, due to a
weak market for houses in the ghetto, limited growth in property value, or emotional ties
to the home.

H6: Homeowners will be more likely to have intentions to stay.

Poverty is both an individual and place-based phenomenon. Poor neighborhoods
often suffer from a dearth of informal social control, crime, a lack of amenities, litter,
careless attention given to streets and vacant lots. Residents who hold negative percep-
tions of their neighborhood are likely to state intentions to move. They may be willing to
sacrifice much for the opportunity to live in what they perceive as a good neighborhood
(Lee et. al., 1994).
H7: Neighborhood disorder will be positively associated with the intention to move.

H8: Neighborhood rating will be inversely associated with the intention to move.

Summary

The hypotheses presented in this chapter represent the assertion that intentions to move or stay are not based on residential satisfaction, but on background factors, such as income, age, social capital, homeownership, space, and neighborhood perceptions. For this reason, the proposed model deemphasizes the importance of residential satisfaction and concentrates specifically on factors that exist in low-income communities that are pertinent to the decision to move. It is suggested that sociodemographic and neighborhood factors will play a major role in determining movement behavior in the ghetto. The model used here suggests that there is a relationship between sociodemographic factors such as income and neighborhood independent of residential satisfaction. This relationship speaks of the social dynamics that exist in ghetto communities around the country. Residential satisfaction is a psychological concept that encompasses individual values and expectations, but fails to come to grips with the hard realities of life in the ghetto. The new model, therefore, is more illustrative of the issues present in the ghetto that impact the lives of residents.
CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this analysis is to understand the factors that influence movement behavior among residents of a poor inner city area. In the introduction, rationales were given for studying the context which influences the movement behavior of poor African Americans. The literature review noted that residential satisfaction was cited as the main determinant of whether a household would move or not. The theory section took issue with this claim and proposed a model that considers the idea that ghetto residents must make decisions within a different context than the middle class.

Three forms of analysis are used to examine the factors that influence movement behavior. Logistic regression is used to analyze the impact of background factors and residential satisfaction on the decision to move. The open-ended responses of study participants are used to examine why residents decided to move away from Woodlawn. Finally, the characteristics of dissatisfied residents who do not move were analyzed to strengthen the modified model which asserts that the decision to move or stay involves factors other than satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Data

This study employs secondary data collected between October 2000 and February 2002 (Mitchell and LaGory, 2002). The survey was constructed based on intelligence gained from focus groups, consultations, and pretesting with individuals from the com-
The survey covered sociodemographic, psychosocial, social capital, and neighborhood issues relevant to residents in Woodlawn. The refusal rate for the study was 4 percent. The survey was supported by Region 2020, the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, and the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (Mitchell and LaGory, 2002).

Data were provided by household decision-makers who completed a face-to-face, household interview survey. Participants were chosen via a random, multistage cluster sample of 222 households in Woodlawn (Mitchell and LaGory, 2002). Three census tracts in Woodlawn are covered in the survey. According to the U.S. Census (2000), Woodlawn is 84 percent African American and almost 12 percent white. Furthermore, 81 percent of the households within the three-tract district have an income under $40,000. The sample is 78 percent African American and 14.9 percent white (Mitchell, 2001) and the average household income is between $15,000 and $25,000.

Several adjustments are made to the data to make it more useful to the current project. Income is recoded from an interval variable to a dummy variable in order to categorize those over and under $20,000. This was done to get a better understanding of the movement behavior of those living in poverty. To better capture the concept of local bonds discussed in the literature, a select group of social capital variables is measured independently of the social capital index used in the original published research (Mitchell and LaGory, 2002). Similarly, employment is recoded as a dummy variable to categorize those working or not working. Again this is to capture information for those in or near poverty. Although it is acknowledged that a resident can be employed and poor or un-
employed and not poor, employment status is an important component of individual socioeconomic status, particularly for low-income residents.

The dependent variable for this study is the *decision to move*. To assess this variable, respondents were asked if they planned to stay in Woodlawn over the next five years. They chose from three answers “yes” (n = 123), “no” (n = 55), or “don’t know” (n = 42). The “don’t know” and “no” categories were merged to form one category, “no/undecided.” The decision to move was then coded as a dichotomous variable. Non-movers are coded as 1 while movers are coded as 0. Finally, all 1990 Census figures, such as the percent of African Americans in Woodlawn, are updated with 2000 Census figures.

**Logistic Regression Analysis**

Logistic regression is the primary method used to assess the role of background factors and residential dissatisfaction on the decision to move. It is preferred when there is a dichotomous dependent variable because of its ability to produce likelihood estimates based on category membership. More specifically, logistic regression explores one of the two categories of a dichotomous dependent variable. The chosen category is then regressed on the independent variables. The category not chosen is the reference category. The independent variables can be dichotomous or continuous. Dichotomous independent variables (categorical variables) control for the reference category in order to explore the category of interest.

In the current study, logistic regression analysis measures the impact of background variables and residential satisfaction on the decision to move. Odds ratios are
generated by changing the dependent variable into a logit. This is done by obtaining the natural log of the odds of the chosen category occurring or not occurring. Odds ratios estimate the likelihood of category membership given the impact of the independent variable(s). The current analysis uses odds ratios to predict the likelihood that residents will remain in the community given certain individual, household, social capital, and neighborhood background variables.

Five models are tested using chi-square as the test of model significance and the Nagelkerke R square (Pseudo R square) as a measure of explained variance. Individual, household, social capital, and neighborhood variables are inputted into the regression equation using the enter method in the SPSS statistical software package. The individual sociodemographic variables are included first followed by the household, social capital, and neighborhood variables. Residential satisfaction is added in the full model to assess its effect as a mediating variable.

Open-Ended Responses

The factors in the quantitative analysis were derived from the literature while themes from the open-ended responses arose from the direct opinion of residents. Only residents who have decided to move were asked to give statements. They were asked to give a short rationale for this decision. The resulting content is analyzed by identifying themes that emerge from these data. The rationales are grouped into categories of background factors. The categories of background factors in this analysis mirror those used in the quantitative analysis. After being placed in the appropriate category, the themes that emerge are tallied and ranked by frequency of occurrence in the content.
The categories in this analysis include individual sociodemographic, household, social capital, and neighborhood variables. Although the categories of variables are similar to those of the quantitative analysis, the factors collected within each category reflect the views of residents intending to move and may be different than those derived from the literature included in the quantitative analysis. For example, a resident may say he or she is moving to have access to a shopping district. This response would be coded under the neighborhood category. The rationale for moving would be described as “better access to amenities.”

Dissatisfied Nonmovers

Because of this dissertation’s interest in the role of residential dissatisfaction in movement decisions, special attention is paid to the group of people who are dissatisfied but do not move. A variable was created to represent residents who did not intend to move though dissatisfied with their residence (hereafter termed dissatisfied nonmovers). The variable was created from the combination of residential satisfaction and the decision to move. Dissatisfied nonmovers chose poor or fair when asked about their residential satisfaction. They chose yes when asked if they planned to stay in Woodlawn. The item “fair” was included because it indicates a significant level of dissatisfaction with the residence.

This analysis focuses on the characteristics of dissatisfied nonmovers. These characteristics are the same as the variables in the logistic regression analysis. The purpose for this analysis is to better understand the sociodemographic, household, social capital, and psychosocial traits of these residents as well as their views on neighborhood
disorder in Woodlawn. Of interest here are the consequences of being a dissatisfied nonmover. This group is important because they do not follow the general model of residential movement based on residential satisfaction.

Measurement of Variables for Quantitative Analysis

The first category of background variables describes the individual sociodemographic attributes of study representatives. They include education, income, age, marital status, and employment. Table 4.1 gives a graphical breakdown of the sociodemographic variables and corresponding frequencies for the entire population of survey respondents.

Education is included to examine the earning potential of participants. Education contains 5 categories ranging from “less than high school” to “bachelor’s degree or more.” Respondents with a high school diploma or GED total 40.5 percent.

The household income variable for this study is examined as a dummy with those earning less than $20,000 per year listed as the category of interest. Respondents earning over $20,000 per year are listed as the reference category. Such coding is done to place emphasis on those earning less than $20,000 a year. Age is measured as a continuous variable in years. The youngest respondent was 18 and the oldest was 92.

Marital status is measured as a dummy variable where “married” is the category of interest and “single” is observed as the reference. Similarly, parental status is observed as a dummy variable.

The employment variable initially contained several options for respondents. These included “retired”, “student”, “temporarily laid off”, “homemaker”, and “disabled.” Given the small amount of responses in these categories and the need to under-
stand the movement behavior of those with and without paying jobs, all responses are now grouped as either “Employed” (working for pay) or “not employed” (Mitchell, 2001). Employed responses are coded as 1 while unemployed responses are coded as 0. Working respondents total 53.6 percent of the participants used in the sample.

The household category of variables examines characteristics of the residence that impact the decision to move. Single-parent status, space, the number of children under age 17, homeownership, and territorial functioning are included in the analysis as household variables. Household variable are represented in Table 4.2 (territorial functioning variables are listed in Table 4.4).

Single-parent households are coded 1 as the category of interest with married-parent households coded as 0. Eighteen percent of the respondents are single parents. Space is coded as a dummy variable. Respondents were asked whether limited living space was a problem or not. If too little living space was selected as a problem it was coded 1 and if living space was not a problem it was coded as 0. A majority of sample respondents, 75.2 percent, indicate that space was not a problem. The number of children in the household under 17 is included to further examine the impact of space on the decision to move. It maintains values ranging from 0 to 3 or more. The majority of the households, 58.1 percent, does not have any children under 17 living in the household. This statistic is probably a function of age. The average age of the household decision maker for this study was 49 thereby decreasing the probability that young children will still be living in the house.

Homeownership versus renting is included as a dummy variable with the former representing the category of interest. A slight majority of respondents in the sample, 51.4
percent, said that they were renters. This variable is gleaned from the literature as a key indicator of whether a resident will move.

Territorial functioning is created from the combination of several variables used to measure objective housing. The combined variables are the presence of junk cars in front of the house, the presence of burglar bars, litter in the yard, uncut front lawns, and the need for exterior maintenance. Each of these objective features is scored. The mean score for each household is imputed as its territorial functioning measure. Statistics for the territorial functioning variables are listed in Table 4.4.

The social capital variables are used to measure community social bonds among the target population. The social capital category contains four variables: years at residence, trust in neighbors, neighborhood association participation, and close friends in Woodlawn. Frequencies for the social capital variables are given in Table 4.2.

The number of years at the residence is an interval level scale variable with reported values between 0 years to 60 years. The largest percentage of respondents, 13.5 percent, report living at their residence less than a year. The trust in neighbor variable employs a 4-point Likert scale. Respondents could chose strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. In the sample, 58 percent of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that they can trust their neighbor. Neighborhood association participation is coded as a dummy variable with “yes” as the category of interest and “no” as the reference. A majority of the respondents, 75.2 percent said that they did not participate in neighborhood associations.

The neighborhood variables measure the resident’s perceptions of the Woodlawn community. Descriptive statistics are given in Table 4.2. Two neighborhood variables
are used in this analysis: place rating and neighborhood disorder. Place rating contains four categories: poor, fair, good, and excellent. Respondents were asked to choose which category they felt best represented their opinion of Woodlawn. Forty-five percent of respondents rated Woodlawn as a good place to live. Neighborhood disorder is a subjective concept derived from the literature (Ross et al., 2000). Residents were asked to complete a neighborhood disorder scale to assess their perceptions of disorder in Woodlawn. The scale contains 15 questions with a range of 1 through 4 (alpha = .863). A neighborhood disorder score is calculated using the mean score of responses (Mitchell 2001). Table 4.3 displays questions included in this scale.

The concept of residential satisfaction is operationalized by categorizing the perceptions of respondents regarding their residence. The variable used to measure residential satisfaction is taken from the question, “how do you rate your residence?” Respondents could choose poor, fair, good or excellent. Most of the responses fall in the middle two categories.

Analysis

Triangulation is employed in the data analysis. This is done by comparing data from statistical analyses, open-ended responses from residents, and descriptive statistics describing the traits of dissatisfied nonmovers. The quantitative segment tests hypotheses and predicts the likelihood of moving or staying. The analysis of open-ended responses offer additional details regarding why residents choose to move from or stay in Woodlawn. The analysis of dissatisfied movers particularly gives information on the characteristics of residents who defy Speare’s model of residential satisfaction. Results from each
of the analyses are compared to add reliability and richness to the data. Also, a table of
descriptive statistics is included to describe the traits of movers and nonmovers in the
study. It is used to provide background information on these two groups and to provide a
foundation for the results.

Summary

The methodology for this dissertation facilitates the study of residential movement
in low-income communities by examining the impact of background factors on residen-
tial satisfaction. The data that are used in this analysis correspond to the scholarship on
the decision to move. The methodology for this chapter allows these data to explore the
movement behavior of poor African Americans. Once analyzed, these data will facilitate
substantive discussions on the factors existing in the ghetto that surround residential
movement. Logistic regression analysis, thematic content analysis of the open-ended re-
sponses, and an analysis of dissatisfied nonmovers are used to evaluate the data. Results
are then produced through triangulation to add depth to the findings.

The theory in the previous chapter suggests that each background factor will di-
rectly impact the decision to move and that the overall impact of residential satisfaction
will decline upon the inclusion of independent variables. To test this assertion, the statis-
tical analysis uses five models to test each category of variables and the mediating impact
of residential satisfaction. Variables contained within the categories are also tested indi-
vidually. Furthermore, the open-ended responses are analyzed along with the data
gleaned from the descriptive statistics describing the traits of dissatisfied nonmovers.
The following chapters will present the results of the analyses followed by a discussion of
the findings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>68.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma/GED</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates Degree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree or Higher</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20K</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Age</td>
<td>49.5 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married or living with a partner</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status</td>
<td>Working</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 Household, Social Capital, and Neighborhood Data from the Woodlawn Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Under 17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems with Space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reported Problem</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Capital</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years in Home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can Trust Neighbor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in Neighborhood As-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sociation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Friends in Woodlawn</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Rating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Disorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4.3 Average Response to Items Contained in Ross and Mirowsky (1999) Perceived Neighborhood Disorder Scale
Range 1-4 (Cronbach’s alpha = .8631)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now I’d like to ask you a few questions about your neighborhood.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you tell me if you strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), or strongly disagree (1) with the following statements about your neighborhood.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lot of graffiti in this neighborhood.</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This neighborhood is noisy.</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism is common in this neighborhood.</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lot of abandon buildings in the neighborhood.</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much alcohol use in this neighborhood.</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is too much drug use in this neighborhood.</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are too many people hanging around on the street near my home.</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lot of crime in this neighborhood.</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’re always having trouble with your neighbors.</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The neighborhood is clean.</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in this neighborhood take good care of their houses and apartments.</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This neighborhood is safe</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People watch out for each other in this neighborhood</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The police protection in this neighborhood is adequate</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can trust most people in this neighborhood</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4 Territorial Functioning Questions (Cronbach’s alpha = .5202)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage “yes”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any visible lack of exterior maintenance</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Signs of Vandalism</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter in the Yard</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junk Cars</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows or doors have</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglar Bars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass Uncut</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V
RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of this dissertation research by providing descriptive statistics as well as logistic regression analysis of the models outlined in the previous chapter. An analysis of the open-ended responses is also reported. Finally, this chapter explores anecdotal data on those individuals who are residentially dissatisfied, but stay in Woodlawn. Together these analyses can provide a comprehensive picture of the factors that influence movement behavior among African Americans in poor neighborhoods.

Table 5.1 gives descriptive statistics illustrating the differences between residents who intend to move and those who intend to stay (nonmovers). Table 5.1 uses the same variables contained in the logistic regression model. Its purpose is to identify any potentially significant differences between the two groups. An independent sample test of difference of means is employed to identify statistically significant factors. Attention is given only to these variables.

Sociodemographic factors are discussed first. Nonmovers (67%) are more likely than movers (53%) to make less than $20,000 and they (54%) are more likely than movers (37%) to be unemployed. Among the household factors, a substantially higher percentage of nonmovers own their home (61%) when compared to movers (35%) and fewer nonmovers (20%) report problems with living space than movers (36%). Among the social capital variables, nonmovers (9%) are less likely to have been at their home one year or less compared to movers (33%), they are more likely to trust their neighbor (65% compared to 47%), and they are slightly more likely to participate in neighborhood associations (28% compared to 21%).
Table 5.1 Differences between Nonmovers and Movers in Sociodemographic, Household, Social Capital, Neighborhood, and Residential Satisfaction Variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nonmovers</th>
<th>Movers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*** Residential Satisfaction</td>
<td>29% Dissatisfied</td>
<td>48% Dissatisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Sociodemographic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (High School Diploma and Above)</td>
<td>79% 83%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Income(percent under 20K)</td>
<td>67% 53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (residents over 50)</td>
<td>51% 28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>59% 54%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Unemployed</td>
<td>54% 37%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Household</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent</td>
<td>19% 22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or more Children &lt; 17</td>
<td>24% 35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Homeownership</td>
<td>61% 35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** Living Space is a problem</td>
<td>20% 36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Social Capital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** 1 Year or less in Home</td>
<td>9% 33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Trust Neighbors</td>
<td>65% 47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** Participated in Neighborhood Association</td>
<td>28% 22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Friends in Woodlawn</td>
<td>48% 36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>** Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial Functioning</td>
<td>51% 49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** Mean Perceived Neighborhood Disorder</td>
<td>2.07 2.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Rating</td>
<td>34% poor or fair 61% poor or fair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05  ***p<.01  ***p<.001
The lone significant neighborhood variable indicates that far fewer nonmovers (34%) give Woodlawn a poor or fair rating than movers (61%). Finally, fewer nonmovers (29%) state that they are dissatisfied with their residence compared to movers (48%). This raw statistic is measured independent of the other variables that may be having a larger impact on the decision to move. Only half of the movers are dissatisfied with their residence. This suggests that factors other than residential satisfaction are influencing their decision to move out of Woodlawn.

What do the percentage differences between movers and nonmovers reported in Table 5.1 say in terms of illustrating characteristics of the two groups. Although more nonmovers make less than $20,000 while being more likely to be unemployed, they still have higher percentages of homeownership. This suggests that in Woodlawn, homeownership may not be a function of household income. Meanwhile, the higher percentages of income and employment among movers may factor into their ability to leave Woodlawn.

The lower percentage of nonmovers who report problems with living space is probably a function of their higher percentage of homeownership. Furthermore, these residents appear to be more active in their community given that they have longer residential tenures, are more trusting of their neighbors, and have higher percentages of residents who participate in neighborhood associations.

Given their characteristics in Table 5.1, it appears that nonmovers are more tied to the community than movers. They are more likely to have a financial investment in Woodlawn in terms of homeownership, they are more active in the community, and they have better perceptions of the neighborhood. On the other hand, movers are less tied to Woodlawn, they have more economic resources in terms of household income and em-
employment, and they have more problems with adequate living space. In addition, they do not generally give Woodlawn high ratings as a good place to live.

Further examination of Table 5.1 is suggestive. A substantial portion of nonmovers and movers defy Speare’s contention that a resident’s level of satisfaction is a determining factor in whether a resident will move or not. Given that 29 percent of nonmovers are dissatisfied and 52 percent of movers are satisfied, it is apparent that there are more salient factors that effect the decision to move. To better understand what factors are most prominent in influencing movement behavior, this analysis now turns to logistic regression analysis to test the models depicted in Chapters Three and Four.

Models Predicting the Odds of Deciding to Move

Logistic regression analysis gives likelihood estimates for a dichotomous dependent variable. In logistic regression the dependent variable has two categories; the category of interest is compared to its reference category by holding the reference category constant. In the current analysis, the dependent variable is movement decision. It is assessed by the question: “do you plan to stay in Woodlawn over the next five years.” Its category of interest is “yes” for nonmovers and the reference category is “no” for movers. This analysis tests the likelihood of residents stating “yes” to the question above given the influence of background factors and residential satisfaction.

Table 5.2 presents the odds ratios (OR) of each background variable, chi squares, and the pseudo R square for each model. The OR for each variable represents the numerical likelihood of the resident stating an intention to stay in Woodlawn given the impact of background factors and residential satisfaction. Each of the five models including
the full model is significant (p<.001) using the chi-square statistic. The pseudo R squares for each model indicate that the amount of variance explained increases with each model, suggesting that the predictions become more accurate with the inclusion of each category of variables. Explained variance peaks at 35 percent in the fourth model. The individual demographic, household, and neighborhood categorical steps are significant. The model representing the addition of social capital variables, however, is not significant.

The first model represents the effects of individual demographic variables on the decision to move. Age is the only significant variable (p<.001) in the first model with an OR of 1.044, suggesting that as a resident’s age increases, the odds of them staying in Woodlawn increases by about 4 percent. Income, education, marital status, employment status, and single parent status are not significant in the first model.

Household variables - which include single parent households, children under 17, homeowners, and space - are entered with the individual demographic variables in the second model. The second model contains three variables significantly related to the decision to move. Age (p<.01) maintains an OR of 1.041. Homeownership (p<.001) has an OR of 3.414 meaning that the odds of deciding to move are significantly influenced by homeownership in that the likelihood of a resident deciding to stay in the community more than triple when he or she is a homeowner rather than a renter. Also in the third model, household space (p<.001) has an OR of .402 suggesting that the residents citing space as a problem are about 60 percent more likely to decide to move from Woodlawn.

Social capital variables are entered in the third model. Despite the literature’s insistence that social capital is a critical determinant of movement behavior, none of the social capital variables are significantly related to the decision to move according to the
logistic regression analysis. Results for this step indicate that social capital may not play the same role in anchoring people to low-income areas that it does in wealthier less segregated places. This brings light to Lin’s (2001) contention that social capital is a function of social position; thus, as Mitchell and LaGory (2002) note, social capital does not work the same way in poor neighborhoods.

The neighborhood variables are introduced in the fourth model. Age, homeownership, and space remain significant variables in the model. Income (p < .05) becomes significant for the first time. Those who have an income under 20,000 dollars are twice as likely to state intentions to stay. Neighborhood rating (p < .001) and neighborhood disorder (p < .01) produce odds ratios of 2.544 and 2.046 respectively. The large odds ratios for these two variables suggest that neighborhood issues are important factors in the decision to move. Residents are 2.5 times more likely to decide to stay in Woodlawn when they rate the neighborhood as good or excellent. Similarly, residents are almost twice as likely to decide to stay in Woodlawn when they perceive less disorder.

Residential satisfaction was added last to produce the full model. As expected residential satisfaction had a negligible influence over the individual, household, and neighborhood background variables’ ability to predict a resident’s decision to move. The addition of residential satisfaction did not improve the explanatory power of the model. The direct impact of income, age, homeownership, space, and the two neighborhood variables on the decision to move remains virtually the same.
Table 5.2 Logistic Regression Coefficients from Models Using Demographic, Household, Social Capital, and Neighborhood Factors Predicting the likelihood of Moving from a High Poverty Ghetto.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictors</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
<th>Model 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>.902</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1.042</td>
<td>1.030</td>
<td>1.045</td>
<td>1.067</td>
<td>1.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>1.310</td>
<td>1.556</td>
<td>1.633</td>
<td>2.051*</td>
<td>2.049*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.044***</td>
<td>1.041**</td>
<td>1.033**</td>
<td>1.038**</td>
<td>1.037**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>1.200</td>
<td>.914</td>
<td>.940</td>
<td>1.067</td>
<td>1.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>.953</td>
<td>.884</td>
<td>1.005</td>
<td>1.032</td>
<td>1.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children &lt; age 17</td>
<td>1.223</td>
<td>1.238</td>
<td>1.230</td>
<td>1.228</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeowner</td>
<td>3.414***</td>
<td>2.779**</td>
<td>2.668**</td>
<td>2.722**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>.402**</td>
<td>.431**</td>
<td>.453*</td>
<td>.442*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Capital Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years at Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in Neighbor</td>
<td>.861</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td>.750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Association</td>
<td>.748</td>
<td>.505</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close Friends in Woodlawn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neighborhood Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial Functioning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Disorder</td>
<td>2.046***</td>
<td>2.036*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Rating</td>
<td>2.544*</td>
<td>2.713**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi Square Step</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td>20.504***</td>
<td>17.736***</td>
<td>3.445</td>
<td>14.007***</td>
<td>.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagelkerke Model R²</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.252</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model df</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05  ** p < .01  ***p < .001
Overall the findings support the hypotheses presented in Chapter III. The central hypothesis of this study proposes that background factors, such as income, age, homeownership, living space, length of residence, participation in neighborhood associations, friends, territorial functioning, and neighborhood perceptions will be directly related to the decision to move. The models show this to be true.

The second hypothesis, that residents with low income will be more likely to decide to stay in Woodlawn, is supported by the regression analyses. Only hypotheses 3 and four are not supported by the analyses. Neither education nor social capital is significantly related to the decision to move. The fifth hypothesis is also supported by the results as it was revealed that insufficient living space is associated with intentions to move away. Hypothesis 6 is borne out by the fact that homeowners are more likely to state intentions to stay. The final hypotheses are upheld by the findings as residents who perceive less neighborhood disorder and who rate their neighborhood highly are more likely to stay in Woodlawn.

When considering both the migration decision of poor people living in the ghetto and poverty in general, the logistic regression analyses show that homeownership and place have the strongest influence on the likelihood of movement. This is not surprising given that in America, social status and quality of life are often functions of place and socioeconomic assets such as homeownership. Given the substantial role that residence plays in determining quality of life and social status, it is very likely that poor African Americans see moving as an opportunity to improve their overall situation. Here, it is ideal to achieve homeownership in a quality neighborhood with low crime rates, good schools, plenty of amenities, and neighbors that actively work to improve the community.
However, this is often not realistic given the limited income and education possessed by most residents in low-income communities; consequently, they may settle for a portion of this ideal in the form of homeownership in lower quality neighborhoods or renting in middle class areas. Thus, moving involves trade offs between various desirable goals, all of which cannot be realized at once. It has already been noted that homeownership and place are related to each other. Land values, local job opportunities, transportation to employment outside of the area, and housing stock help determine neighborhood economic viability and growth. These factors typically do not develop in a manner that benefits low-income residents.

Hence while residential satisfaction is not predictive of the movement decision, the fact that place and residence affect the individual’s location plans suggests that there is a decision making process involved with movement. The decision to move is not a random phenomenon, nor is it purely a function of individual poverty. The phenomenon of contextual poverty is important here because it speaks of how the ghetto influences the decision-making process. Although the decision to move is a calculative process where residents attempt to achieve the highest possible standard of living given their resources, their decisions are made within the boundaries set by ghetto conditions; thus, the agency of low-income residents is limited as their decisions are shaped by ghetto conditions.

The logistic regression analyses along with the descriptive statistics in Table 5.1 indicate the possibility of many dissatisfied residents who stay. What are the characteristics of dissatisfied residents who fail to move? Who are they and what are the consequences of their failure to move? Also what specific reason do people give for wanting to
move and how do these reasons compare to typical explanations for why people move. These questions necessitate a more detailed analysis of movers.

Why do People Move?

The analysis of open-ended responses supports the view that place is a major theme used by respondents to explain their decision to move. Tables 5.3a and 5.3b give a portrait of the major reasons residents give for leaving Woodlawn and the demographic characteristics associated with each type of reason cited. Residents most often list neighborhood issues (49%) as a reason for deciding to leave Woodlawn. Within the neighborhood category, crime, a general dislike of the neighborhood, and poor neighborhood upkeep are most often cited for deciding to leave. Household-related reasons are the second most common response with 30 percent, followed by social capital, and individual economic reasons.

Those who cite crime in the neighborhood as a reason for wanting to leave (17%) claim that Woodlawn is “rowdy,” full of “prostitutes and pimps,” and is “not safe.” The crime rate in low-income communities is influenced by participation in illegal economic activity related to “shadow work” and, most notably the trade of hard narcotics such as crack and heroin. Battles over turf, violent reactions to delinquent debtors, and theft are crimes often associated with the hard-narcotics trade. Moreover, in a place where financial resources are scarce, dope dealers competing for customers often turn violent. Crime occurs in every part of the city, but the limited amounts of informal social control in the ghetto exacerbates the problem further as residents are not compelled to reduce crime internally (Wilson, 1996).
Seventeen percent of Woodlawn residents state that their general dislike for the neighborhood was a reason for leaving. Residents declare that they “don’t like the neighborhood,” that they are “tired of the area,” or that they wanted to “move to a better area.” This general dislike of the neighborhood may be interpreted as a combination of several specific neighborhood factors that induce movement intentions.

The most frequent theme arising in the household category concerns problems with space. Fourteen percent of responses center on inadequate living space as a reason for wanting to leave Woodlawn. This is likely to be particularly problematic for renters who make up a large percentage (51.8%) of Woodlawn’s residents.

Twelve percent of respondents list poor upkeep of the neighborhood as a reason for wanting to leave Woodlawn. Poor upkeep includes responses describing the neighborhood as “not well maintained”, “flood prone,” or “dirty.” With the other aspects of disorder, poor upkeep reflects limited municipal maintenance in the community, such as street and sewer crews. It also reflects the lack of informal social control in the community where residents are encouraged to take it upon themselves to keep the neighborhood clean and free of vandalism.

These factors reflect the broader issue of territorial functioning (Taylor, 1988). Furthermore, such areas promote high levels of neighborhood risk and hazard common in unhealthy places which degrade quality of life. According to Fitzpatrick and LaGory (2000):

There is a growing recognition that disadvantaged populations are disproportionately exposed to a wide range of environmental health hazards threatening their general physi-
cal health and well-being. Minority populations, particularly African American and Hispanic, are at risk for exposure to levels of environmental contaminants not because of some inherent genetic characteristics or behavioral patterns, but rather because of the places where they live and work (p.109).

Few of the residents cite individual life-cycle, economic, or social capital variables as reasons for planning to move. Among the few who mention social capital, the reasons provided include unfriendly neighbors, the desire to be closer to family and friends somewhere else, or in one case, the desire to escape a family member. Substantively, these data suggest that the decision to move from Woodlawn appears to revolve around problems with the neighborhood and household. The impact of poverty here is at least in part a function of place considerations rather than simply a function of income.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percent of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neighborhood</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Dislike</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upkeep/Pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Amenities</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit problems</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintenance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans for new</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social network,</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family, friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.3b Sociodemographic Descriptive Statistics of Thematic Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Social Capital</th>
<th>Individual Economic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Under 20K</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working/not retired</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma or more</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dissatisfied Nonmovers

Dissatisfied nonmovers are an interesting case because they involve a group of residents who defy Speare’s model of residential satisfaction in that their dissatisfaction does not lead to movement out of the neighborhood. Table 5.4 reflects selected characteristics of this group. When compared to the entire sample, dissatisfied nonmovers have slightly more residents who earn under $20,000, fewer African Americans ($p < .001$), more residents over the age of 50, and fewer residents who have a high school degree. The main household variables are homeownership ($p < .001$) and space ($p < .01$). Dissatisfied nonmovers, as a group, have fewer residents who own their home and more residents who do not have adequate living space, although the differences between the two groups are negligible. In terms of social capital, eighteen percent of dissatisfied nonmovers have been at their residence for one year or less ($p < .001$). The psychosocial characteristics give insight into the potential consequences of being dissatisfied in the ghetto. Thirty-seven percent of dissatisfied nonmovers exhibit anxiety ($p < .01$) scores above the mean for the entire Woodlawn sample and 32 percent of this group exhibit CESD depression scores ($p < .001$) above the mean. Further, a noticeable amount of dissatisfied nonmovers state that they are unhappy (22%) and in poor health (42%). Finally, a substantial percentage of dissatisfied nonmovers (41%) report neighborhood disorder scores above the mean for the sample.

Although these residents are dissatisfied, they still decide to stay in Woodlawn; so what are potential reasons for staying? It has already been pointed out that income, age, homeownership, and neighborhood perceptions are the primary factors in determining movement behavior.
Table 5.4 Sociodemographic, Household, Social Capital, Neighborhood, and Psychosocial Characteristics of Nonmovers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sample (Minus Dissatisfied Nonmovers)</th>
<th>Dissatisfied Nonmovers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociodemographic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income &lt;20K</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***African American</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Married</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents age 50+</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma and above</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Parent</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** Homeownership</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or more Children &lt; 17</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** Living Space is a problem</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*** 1 Year or less in Home</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Neighbors</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in Neighborhood Association</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neighborhood/psychosocial</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent above Mean</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Good health (self report)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Happy (subjective)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anxiety (mean =2.20)</strong></td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
Table 5.4 shows that a large majority of dissatisfied nonmovers may not be able to move because of economic restraints. Given that the likelihood of moving decreases as residents age, the dissatisfied nonmovers are less likely to move since more than half of their population is over age 50. Furthermore, almost half of the respondents are homeowners, which is another factor that encourages non-movement. Finally, dissatisfied nonmover’s perceptions of neighborhood disorder are slightly higher than the mean. Considering the data, it is a strong possibility that dissatisfied nonmovers’ decision to stay is affected by the same variables hypothesized in the model to most influence movement behavior.

The description of movers and nonmovers at the beginning of this chapter, along with the logistic regression analysis, the open-ended responses, and the analysis of dissatisfied movers emphatically demonstrate that place and variables such as homeownership influence movement behavior among poor residents. When the results from each analysis are combined, a picture of movement behavior in the ghetto develops depicting resident’s concern with quality of life issues such as safety, adequate space, and homeownership.

Summary

The analyses are generally uniform in their findings. They show that resident’s decision to move out of Woodlawn is based on the following factors: income, age, homeownership, spatial needs, and neighborhood problems. To be sure, individuals in Woodlawn do form opinions about residence in Woodlawn and do express various levels of
residential satisfaction; however, this psychological variable does not appear to have a strong mediating influence on the decision to move.

The background factors affect residents of low-income communities differently than those of middle or upper middle class neighborhoods. How do these differences manifest themselves? Moving is expressive and poor people obviously have less disposable income than others. According to the findings, individuals with limited income living in dangerous neighborhoods may not be able to move to another neighborhood, even though they would like to. The analyses suggest, however, the fact that neighborhood issues are important to residents as they make the decision to move or not. In the quantitative analysis, income does not become significant until neighborhood variables are entered into the model, suggesting that disorder may be causing residents to consider their income more closely. For poor residents, the lack of income reduces the odds of escaping undesirable neighborhood circumstances. Poverty often traps the individual in places that only serve to intensify their impoverished circumstances. High poverty ghettos often become “islands of despair” (Fitzpatrick and LaGory, 2000). This contrasts with the situation for others in which spatial mobility reflects a housing career where individuals continuously improve their housing as their income and way of life changes.

Some of the potential consequences of being trapped on these islands of despair are depression, anxiety, and poor perceptions of health (See Table 5.4). Quality of life is affected in an adverse way when residents must deal with the negative psychosocial consequences that result from residential life in the ghetto and limited individual resources. Often, low-income residents do not have the resources to seek professional help in managing depression and anxiety which further exacerbates the situation.
Homeownership has different significance in the ghetto than in other communities. Homeownership in middle and upper middle class communities reflects prosperity. These residents have financial options when deciding whether to move or to renovate. Homeowners in the ghetto, on the other hand, typically do not have this financial freedom. Homeownership in the ghetto, therefore, may be associated with involuntary stability in that such residents are held in place by the financial demands of their mortgage and household maintenance costs. Often times their homes can become a liability, unable to be converted into a housing opportunity elsewhere.

Subjective concepts such as neighborhood disorder or neighborhood rating also manifest themselves differently in low-income communities. What will be considered as a problem in wealthy suburbs may not be seen as a problem in the ghetto. In Woodlawn, routine acts of violence, prostitution, or fighting continuously rouse the attention of residents. According to the analyses, residents have not become desensitized to such occurrences. They are aware of the disorder as well as the lack of amenities and proper maintenance that exists in their community. As a result, many residents intend to move. Nevertheless, place affects low-income and middle class communities differently with the former receiving the harsher types of disorder, such as homicides and the prevalence of crack cocaine. The problems that Woodlawn residents face are perpetuated within the context of place. Low-income places do not receive an equal distribution of the opportunities to improve quality of life. The next chapter will discuss what may be done about this and the other consequences of place that emanate from the findings.
CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Implications of Findings

Throughout this dissertation an argument has been made that general models used to explain the decision to move among poor African Americans are inappropriate. Residential dissatisfaction has been shown to be inconsequential for the movement decisions of high poverty ghetto residents. The findings identified several critical variables, however, that do influence the decision to move. While these factors are included in standard movement decision models, the current study shows that the literature fails to take into account the critical effect that socioeconomic status and place has on movement behavior. Because of the influence of place and the marginal socioeconomic status of individuals in low-income communities, these factors manifest themselves differently in the ghetto.

As Woodlawn residents age they become less likely to move away from the neighborhood. Woodlawn is an aging community; thus, a significant portion of the Woodlawn population will be less likely to move regardless of satisfaction. According to the findings, aging individuals in Woodlawn remain amid younger, more transient residents. Many older residents are homeowners where house values are declining as the neighborhood declines. These lowered housing values, in turn, often mean that elders cannot leave because the value of their home has not kept pace with housing values in other areas, hence, they must age in place (Fitzpatrick and LaGory, 2000). Consequently,
aging residents sometimes endure hazardous neighborhood circumstances. This often occurs at a time when they are more vulnerable to negative environmental circumstances because of their aging. Perhaps that is why 56 percent of dissatisfied nonmovers are over 50 years of age (See Table 5.4). Fixed income may exacerbate this problem (Meyer and Speare, 1985).

Similarly, the findings suggest that people with higher incomes are more likely to move; since most people in this study are poor, “higher” in this context may simply mean that residents have just enough income to move out of the neighborhood. Most of these residents decide to relocate because of neighborhood problems. Many residents may see moving as the only option in improving quality of life since they have limited control over their neighborhood’s deterioration due to a loss of territorial functioning. One interpretation of these data is that many individuals living in neighborhoods with large amounts of disorder, will if possible, concentrate their income toward financing a move.

The finding that African American homeowners in poor neighborhoods are less likely to move is supported by South and Crowder (1997) who maintain that movement away from the ghetto is partially a function of the “distribution of opportunities embedded in the local social structure.” Also, it is probable that many homeowners in Woodlawn are not able to move because of their limited incomes (the average income of homeowners in Woodlawn is between 15 and 25 thousand dollars) and the failure of houses there to appreciate in value. Whether homeowners are dissatisfied because values are low or not, they are likely to stay and endure the challenges of living in a high poverty, unhealthy environment because they have no other options. The Woodlawn residential milieu is dominated by rental properties, deterioration, vandalism, and crime; all of
which reduce the property value of homes in the neighborhood and create challenges for residents. Homeowners in Woodlawn have very little control over their neighborhood. They cannot rely on neighborhood covenants, such as those that exist in wealthy subdivisions, or collective efforts of informal social control. Homeowners are therefore wedged between difficult residential circumstances and their commitment to their home.

Social capital, especially bridging social capital, is a function of social position meaning that low-income residents as a whole often do not have the network resources to improve the conditions in the ghetto that reduce quality of life. In terms of bonding social capital, residents in Woodlawn seem to have a network that facilitates trust among neighbors (See Tables 5.1 and 5.4), but that is offset by resident’s fear of crime as noted in the analysis of open-ended responses. There is no evidence supporting the effectiveness of other bonding capital resources, such as having close friends in the community and high levels of participation in neighborhood associations which could bolster levels of informal social control in the neighborhood. Ultimately, residents of Woodlawn still lack the critical network resources that can be instrumental in improving residential life. Bonding social capital, at best, can only help people get by and bridging social capital is absent in Woodlawn (Mitchell and LaGory, 2002).

Residents also intend to move because of the high levels of neighborhood disorder. This reflects the general disapproval of the elements that increase disorder and disadvantage in Woodlawn. Just as residents value the prestige that is attached to certain neighborhoods (South and Crowder, 1997), they are apprehensive of the stigma attached to living in the ghetto. Both the analysis of the open-ended responses and logistic regression data suggest that people desire to move away because of “Woodlawn.” Neighbor-
hood disorder, high transience, and low informal social control constitute a network of adversarial factors within low-income neighborhoods, each contributing to the existence of the other. Place of residence clearly matters to these residents.

Given the significance of the above factors concerning the living situation of poor African Americans, it is evident that they should directly affect movement decisions. Aging residents, although often dissatisfied, do not move or plan to move and must live amid the chaos of the neighborhood. Many homeowners are inclined to stay because their investment cannot be cashed in for a better house elsewhere. Simply, the value of their housing has declined over time as the neighborhood has deteriorated. Finally, residents are generally displeased with the state of their neighborhood. Thus, movers are generally responding to the neighborhood and the poor quality of life that it offers while nonmovers are responding to their limited income, home investments, and social ties to the neighborhood.

Therefore, movement in low-income neighborhoods is not often based on residential dissatisfaction or satisfaction, but on individual factors such as age, income, space, homeownership, and neighborhood. High poverty neighborhoods often represent traps for the very poor and elderly. Such places too easily become “islands of despair” (Fitzpatrick and LaGory, 2000) - unhealthy places where people must not only endure their poverty, but also that of their neighbor. The costs of such places are paid not only by residents, but by the larger community where negative consequences exist for public health, ranging from crime problems to physical and mental health symptomatology with significant costs in health services (Ross and Mirowsky, 2001; Mitchell and LaGory, 2002).
Policy Recommendations

A review of the findings suggests that ghetto conditions have a major impact on resident’s intent to move. Poverty and place are inextricably weaved together. Given that ghetto conditions reduce quality of life, increase transience, and socially isolate residents from resources, it is necessary that measures be taken to mitigate these problems. Promoting residential stability and positive role models is an initial step in removing ghetto conditions from low-income communities. The findings show that homeownership and a high-quality neighborhood environment are factors that increase the probability that residents will remain. Also given that most of the neighborhood population lives under or close to the poverty line, it is evident that Woodlawn would benefit from a more diverse mix of residents in terms of socioeconomic status.

The causes for the increase in poverty are known. Earlier three main reasons were given to support the social isolation thesis: 1) middle-class black flight, 2) federal policy that led to housing segregation and 3) unemployment that resulted when the economy shifted from manufacturing to service-related industries. It, therefore, becomes evident that external resources, such as fair housing policies and internal programs to help residents invest in the neighborhood are needed. This analysis provides policy recommendations intended to help alleviate ghetto conditions and improve quality of residential life in urban neighborhoods such as Woodlawn. First there must be an understanding of the policies that led to the current situation.
Taylor (1995) argues that gatekeepers including major finance companies and the FHA (Federal Housing Administration) promoted “investments in whiteness” by sponsoring “race-based suburbanization.” The FHA was started after the passage of the Housing Act of 1934 as a New Deal effort to save the home building and finance industries that were in serious peril during the Depression (Schill and Wachter, 1995; Gotham, 2000a). The FHA was effective in lowering down payment requirements, establishing standards for construction, and most importantly, eliminating risk from loans (Gotham, 2000a). The agency was advised by a group of real-estate elites who recommended racially discriminatory provisions (Domhoff, 1990, Gotham, 2000a). These provisions were in accord with the ordinances being passed by local governments that segregated African Americans from whites as a method of dealing with the competition for housing due to the massive influx of African Americans coming to urban areas during the Great Migration (Taylor, 1995; Gotham, 2000a). The agency operated under strict codes that precluded equal treatment to African Americans by stratifying neighborhoods and restricting certain racial groups, namely African Americans, from moving into certain areas. Communities were split along class and racial lines using regulatory mechanisms, such as local-zoning laws, building codes, and subdivision regulations:

Striking increases in the African American population of many U.S. cities established the basis for the development of various legal devices, including zoning, deed restrictions, and racially restrictive covenants to impose and increase racial residential segregation. From the turn of the
century on, the mainstream opinion among real estate agents, appraisers, brokers, and mortgage bankers was that the movement of African Americans into white neighborhoods would undermine property values, contribute to neighborhood deterioration, and lead to other negative consequences (Gotham, 2000a:300-301).

The process of limiting home financing to certain zones based on race and class was called redlining (Monkkonen, 1988; Schill and Wachter, 1995; Wilson, 1996). Redlining practices were heavily slanted toward promoting suburban loans, racially discriminatory (as explained above), and led to the major disinvestment in mortgage capital in cities (Monkkonen, 1988). Although the FHA was created to aid working class families, very few African Americans received FHA loans (Gotham, 2000a). Essentially, African Americans were restricted to poor communities with very few opportunities to own homes.

The passage of Section 235 of the 1968 Federal Housing Act was meant to increase homeownership among African Americans by funding privately owned agencies designed to lend to minorities. This program actually further intensified the problems as African Americans with means took advantage of this act, but moved to neighborhoods that were in racial transition (mixed neighborhoods that were turning black) further isolating poor residents (Wilson, 1987; Gotham, 2000b).

Thus, federal housing policy contributed to the inequality of place. The impact of this inequality has had a staggering impact on poor African American communities. The concentration of poverty has led to ghetto conditions in many neighborhoods, which was
the primary reason given by residents for their intentions to move away. Forces external
to these poor neighborhoods such as changing economic conditions and federal policy
have isolated poor people into geographic enclaves of poverty and hopelessness thereby
creating pools of “dissatisfied nonmovers”, as seen in this study.

Policy makers concerned with the rebuilding of Woodlawn should focus on the
retention of residents who have a stake in improving residential quality of life in the
neighborhood and attracting new residents with the same sentiment. Homeownership is
regarded as a retaining force. The residents most likely to stay own their home. Many of
these homes are substandard properties of limited value, some of them should be con-
demned. At the same time, homeowner retention in low-income areas is important be-
cause these residents tend to possess attributes that improve the social and infrastructural
health of their communities. Homeowners are motivated to strengthen their investment
and improve their neighborhood. Due to their monetary investment in the community,
homeowners are more likely to be interested in the elimination of negative elements such
as prostitution, hard narcotics, and litter. They are likely to support projects that rejuve-
nate their community, such as street repaving, the erecting of a community center,
neighborhood watch programs, or efforts to spruce up vacant lots and alleys. Homeown-
ers are more likely to promote norms of informal social control, a method of internal po-
licing common in middle and upper middle class neighborhoods. They are also more
likely to promote what Taylor refers to as territorial functioning (Taylor, 1988)

The failure of Section 235 of the 1968 Federal Housing Act and subsequent poli-
cies such as the Equal Credit Act of 1974, the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act of 1975,
and the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 to improve homeownership in low-
income communities is due to their reliance on market-driven private industry to provide fair housing opportunities for poor African Americans in low-income communities (Gotham, 2000b, Freeman and Hamilton, 2002). Several other reforms have been enacted since the 1980’s with limited success when considering ghetto residents. Low-income residents with poor credit and limited knowledge present risks that many private agencies are not willing to overlook; therefore, supply-side policy is ineffective in high-risk situations. On the other hand, demand-side policy takes into account the unique circumstances of ghetto residents. The analysis of why people decided to move reveals that many Woodlawn residents are seeking an opportunity to own a home (See Table 5.3a under “plans for a new house”). It should be remembered that the original intent of the FHA was to provide homeownership opportunities to marginal buyers who were facing tenuous economic circumstances and to decrease foreclosures. Poor African Americans were excluded from such opportunities during that time.

What would be a better approach by the FHA in terms of generating homeownership in low-income African American communities? Federal and local governments should be proactive in establishing loan programs for poor residents who wish to buy homes in low-income communities. They would carry low-interest rates with flexible payment schedules. Government lending has proved successful in the area of education where low-income individuals can receive financing through federal grants or loans. The United States Department of Education appropriated 19,226,975 dollars for financial aid in 2006 and is estimated to spend 14,487,735 dollars in 2008 in the form of loans and grants to assists low-income citizens (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The United Stated Department of Agriculture regularly loans money to struggling farmers or to help
farmers who are just starting out. Beginning farmers can receive loans of up to 40 percent of the appraised or purchase price of a farm with a 4 percent interest rate on a 15 year mortgage (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2006). These demand side lending practices help individuals with limited resources acquire important components of vertical mobility in America: property, income, and education. These three components work together to improve quality of life. The importance of owning property has already been discussed. Income is needed to acquire property and maintain the residence. Formal education positions the resident to make informed decisions and provides marketable skills that translate into higher incomes.

*Improving Rates of Homeownership among the Poor and Attracting Middle Class Residents*

The need for federal demand-side loans for low-income citizens to purchase homes in ghetto communities is exemplified by the inability of local housing authorities to administer resources to those in the most need. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does have programs for low-income residents, but African Americans in extremely poor communities rarely benefit from HUD programs filtered through inept local housing authorities (Schill and Wachter, 1995). Consequently, homeownership rates, community redevelopment plans, and home remodeling efforts continue to bypass many ghetto neighborhoods (Schill and Wachter, 1995). For example, among the financial beneficiaries of the HUD home rehabilitation grants for low-income residents in 2006, 54.94 percent were white and only 29.36 percent were African American (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2006). Through ethnographical observations of Woodlawn, it becomes evident that substantial resources do not often reach ex-
tremely poor African Americans living in blighted communities (Hannon, 2005). These observations indicate that the housing stock has suffered because of limited maintenance by current residents as well as white and middle class African American flight which led to neighborhood disinvestment. Improving housing stock is a critical component to neighborhood revitalization. Poor housing stock is a visible aspect of any community that lowers home values, discourages new residents or business owners from purchasing real estate in the community, and lowers neighborhood morale. Demand-side loans can help current or new residents secure funds for improving housing stock. Moreover, special rates on loans can be made available to developers who work to improve the housing stock in low-income communities. Further, knowledge of how to secure existing resources like the HUD home rehabilitation grants mentioned above should be extended to common people in need of such help.

Moreover, programs that provide loans for low-income residents to purchase homes in their communities must be complimented with programs that diversify the neighborhood according to class. The open-ended responses in Table 5.3a reveal that Woodlawn residents are displeased with the high level of neighborhood disorder, the lack of amenities, and poor housing quality. Given these data, policy makers are urged to examine initiatives that attract middle class residents to low-income communities. An influx of middle class homeowners will increase the local tax base which is beneficial for public goods such as schools. The higher incomes of these residents attract amenities such as shopping centers, grocery stores, and banks. These residents also bring a value-system that places high priority on education, territorial functioning, and participation in
neighborhood associations. Furthermore, middle class residents often have bridging capital resources that can be translated into community-level assets.

Given that middle class residents often seek the prestige, amenities, and security of a quality neighborhood, how are such residents attracted to low-income areas? Incentive packages must be offered to this group to encourage mobility into poor communities. The combination of low interest rates on FHA regulated mortgages, a reduction or elimination of student loans, and remodeling vouchers to improve housing stock are examples of such incentives to attract middle class residents. Provisions can be put in place to ensure that the recipients of these incentives live in the home and not use it as a rental property.

Community Economic Development

Community economic development (CED) is a social change strategy that arose in the 1990’s to address the issues of poverty and declining neighborhoods (Cummings, 2001). In terms of policy, CED was intended to replace Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society welfare policies of the 1960’s. The policy format is designed to stimulate economic growth and “community empowerment” in low-income communities by increasing federal and private investments (Cummings, 2001). Current CED programs are politically engaged and promote intercommunity coalitions (Cummings, 2001).

On the community level, CED organizations emphasize a model that identifies “competitive advantages of conducting business in inner city areas and structuring the proper incentives to lure reluctant enterprises into neglected markets” (Cummings, 2001). CED relies on innovation and preexisting assets in the community, such as labor to attract
investors. Investments manifest as economic gains in the form of employment opportunities and capital improvements (Cummings, 2001).

CED strategies include the development of community organizations with an interest in neighborhood growth and development. CED organizations receive funds from state and national governmental sources which are used to attract neighborhood businesses, provide workshops for local entrepreneurs intending to operate businesses in the community, and develop real estate projects that include shopping centers, grocery stores, and industrial parks. Businesses receiving public subsidies must direct economic benefits to low-income communities. CED organizations empower low-income residents to become active participants in local economic and social improvements by providing them employment through the businesses they help attract (Cummings, 2001). Furthermore, these organizations often provide micro loans for local entrepreneurs. In effect, these organizations act as mediating forces between government and business and between business and the residents of the community. The goal of many CED organizations is to increase the percentage of local residents working in or close to the neighborhood (Immergluck, 1998).

CED organizations also work to develop declining neighborhoods by engaging residents in the political process, requiring that businesses receiving government subsidies give money to the community for capital improvement, and by developing infrastructure (Cummins, 2001). Because of their focus on community-level organizations and empowerment strategies for local residents, CED programs are endorsed by scholar-activists who understand the importance of providing low-income residents with a link to resources that can improve their community.
Youth and Senior Adults

Another factor contributing to neighborhood disorder in low-income communities is youth violence and delinquency (Wilson, 1996). Low-income neighborhoods often have a lack of positive role models to reinforce positive norms, an influx of participation in informal economic activity, and a large degree of hopelessness among young residents (Wilson, 1996). Such communities would benefit from policies that require local and state governments to set aside funds for youth activity centers. Each center would be operated by a scholar-activist and staffed by local youth. These centers would be responsible for producing research intended to improve its community and applying mentoring to local youth. Youth activity centers would focus on gang reorganization, positive identity development, job training, and individual prosocial development.

The Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ), founded in 1970 and operated by scholar-activist Jeffrey Canada is an ideal type for youth activity centers. It covers a 60-block area in Harlem and offers a charter school, adult educational courses, and numerous youth activities. Through its social services, recreation, and educational programs, the HCZ seeks to rebuild “the very fabric of community life” (HCZ, 2007). The staff is composed mostly of youth from the Harlem area where they develop work ethics and learn the value of contributing to community progress. The Harlem Children Zone receives over 43 million dollars in government contributions and maintains well over 68 million dollars in assets which enables it to serve approximately 13,000 low-income residents including 9,500 youth (HCZ, 2007). The charter school, Promise Academy, is the centerpiece of the HCZ where children receive academic training along with life skills that build self-esteem and vision. It maintains a 6 to 1 student-teacher ratio and was paid
for primarily through private donations. Canada is an ardent supporter of education for low-income residents as a means of accessing upward mobility. He argues that “there is no solution for dealing with the issues of poverty, for dealing with the issues of crime in this country except education. If our schools don’t work, then the poor children in this country are simply not going to succeed” (CNN, 2006).

Programs are also needed for Woodlawn’s senior adult population. According to the logistic regression analysis, age is the most robust factor determining intentions to move. Senior adults may feel even more isolated in the community due to the amount of crime which limits outdoor travel and the high level of transience among neighbors which prevents familiarization. Woodlawn would benefit from social programs for the elderly designed to increase their involvement in the community. Such programs would require participating residents to be at least 50 years of age and would pay a stipend for work done either at a local school, community center, or neighborhood association.

An example of a preexisting program for senior citizens is the Positive Maturity project operated by the United Way. Begun in 1970, Positive Maturity offers a range of activities for senior adults. One of these programs is the foster grandparent project where participating senior adults function primarily as teacher’s aids in various inner city schools (Positive Maturity, 2007). The Foster Grandparent program simultaneously accomplishes two vital tasks: 1) keeping senior adults active and 2) providing a format for them to be involved in the community. It is recommended that increased public funding in the form of grants be put forth to support and expand programs for senior adults.
Summary

The Discussion chapter began by providing an overview of the findings in terms of their relevance to movement decisions within the context of life in the ghetto. The findings from each of the analyses suggest that residential dissatisfaction should not be used to predict movement behavior because background factors such as income, age, homeownership, inadequate living space, and neighborhood disorder resonate with residence enough to directly influence movement intentions. Movement behavior is shown to be profoundly affected by the ghetto conditions in which residents live. Taking this into account, this analysis uses the findings as a basis to consider policy to reduce the challenges of high poverty ghettos.

National, state, and local policy initiatives are recommended to improve quality of life by retaining positive residents and decreasing neighborhood disorder. It is suggested that an increase in homeownership opportunities will lower transience and thereby stabilize the neighborhood. An explanation is given of how unfair housing policy limited the amount of opportunity in African American communities which helped intensify the concentration of poverty in inner cities. Solutions are given on how to repair the damage created from these practices. One such solution is adding socioeconomic diversity to Woodlawn by using economic incentives to attract middle class residents to the community and to improve area housing stock (South and Crowder, 1997; Cummings, 2001).

Community economic development organizations are cited as a good way to stimulate economic growth in urban low-income neighborhoods. These organizations exist on the grassroots level and function as a bridge between external resources and residents. They use public funds to attract businesses and development to low income com-
munities. Civil rights leaders and scholar-activists endorse CED initiatives because they operate within the community and they empower low-income residents to become politically and socially active. CED organizations help residents become active in developing their own communities by giving them easy access to and ownership of these organizations.

Given that much of the disorder in neighborhoods like Woodlawn involves youngsters, it is suggested that policy be directed toward establishing youth activity centers. Youth activity centers provide positive modeling for young people along with education programs, mentoring, and activities that foster positive development among young people. The Harlem Children Zone was highlighted as an example of an existing program with similar goals. It is also suggested that funds be directed toward the creation or expansion of programs that keep senior adults involved in the community. Many of these adults do not intend on moving from Woodlawn and could play a major role in local institutions such as schools, day cares, and neighborhood associations.

Study Limitations

The limitations of this dissertation primarily consist of data restrictions. The data for this analysis dealt with resident’s intentions to move away from Woodlawn. In order to obtain a more complete picture of movement behavior in low-income communities, data should be gathered on actual movement giving consideration to questions regarding actual movement and destination. Beyond that, it can be used to explore additional constraints on movement imposed by poverty and race. A decision to move is not real until actualized. Poverty constrains such decisions further. Such information gives research-
ers and policy makers a base to expand upon when conceptualizing programs and laws to improve the area. The study is also limited by the nature of the cross-sectional data. Due to this, patterns concerning movement behavior cannot be explored in depth, nor can causal relationship be established.

Future research should employ a longitudinal research design which will allow researchers to track the movement behavior of participants over a substantial period of time. This would not only include keeping track of actual movement, but also the location of where respondents moved to better understand whether the moves were lateral (from one ghetto to another ghetto) or vertical (out of the ghetto into a working or middle class community).

Future Studies

Borrowing from Fitzpatrick and LaGory (2000), later projects should attempt to explain how the problems of place, namely high poverty ghetto residence, impact an entire metropolitan area. As this analysis has shown, place influences quality of life. Unhealthy places - characterized by neighborhood disinvestment, decreased territorial functioning, crime, poor housing stock, and residential apathy – are developed through structural mechanisms and they negatively impact residents of these communities. Future research should explore solutions to the problems associated with place that lower quality of life. Specifically, new models can be tested that provide potential answers to the question of how to coalesce structural forces with individual efforts to remove the destructive forces associated with the ghetto. This would include a model hypothesizing that certain factors, such as demand-side lending, government home-improvement grants, CED, and
programs for the youth and elderly directly affect neighborhood revitalization. In this model, homeownership operates as a mediating variable.

Furthermore, future research should be concerned with developing health interventions that reduce the risks and hazards associated with place. These interventions will be based on models promoting collective efficacy to reduce environmental risks and hazards that compromise health. Such models predict that in metropolitan areas, the strength of neighborhood associations influences the presence of place-based health hazards, such as factories that emit toxic fumes and elements of neighborhood disorder, including crime. Implications of this research would impact the national policy agenda which is currently concerned with such issues as immigration, poverty, and the effectiveness of existing urban renewal programs.
REFERENCES:


APPENDIX

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

UAB THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM
Institutional Review Board for Human Use

Form 4: IRB Approval Form
Identification and Certification of Research
Projects Involving Human Subjects

UAB's Institutional Review Boards for Human Use (IRBs) have an approved Federalwide Assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). The UAB IRBs are also in compliance with 21 CFR Parts 50 and 56 and ICH GCP Guidelines. The Assurance became effective on November 24, 2003 and expires on February 14, 2009. The Assurance number is FWA00005960.

Principal Investigator: HANNON III, LONNIE
Co-Investigator(s):
Protocol Number: 0961026001
Protocol Title: The Decision Among African Americans to Move from the Ghetto

The above project was reviewed on 11/16/04. The review was conducted in accordance with UAB's Assurance of Compliance approved by the Department of Health and Human Services. This project qualifies as an exemption as defined in 45CFR46.101, paragraph 44.

This project received EXEMPT review.
IRB Approval Date: 11/16/04
Date IRB Approval Issued: 11/16/04

Sheila Moore, CIP
Director, Office of the Institutional Review Board for Human Use (IRB)

Investigators please note:

IRB approval is given for one year unless otherwise noted. For projects subject to annual review research activities may not continue past the one year anniversary of the IRB approval date.

Any modifications in the study methodology, protocol and/or consent form must be submitted for review and approval to the IRB prior to implementation.

Adverse Events and/or unanticipated risks to subjects or others at UAB or other participating institutions must be reported promptly to the IRB.

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