

Social Capital and Social Integration: The Case of the Barrio in San Antonio, Texas

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Studies suggest that racial and ethnic minorities exhibit lower levels of social capital. Using survey data from the general adult population in Bexar County (primarily San Antonio), Texas, including questions from the Saguaro Seminar's Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey Short Form 2002, the authors examine social capital among racial/ethnic groups and the question of whether social capital impacts community participation. Overall, the findings diverge from the literature and indicate social integration and perceptions of community divisions by race/ethnicity as better explanations of social capital than race/ethnicity alone. African American and Hispanic respondents, for example, did not differ significantly from others in social capital, while predominately Spanish-speaking Hispanics, Westside (barrio) Hispanics, and those who perceived the community divided by race/ethnicity exhibited less social capital. Conversely, socially integrated individuals (of higher socioeconomic status, with positive perceptions of happiness) demonstrated greater social capital. As far as community participation, neither measures for social capital nor for Hispanics generally or Spanish speaking Hispanics were statistically significant, while measures for African Americans, education level, and religiosity had positive impacts.

Is racial and ethnic diversity a civic virtue that cities should nourish (i.e., our differences make us stronger) or the death knell of social capital and something that cities should discourage (i.e., we are all Americans and emphasizing our differences only divides us)? Robert Putnam (2007) and the growing social capital literature seemingly link diversity to the concomitant decline of civic life and a growing social isolation or “hunker(ing) down” within cities and communities (149; see also Costa and Kahn 2001, 2003; Hero 2003; and Rice and Steele 2001).¹ Putnam’s contention (1995a, 2000) is straightforward: Since the mid 1960s, political trust, social cohesion and civic activity in this country have declined because of a decrease in neighborhood connections (e.g., *gemeinschaft*; see Tönnies 1957), and continued erosion in these areas is detrimental to our democratic society. At the broadest level, social capital theorists hold that if people are socially, politically, and economically integrated within and among elements of a community, then individually and collectively they can work together to solve their problems and maintain a functional and trusting community.

But is diversity or community heterogeneity directly linked to mistrust and declining civic participation? Does context—urban, geographic or socioeconomic—really matter? Are there competing attitudinal and demographic factors within a community, for example, that equally matter, and, if so, what kinds of urban or community public policies might address the issues of social capital?

The following is a case study of social capital in Bexar County (primarily San Antonio), Texas that utilizes items from the Saguaro Seminar’s *Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey Short Form 2002* as part of an annual community survey. We tested whether or not community diversity impacts social capital and, in turn, how social capital impacts civic participation within a diverse urban setting. Moreover, data from this case allowed us to test the effects of a various diversity indicators against attitudes and perceptions about social capital and civic participation within the community.

San Antonio is an ideal setting for examining social capital relationships among different racial and ethnic groups, as well as by geographic location. San Antonio is one of the poorest, most ethnically fragmented and segregated cities in the nation (Iceland, Weinberg, and Steinmetz 2002; Alesina, Baqir, and Easterly 1999).¹ Among the ten largest U.S. cities, it is the only one with a Hispanic majority, with Latinos (mostly Mexican Americans) representing roughly 58% of the population (and growing). As with

¹ London’s *Financial Times* also quoted Putnam as saying, “The more diverse a community is, the less likely its inhabitants are to trust anyone—from the next-door neighbor to the mayor.” While Putnam contends that he was quoted out of context, the executive summary for the Saguaro Seminar (2001), which Putnam co-founded, reiterates the point: “The more diverse a community in our study, the less likely its residents are to trust other people...to connect with other people...to participate in politics...[and] to connect across class lines” (5-6). See also Lloyd’s “Study Paints Bleak Picture of Ethnic Diversity” (*Financial Times*, October 8, 2006) and Goldsmith’s “Prof. Disputes Paper’s Portrayal” (*The Harvard Crimson*, October 26, 2006).

¹ In terms of segregation, San Antonio received a dissimilarity index score of .51 on a scale of .0 to 1.0 (Iceland, Weinberg, and Steinmetz 2002). Using the ethnic fragmentation index (Alesina et al. 1999), the probability that two randomly drawn people from San Antonio belong to different ethnic groups is .50. In the Alesina et al. (1999) study of 1,020 cities with populations of 25,000 and above, the median ethnic fragmentation was .29 (1,260).

many U.S. cities, an inner city/business core, a slow-growing older residential area, and expanding suburban areas define San Antonio geographically. Locally, the city is often viewed in quadrants: the west and south sides are largely Mexican American; the East side African American; and the north side mainly non-Hispanic white, with racial and ethnic minorities of higher socioeconomic status gravitating to this area for perceived better retail sectors, better schools, and newer bedroom communities.

Like many Latino neighborhoods, San Antonio's "Westside" is the site of traditional Mexican and Mexican American *barrios*, residential areas characterized by dense housing and, compared to other areas of the city, relatively higher rates of crime, poverty, and unemployment and lower educational attainment and economic development. Among other groups, non-Hispanic whites comprise about 34% of the population, African Americans about 6%, and Asian Americans approximately 2%. Within this context, non-Hispanic whites, while a numeric minority, are the dominant socioeconomic status group. Given this backdrop, we examined social capital and civic participation within the larger, more diverse community and compared the results to those for the more geographically isolated and homogeneous Westside.²

This article proceeds straightforwardly: First, we review the relevant literature on social capital in general and social capital and ethnic minorities in particular. Second, we identify the levels of social capital in San Antonio. Third, we highlight significant variations in the levels of social capital among the demographic groups that make up the general community. Next, we compare social capital between barrio residents and the larger, more diverse community and assess the impact of social capital on civic participation for both areas. In the final section we present our conclusions as well as implications for further research.

Literature Review

Contemporary analyses of social capital can be traced in sociology to Pierre Bourdieu (1985) and James Coleman (1988) and more recently in political science to the works of Robert Putnam (1995a; 1995b).³ Social capital refers to the potential resources inherent in levels of social relationships and social networks among individuals and within communities and societies (Bourdieu 1985; Coleman 1988; Putnam 1995a; 1995b; 2000; Lin 2001; Jacobs 1961). Both Bourdieu and Coleman focused on social capital as a resource embedded within social structures that facilitates effective individual and community actions to meet shared objectives (Bourdieu 1985, 248; Coleman 1988, s98; also Lin 2001; Gittell and Vidal 1998).

Social capital is also discussed under the themes of civic virtue (e.g., responsibility and trustworthiness); levels of civic engagement (voting, volunteering, associational memberships); reciprocity (mutual help within a community); and community building (see Bourdieu 1985, 248-250). In his study of political culture in Italy, for example, Putnam (1993) concluded that social capital sustains civic identity, participation, shared commitments, and the capacity of the government or society to

² We recognize the inability to generalize to other largely Mexican American communities like Los Angeles or Houston. Nonetheless, we believe the case approach and the use of empirical data illuminate important dimensions of social capital within diverse communities.

³ Some scholars have found elements of social capital in DeToqueville's emphasis on free association and in Veblen's notion of "intangible assets." See Woolcock (1998, 193-197).

function effectively (see also Hetherington 1998 and Jacobs 1961). Fuller and Hannum (2002) described social capital as “an elastic bundle of constructs—expectations, cultural bonds, expressions of trust and reciprocal support—that illuminate how membership and situational norms come to vary in strength” (11).

Two elements of social capital are social trust and social networks.⁴ Putnam’s Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America,⁵ whose members conducted the *Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey* in 2000,⁶ put social trust at the core of social capital (2001). Social or generalized trust refers to the extent that one trusts other people (Saguaro 2001; Uslaner 2000). Trust is also associated with social cohesion, economic performance and transactions, and public participation (Sztompka 1999; Paxton 1999). Societies where trust is high are also more innovative, more likely to invest in human capital, have more confidence in government, and more likely to perceive policy initiatives as reliable (Coleman 1988; Brehm and Rahn 1997, 1003; Knack and Keefer 1997). On the other hand, Uslaner and Brown (2005) found trust linked to communal participation rather than to political participation.⁷

Social trust is also linked to social networks or associations that enable coordination for obtaining information and maintaining norms of reciprocity. Informal networks include family, friends, and work-associated ties. Formal networks include organizations, clubs, political parties, and other forms of secondary associations. Putnam (1995a) distinguished between bridging and bonding network elements. Bridging (generalized social capital) is the capacity to span social cleavages (i.e., religious, ethnic, and political) between communities (inter-group relations) and is useful for obtaining social or economic information and improvements. Bonding (particularized social capital) reflects social cohesion (intra-group relations) and its benefits (sanctioning norms and increased trust) and occurs between individuals with similar demographic characteristics or among those considered equals (family members or individuals with a shared identity) within a community (Woolcock 1998; Gittel and Vidal 1998; Paxton 1999; Briggs 2003; World Bank Group 2003).

Typically, studies of social capital include comparisons of individual and community groups’ layers of network channels, social norms, and social trust (Coleman 1988; Putnam 1995b). Briggs (2003), for example, noted that urbanites are generally less trusting than their socially homogenous suburban and rural counterparts. Knack and Keefer (1997) found that trust and civic cooperation are stronger in countries that are more homogenous across class and ethnicity. Other studies indicate that access to social capital resources differs according to individual and community characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, religiosity, income, negative attitudes, and educational

⁴ Other elements include civic (voluntary and associational memberships) and political participation (voting, attending political meetings). Trust at the aggregate level can include trust of “generalized others” and of “institutions” (e.g., schools, government).

⁵ See Putnam 2000, 501. Information on the Saguaro Seminar is available online at <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/saguaro>.

⁶ The study was based on a national sample of 3,000 individuals and representative samples from forty communities across the nation, an additional 26,200 respondents. See http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/scc_bench.html.

⁷ Other studies link high levels of social trust within a society to economic development (Putnam 1993; Coleman 1988; Carroll and Stanfield 2003; Woolcock 1998).

attainment (Baum and Ziersch 2003; Brehm and Rahn 1997; Brown and Uslaner 2002; Lin 2000). Clearly, social capital opportunities reflect social stratification features (Lin 2000). As economic inequality increases, trust and civic engagement tend to decrease by age, ethnicity, race, and socioeconomic status. Individuals with more resources have greater access to social networks that reinforce and assist in increasing their individual resources. Portes and Landolt (1996), for example, argued that in many poor areas, people rely on their social and family ties for economic survival, and that in poor communities there is considerable bonding social capital.

Racial/Ethnic Minorities, Inequalities, and Social Capital

Generally, communities characterized by racial, ethnic, religious, or political heterogeneity have been shown to be less trusting if not “distrusting” (Alesina and La Ferrara 2002). The Saguaro Seminar’s executive summary (2001) notes that “the more diverse a community in our study, the less likely its residents are to trust other people...to connect with other people...to participate in politics...[and] to connect across class lines” (5-6). It further states that “blacks/Hispanics are less than half as likely to trust other people in their neighborhoods compared to whites (56% of whites trusted people in their neighborhoods v. 21% for blacks and 19% for Hispanics)” (6). Similarly, Chávez and Fraga (2003), using the Community Benchmark Survey data, reported that “Latinos have the lowest levels of trust when compared to African Americans and especially as compared to whites” (14; see also de la Garza et al. 1992). Costa and Khan (2003) also noted that several studies since 1997 have concluded that heterogeneity (diversity) reduces civic engagement.⁸

Social capital elements also vary by race and ethnicity. Briggs (2003) and Granovetter (1985), for example, found significant differences among demographic groups in “bridging.” Briggs (2003) noted that, in general, people in racially diverse metropolitan areas, who are educated, older, married, or white participate in bridging social networks. Briggs also found similarities in bridging for Latinos but not for African Americans, suggesting a class divide within the black community, “with higher status blacks somewhat more integrated at the neighborhood level (across metros) and lower-status ones quite segregated from white neighborhoods and bridging groups” (16). For Briggs, level of education and being in the labor force or in school were also associated with bridging. Granovetter (1985) noted that white-collar workers are able to obtain employment through weak ties that bridge different social groups. On the other hand, as Baum and Ziersch (2003) and Briggs (2003) indicated, the poor, racial and ethnic minorities, and women are often less able to build social links needed to improve access to other resources.

On another level, using measures of commitment to community involvement and problem solving, Segura, Pachon, and Woods (2001) found that support for the view “that individuals should help the community” was high among the four Latino

⁸ Helliwell (2003) suggested that this negative relationship is a product of government quality and governmental policy, and when measured as such, ethnic diversity is no longer a significant predictor of social capital. Moreover, Michelson (2001) and Vega et al. (1998) found that Latinos’ incorporation into the dominant society is detrimental to their political participation, identification, and health. Alesina et al. (1999) also noted the consistent negative association of racial fragmentation and the distribution of public goods. See also Hero (2003) and Rice and Steel (2001).

communities they surveyed (97). Garcia and Arce (1988) also found that differences in organizational involvement for Latino joiners and non-joiners rested with socioeconomic status and length of exposure to U.S. society. They added that political integration of Latinos was both uneven and variable.

When applied to African Americans, social capital measures also vary. In their study of Mobile, Alabama, Emig, Hesse, and Fisher (1996) found that African Americans exhibited more trust, efficacy, and involvement in the community than whites. Bobo and Gilliam (1990) suggested that in communities with greater and sustained political empowerment (or “incorporation,” per Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984, 384), African Americans have more political trust, efficacy, and participation than their counterparts in communities with less political empowerment (see also Portney and Berry 1997 and Shingles 1981).

One issue that has been under-emphasized in social capital discussions is the presumption that social capital is an exclusively positive attribute. While Paxton (1999) and others (e.g., Gittel and Vidal 1998; Portes and Landolt 1996) have acknowledged that differing levels of social capital among individuals and groups can exist and may not necessarily be positive, this point is often lost in aggregate analyses of social capital in cities or states. Paxton emphasized that social capital within a single group does not necessarily translate into social capital at community (or inter-group) levels, or that it is positively related to the social capital of other groups. Consequently, intra-group trust within a cohesive neighborhood, for instance, may benefit trust within groups but does not lead to generalized trust between groups (Brown and Uslaner 2002; Soroka, Helliwell, and Johnston 2003; Newton 1997). However, these analyses may be forcing the issue by using intra- and inter-groups with the same generalized trust. It is possible that different dynamics are at play in neighborhoods or within groups, such that particularized trust cannot be adequately measured as generalized trust in a larger community or even at the metropolitan level.

A related limitation of previous research is that examinations of social capital tend to rely on either individual or aggregate measures of diversity (i.e., percentages of Latino or other racial/ethnic minorities) without fully examining variations within minority communities or the impacts of attitudes and perceptions within the larger community. Certainly, as the literature suggests, we expect to find differences across aggregate attributes; but should we not also expect systematic and significant differences among the subgroups within a community—racial and ethnic minority groups, for example? And do attitudes and perceptions about the community context differ across groups? Other than Uslaner (2000), who argued that it is not ethnic or racial diversity that matters for trust but ethnic segregation,⁹ there is a paucity of literature about these questions.

Most important perhaps is the question, *What is “social capital” really measuring?* If “social capital” is “everything,” then, to borrow from Wildavsky (1973), “maybe it’s nothing.”¹⁰ The literature focuses almost exclusively on social capital as a

⁹ As found in endnote 10 of Uslaner and Brown (2000, 892), which quotes Uslaner’s chapter, “Trust as a Moral Value” from *Handbook of Social Capital* (Catiglione, van Deth, and Wolleb 2008, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press).

¹⁰ Wildavsky (1973) focused on the emergence of planning as a discipline.

series of dependent variables: trust, social ties, and networks. But are trust, social ties and networks different elements of social capital in the aggregate or are they different measures of it? Might we find the same variations among traditionally marginalized groups using a single dimension of social capital? As such, differing levels of incorporation, in this case Latino incorporation, could be associated with differing levels of social capital and their association need not necessarily be positive (Leigh 2006).

Absent in the literature are substantive findings about why differences in social capital in a diverse community might matter. Is there a relationship between social capital elements and civic or community participation, for example? Also, does minority status in a community make a difference when the racial or ethnic group is a numeric majority? In such a case, do majority ethnic minority communities fit previous findings of social capital differences among racial and ethnic minorities? For example, how does being a Hispanic in a Hispanic-majority city impact one's social capital? How does living in a racially segregated neighborhood or traditional barrio impact one's social capital? Furthermore, how does being a member of a different racial/ethnic minority group (e.g., African American) impact one's social capital in a Hispanic-majority city?

This study's aim was to test key relationships found in the literature, focusing specifically on a single dimension of social capital that incorporates general trust, ethnic and racial trust, and social ties measures. As in previous research, we expected significant variations in social capital based on socioeconomic status and demographic characteristics (race, ethnicity, sex, income, age, education, and marital status). We used multiple regression to analyze social capital, focusing on individual attributes, attitudes, and perceptions. We compared socioeconomic measures (e.g., education, family income) to demographic measures (age, race/ethnicity, sex) and attitudes and perceptions about the community context to explain variations in social capital. We then examined whether social capital elements contribute to variations in community participation.

Given the state of the literature, we expect, for example, that varying degrees of social capital within a city or community would be more a question of residents' social integration (e.g., married, employed full time, having higher education attainment, residing longer in the community, being religious) and less a question of diversity tied to aggregate measures of race and ethnicity. Individuals with positive attitudes of health and happiness and perceptions of the community's social cohesion, for example, should possess higher levels of social capital. The opposite should also hold: Racial and ethnic minorities with low educational attainment and low family incomes, individuals who conduct their primary daily activities using Spanish rather than English, and barrio residents should exhibit lower levels of integration and social capital. Finally, by controlling for Westside Hispanic respondents compared to non-Westside Hispanic respondents (i.e., barrio Hispanics versus non-barrio Hispanics), we also expected to find empirically identifiable differences in social capital within the larger Latino community.

Methods

Data for this study came from the San Antonio Survey 2003 ("SAS 2003"), a random probability survey of the general population of adults in Bexar County (San Antonio), Texas.¹¹ The SAS 2003 consists of a split sample design of 422 responses from

¹¹ The SAS 2003 was conducted October 12-28, 2003 by University of Texas at San Antonio students in collaborating research methods courses and the university's Culture and Policy Institute.

individuals in Bexar County and 141 responses from individuals living on San Antonio's West Side for 563 total adult respondents from the metropolitan area. The SAS 2003 included nineteen of forty-eight questions from the Saguaro Seminar's *Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey Short Form 2002*.¹² Responses were weighted using 2000 Bexar County census data to reflect the county's racial, ethnic, and sex distributions. The survey response rate was 26.0%.¹³

As Table 1 shows, we employed eight social capital measures to create a single index of *social capital*. They consisted of

- two social trust measures operationalized as generalized trust (i.e., "Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted...?") and trust of neighbors (i.e., "... would you say that you can trust [people in your neighborhood] a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?");
- three racial trust measures for trust of whites, African Americans, and Hispanics which excluded respondents' race or ethnicity; and
- three social network measures to ascertain how frequently respondents had been in the home of a person of a different race, or had the person in their homes; how frequently they had been in the home of someone from a different neighborhood or had the person in their homes; and how often they had friends over to their homes. Response choices were "Frequently/Often," "Sometimes," "Seldom," and "Never."

Higher values on the index equaled higher levels of social capital. Cronbach's alpha was .78 for this scale.

To examine the impacts of social capital against traditional socioeconomic and demographic measures, we also created a scaled dependent variable of *community participation*. This index included measures of

- public participation (i.e., how frequently in the past twelve months had respondents attended a public meeting in which there was discussion of town or school affairs);

Of the responses, 28 were partial interviews—respondents stopped answering questions before the end of the survey—and 535 were completed. The standard error for the entire sample is +/- 4.1% at the 95% confidence level. The university purchased the sampling frame from Survey Sampling International of Fairfield, CT, which generates sets of randomly selected replicates of listed phone numbers (each replicate is a random sample of one hundred phone numbers) for a total of 3,840 numbers. Respondents who answered the phone in Spanish had the option of conducting the interview in Spanish or English; 8% of all the survey interviews were in Spanish.

¹² See <http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/saguaro/pdfs/socialcapitalshortform.pdf>. Appendix A lists the specific survey questions used in this study.

¹³ While this response rate is low, we believe that these data provide an ample sample for preliminary tests of social capital and community diversity. A systematic analysis of the unweighted respondents by race, ethnicity, and sex, for example, indicated that the sample was a good demographic representation of Bexar County. Moreover, after systematic analysis, Keeter et al. (2000) found very few statistically significant differences between estimates from two surveys with differing response rates (one with a 36% response rate and the other with a 60% rate). Thus, the effect of non-response on survey estimates is as critical (Fowler 2002, 44). Given the scope of this study, we felt justified in proceeding.

- organizational participation (i.e., how frequently in the past twelve months had respondents attended any club or organizational meeting (not including meetings for work)?); and
- volunteerism (i.e., how frequently in the past twelve months had respondents volunteered?).

The values range for these individual variables were 0 = Never; 1 = Seldom; 2 = Sometimes; and 3 = Frequently/Often. Higher values on the index equaled higher levels of community participation. Cronbach's alpha was .65 for this scale.

Independent variables included *race/ethnicity* (one variable dichotomized as 1 = African Americans and the other as 1 = Hispanics), *Westside Hispanic residents* (dichotomized as 1 = Westside Hispanic respondents), and a measure for *Spanish speaker* (dichotomized as 1 = Spanish speaker). As *Westside Hispanic residents* differ significantly in family income and levels of education, this measure also allowed for an examination of social capital comparing San Antonio Hispanics in general against a geographically segregated segment of the Hispanic population.¹⁴ The *Spanish speaker* variable measured Spanish monolingualism. A *social cohesion* measure was also included using a question that asked respondents if they believed that San Antonio is a community "divided on the basis of race and ethnicity" (dichotomized as 1 = agreement). These latter variables (*Westside Hispanic residents*, *Spanish speaker*, and *social cohesion*) measured elements of social integration. We expect that individuals who live in the barrio or exclusively or predominately speak Spanish or perceive the community as divided are more socially isolated from the larger community and thus may exhibit lower levels of social capital and civic engagement. We also expect, based on the literature, that individuals with higher socioeconomic status (i.e., educational attainment and family income) or levels of integration (i.e., years in the community and marital, employment and income status) would exhibit stronger levels of social capital, and that females with these characteristics would also participate to a greater extent in the local community.

Control variables included socioeconomic and other demographic measures such as *educational attainment* (1 = less than high school; 2 = high school; 3 = some college; 4 = bachelor's degree and 5 = graduate degree), *age* (interval), *sex* (dichotomized as 1 = female), *years lived in San Antonio* (interval) and *marital status* (dichotomized as 1 = married), *employment status* (dichotomized as 1 = employed full time), and *family income* (interval). Other control variables used as measures of social integration included *religiosity*, measured by frequency of attendance at religious services (i.e., never, at holidays, a few times a year, monthly, weekly or more); *happiness* (i.e., very happy, happy, not very happy, not happy at all); and *health* (i.e., excellent, good, fair, poor). While we treated religious service attendance as an interval level measure, we dichotomized four-point ordinal measures for happiness and health, with "0" values associated with the absence or low levels and "1" associated with the presence or high levels of happiness or excellent or good health. We used bivariate analysis and Ordinary Least Squares regression to examine social capital and community participation.

¹⁴ Contingency analyses demonstrated statistically significant differences in family income and education level between non-Westside Hispanics and Westside Hispanics at the .05 level.

TABLE 1. Survey questions for social capital and community participation dependent variables.

Social Capital Index		
Measure	Question	Response
Trust		
Trust (General)	Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?	a. People can be trusted b. You can't be too careful c. Depends
Trust Neighbor	First, think about people in your neighborhood. Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?	a. Trust them a lot b. Trust them some c. Trust only a little d. Trust them not at all
Racial/ Ethnic Trust		
Trust Whites	(How about) white people?	a. Trust them a lot b. Trust them some c. Trust only a little d. Trust them not at all
Trust African Americans	(How about) African Americans or blacks?	a. Trust them a lot b. Trust them some c. Trust only a little d. Trust them not at all
Trust Hispanics	(How about) Hispanics or Latinos?	a. Trust them a lot b. Trust them some c. Trust only a little d. Trust them not at all
Social Ties		
Race Home	Now I am going to ask you some questions about how frequently, if at all, you have done certain things in the past twelve months. How frequently have you been in the home of a person of a different race, or had them in your home?	a. Frequently/Often b. Sometimes c. Seldom d. Never
Neighbor	How frequently have you been in the home of someone from a different neighborhood or had them in your home?	a. Frequently/Often b. Sometimes c. Seldom d. Never
Friends	How frequently have you had friends over to your home?	a. Frequently/Often b. Sometimes c. Seldom d. Never

TABLE 1. Survey questions for social capital and community participation dependent variables (*continued*).

Community Participation Index		
Measure	Question	Response
Public Meeting	In the past twelve months, how frequently have you attended a public meeting in which there was discussion of town or school affairs?	a. Frequently/Often b. Sometimes c. Seldom d. Never
Organizational Meeting	In the past twelve months, how frequently have you attended any club or organizational meeting, not counting work related meetings?	a. Frequently/Often b. Sometimes c. Seldom d. Never
Volunteered	In the past twelve months, how frequently have you volunteered?	a. Frequently/Often b. Sometimes c. Seldom d. Never

Findings

Frequency distributions of the social capital and community participation measures revealed slightly skewed distributions (see Table 2). For example, San Antonians exhibited relatively high levels of social capital. Our measure of social capital values ranged from 10 (low) to 31 (high), with an average score of 23.2 (median = 23.0). Only 11% of San Antonians surveyed appeared in the lower one-third of this scale (scores of 17 or lower) while 39.4% (nearly four in ten) appeared in the upper one-third (scores of 25 or higher).

On the other hand, when we examined for community participation (frequency in attending public or organizational meetings and volunteering), San Antonians scored much lower. On a scale that ranged from 3 (low) to 12 (high), San Antonians had an average civic participation score of 6.5 (median = 6), with 40% of respondents scoring a 5 or lower while only 15% exhibited high levels of civic participation (10-12).

Analyses of variance of social capital and civic participation measures revealed small but statistically significant differences among respondents by race/ethnicity with Hispanic respondents trailing both white and African American respondents (see Table 3). White respondents, for example, had a 24.4 social capital average score. This compares to 23.2 average for African Americans and 22.1 for Hispanics. In terms of community participation, African American respondents had a 7.1 average score compared to 6.8 for whites and 6.1 for Hispanics.

TABLE 2. Social capital and community participation in San Antonio.

Social Capital	Frequency	Percent
10	2	.4
11	2	.6
12	4	.9
13	4	.9
14	7	1.5
15	6	1.4
16	11	2.5
17	10	2.4
18	13	2.9
19	23	5.2
20	18	4.0
21	23	5.3
22	54	12.2
23	53	12.0
24	37	8.3
25	41	9.3
26	39	8.7
27	18	4.1
28	27	6.1
29	18	4.0
30	15	3.3
31	17	3.9
Total	442	100.00
Missing	122	

Community Participation	Frequency	Percent
3	94	17.8
4	40	7.5
5	80	15.1
6	70	13.1
7	61	11.6
8	51	9.7
9	56	10.5
10	32	6.0
11	18	3.3
12	28	5.3
Total	529	100.00
Missing	34	

TABLE 3. Analysis of social capital and community participation variance by race/ethnicity.

Social Capital	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
White	162	24.4	3.5
Hispanic	229	22.1	4.7
Black	31	23.2	3.8
Total	422	23.1	4.3

F=13.8; prob.=.0000

Community Participation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
White	205	6.8	2.7
Hispanic	261	6.1	2.5
Black	36	7.1	2.4
Total	503	6.5	2.6

F=5.7; prob.=.0000

Bivariate correlations revealed statistically significant and moderately strong negative associations with social capital and Hispanic (-.23), Westside Hispanic (-.22) and Spanish-speaking (-.35) respondents. However, the social capital index was moderately and positively associated with educational level (.38), family income (.28), perceptions of happiness (.33), and disagreement with the proposition that San Antonio is a “divided” city (.21).

Table 4 presents the four regression estimates for the measures of social capital and community participation. In the community participation models (3 and 4), we included the social capital measure as an independent variable to examine its relative impact. Additionally, in Models 2 and 4 we replaced the variable *Hispanic* with *Westside Hispanic* to examine the effects of a geographically segregated ethnic subgroup. Overall, the amount of variation explained (adjusted r-square) using the models ranged from .41 for social capital using the Westside Hispanic variable (Model 2) to .23 for community participation (Model 3).¹⁶

In terms of social capital in Model 1, perceptions of a community divided along ethnic and racial lines (-.20) and the dummy variable for Spanish speakers (-.14) had statistically significant, negative impacts. In contrast, educational levels (.22) and perceptions of happiness (.22) had the largest positive effects on social capital. Moreover, in this model, measures for Hispanics, African Americans, females, family income, perceptions of health, age, years in San Antonio, marital status, full-time employment, and religiosity were not significant.

¹⁶ A correlation matrix of dependent and independent variables was utilized to examine for issues of multicollinearity and is available from the authors upon request.

TABLE 4. Regression models with social capital and community participation.

	MODEL 1: Social capital standardized coefficients	Prob.		MODEL 2: Social capital standardized coefficients	Prob.
(Constant)		**	(Constant)		**
SPNSPKER	-.221	***	SPNSPKER	-.185	**
HISP	-.107	.054	<i>WESTSIDE HISP</i>	-.264	**
AFRI-AM	.018	.712	AFRI-AM	.009	.833
HAPPY	.217	**	HAPPY	.215	**
HEALTHY	.092	.065	HEALTHY	.097	*
EMPLOYED FULL TIME	.010	.836	EMPLOYED FULL TIME	-.008	.866
FEMALE	.050	.283	FEMALE	.037	.413
FAMILY INCOME	.077	.128	FAMILY INCOME	.065	.185
AGE	-.112	.070	AGE	-.115	*
MARITAL STATUS	.090	.062	MARITAL STATUS	.066	.160
EDUC	.222	**	EDUC	.200	**
YEARS IN SA	.080	.185	YEARS IN SA	.122	*
DIVIDED	-.203	**	DIVIDED	-.195	**
RELIGIOSITY	-.065	.169	RELIGIOSITY	-.047	.297
Adjusted R Square	.367			.414	

*=p < .01, two tail test; **=p < .05, two tail test

TABLE 4. Regression models with social capital and community participation (continued).

	MODEL 3: Community participation standardized coefficients		MODEL 4: Community participation standardized coefficients	
(Constant)		.346	(Constant)	.695
SPNSPKER	-.087	.134	SPNSPKER	-.104 .075
HISP	-.099	.108	<i>WESTSIDE HISP</i>	.011 .849
AFRI-AM	.093	.082	AFRI-AM	.121 *
HAPPY	.117	*	HAPPY	.111 .053
HEALTHY	.037	.501	HEALTHY	.039 .489
EMPLOYED FULL TIME	-.017	.755	EMPLOYED FULL TIME	-.007 .901
FEMALE	.118	*	FEMALE	.121 *
FAMILY INCOME	-.015	.786	FAMILY INCOME	-.016 .781
AGE	-.105	.127	AGE	-.064 .327
MARITAL STATUS	.041	.450	MARITAL STATUS	.045 .405
EDUC	.149	*	EDUC	.167 **
YEARS IN SA	.096	.150	YEARS IN SA	.062 .354
DIVIDED	-.019	.718	DIVIDED	-.016 .767
RELIGIOSITY	.334	**	RELIGIOSITY	.323 **
SOCCAP	.070	.270	SOCCAP	.086 .198
Adjusted R Square	.229			.222

*= $p < .01$, two tail test; **= $p < .05$, two tail test

Substituting *Westside Hispanic* for the dummy variable *Hispanic* in Model 2 increased the amount of variation explained in Model 1 and indicated lower levels of

social capital among Hispanics living on the Westside.¹⁶ As previously mentioned the Westside has historically and traditionally been a Mexican-American barrio or neighborhood. As a dummy variable, *Westside Hispanic* then measures the impact of being Hispanic and living in a barrio in San Antonio. In Model 2, Westside Hispanic was significant and negative (-.26). In addition, speaking Spanish (-.18), perceptions of a divided city (-.19), and age (-.11) were significant and negative influences on social capital. In contrast, education (.20), years in San Antonio (.12), and perceptions of happiness (.21) and health (.10) were significant and positive in this model.

In Model 3, social capital was not significant in predicting community participation. Measures for religiosity (.33), education level (.15), females (.12), and perceptions of happiness (.12) had significant and positive impacts while Hispanics, African Americans, perceptions of a divided city, age, family income or employment status, speaking Spanish, marital status, years in San Antonio, and perceptions of health had no statistically significant influences on community participation.

Importantly, when the Westside Hispanic variable replaced the more general Hispanic variable for community participation in Model 4, it was not significant. Westside Hispanics were no more or less civically active than non-Westside Hispanics. As in Model 3, the measures here for religiosity (.32), education level (.17), females (.12), and perceptions of happiness (.11) had significant and positive impacts. However, in this model, African Americans were significantly more likely to engage in community participation (.12).

Discussion

Social capital in San Antonio, as in many cities and metropolitan areas, varies by demographic characteristics, perceptions about the social cohesion of the community (“divided city”), levels of happiness, and, for Hispanics, residential geography. Diversity, however, does not appear to be the dominant predictor of social capital. In general, this case had similar results as previous studies on social capital in relation to socioeconomic status but failed to provide consistent impacts, particularly regarding diversity, as measured by ethnicity/race (Hispanic, African Americans) or sex (females), and demonstrated geographic impacts, as measured by West Side Hispanic (measure of living in the barrio). Thus, being predominately a Spanish speaker and a Hispanic living in the barrio were negatively associated with social capital levels.

Collectively, these findings point to variations within aggregate measures of race and ethnicity. Perceptions of social integration (e.g., happiness and levels of education) and of community cohesion (i.e., living in a “divided” community) as principal contributors to variations in social capital are impacted by race/ethnicity, and living in a barrio. The Westside Hispanic variable and the consistently negative impacts of the Spanish speaking and social cohesion (divided city) measures suggest that individuals living in economically and ethnically segregated neighborhoods or enclaves possess lower levels of social capital in terms of generalized and racial/ethnic trust and

¹⁶ The dummy variables *Hispanic* (0 = non-Hispanic, 1 = Hispanic) and *Westside Hispanic* (0 = non-Westside Hispanic, 1 = Westside Hispanic) had a correlation of .56. While the Westside is nearly 90% Hispanic, the Westside Hispanic variable is a measurement of the interaction of residency and ethnicity.

social ties. Given Westside Hispanics' low socioeconomic status of , this finding supports the proposition that social capital is linked to social inequality and segregation. The influence of social cohesion perceptions also suggests that social capital in San Antonio does not vary exclusively by ethnicity or race, as one might expect, but also by perceptions of whether or not the city is divided by race and ethnicity. Clearly, language, geographic and ethnic identifiers, and perceptions of social cohesion are important aspects of a community's social capital.

In this case, respondents' years in San Antonio and perceptions of health and happiness had positive impacts on their degrees of social capital, while age had a negative influence. It seems clear that levels of social integration—both perceptual and based on place of residency—within and among members of the community contribute to varying aspects of social capital.

As to whether differing levels of social capital or community heterogeneity matter for community participation, the short answer is no. As Model 3 shows, religiosity, educational levels, being female, and perceptions of happiness significantly and positively influenced community participation—again, pointing to aspects of social integration. In Model 4, with its Westside Hispanic variable, being African American, perceptions of happiness, being female, and religiosity had positive relations to community participation. The consistency of female, education, and religiosity variables in the community participation models suggests that women, those with higher educational attainment, and those who claim to be more religious in San Antonio are more civically active than males, those with lower education attainment, and those who claim to be less religious. In contrast, speaking Spanish, being a Westside Hispanic, having positive perceptions of health, as well as employment status, family income, age, marital status, and having varying degrees of social capital did *not* significantly impact an individual's levels of community participation..

Finally, incorporating the various components of social capital under one-dimension works well. Rather than assessing the variations within social capital elements (i.e., generalized trust, particularized trust, bonding, and bridging) and undertaking the mental gymnastics of aligning these elements with categories of independent variables, using a single dimension offers a clearer portrait of social capital in a community. Our findings, for example, suggest that the argument over social capital and its virtues may in fact be masking the negative impacts of social inequalities and segregation.

Conclusion

Returning to our original questions: Does diversity within a community lead to mistrust and negatively impact civic participation? Do varying degrees of social capital within a heterogeneous community really matter? How does social capital matter for a city's or community's public policies? Does racial/ethnic minority status within a community make a difference in residents' social capital when the minority group is a numeric majority group? Do majority ethnic minority communities fit previous findings of differences in social capital among racial and ethnic minorities? The short answers are both “maybe” and “it depends.”

In San Antonio, those who predominately speak Spanish, and, specifically, Hispanics living in the traditional Latino barrio, had lower levels of social capital as compared to non-Westside Hispanics and English-speaking counterparts. However, we suggest that measures for Westside Hispanics, English proficiency and place of residence

are proxies for measures of socioeconomic status and social integration rather than alternative measures of ethnicity. We suspect that for the vast majority of individuals without English proficiency who reside in the barrio, place of residency is less a question of choice than of socioeconomic status and social integration. In addition, our findings show that social capital levels are mediated both by perceptions of happiness and whether or not the city is divided along racial/ethnic lines; therefore, community context matters. Again, we suggest that this contextual relationship is an indicator of social integration as social capital is also positively influenced by perceptions of happiness, health, and educational attainment.

In a majority ethnic minority community like San Antonio, Hispanics and African Americans generally do not exhibit significant differences in their levels of social capital relative to non-Hispanics or non-African Americans. Being a Hispanic or an African American in a Hispanic-majority city does not directly impact one's social capital. In the aggregate, racial and ethnic diversity does not directly impact the community's social capital. This latter point counters both the general social capital literature and the overall suggestion that community diversity negatively affects social capital. For Westside Hispanics, this finding even suggests the opposite point: less diversity, lower social capital. In San Antonio, social capital seems to be impacted less by race and ethnicity in general and more by socioeconomic class, levels of social integration, and attitudes and perceptions about the community context.

In addition, when we used our social capital measure to predict community participation, it had no statistically significant impact. Community participation in San Antonio is impacted by perceptions of happiness, being female, having greater educational attainment, and claiming higher levels of religiosity. Importantly, Hispanics, barrio Hispanics and those who predominately speak Spanish were not significantly different in their degrees of community participation relative to non-Hispanics and non-Spanish speakers. In contrast, African Americans generally had significantly higher levels of community participation than non-African Americans. Here, again, our study diverges from previous studies' findings that heterogeneity (diversity) reduces community engagement while social capital increases it.

These are salient findings given the core debate surrounding social capital, diversity, and immigration in cities today. Cities are consistently interested in shoring up their economies and increasingly concerned with nurturing a dynamic "creative class" of entrepreneurs, artists, and bohemians. However, as ethnic and racial diversity (typically strongly linked to immigration) increases in many of these cities, the lament over the decline of social capital and civic participation may not be far behind. The case of San Antonio suggests a different dynamic—one not centered on diversity or even race/ethnicity but on social integration. This case suggests that perhaps it is time to be less overly concerned with social capital and more with social integration. As Browning, Marshall, and Tabb (1984) suggested, cities and communities that emphasize public policies of integration (seemingly increasing educational attainment and encouraging political and civic participation in neighborhood and city-wide associations and events that address social isolation) can facilitate community contexts that welcome and invite incorporation, which can eventually lead to a functional and trusting community.

Social capital does not emerge in a vacuum and variations may not be fatal to other civic virtues like political participation, as many have indicated. Given their

limitations, this study and previous works tied to political incorporation warrant further examinations of urban and community social capital relative to contact and conflict theories, social integration, and social policies, especially in different contexts.

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Appendix A. Saguaro Seminar questions (by number) and other questionnaire items in the San Antonio Survey 2003

1 (SOCTRUST) Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

People can be trusted; You can't be too careful; (VOLUNTEERED) Depends; Don't know; Refused

2 (TRSTNBR) Next we would like to know how much you trust different groups of people. First, think about people in your neighborhood. Generally speaking would you say you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?

2A (RACTRUST) Next, we'd like to know how much you trust different groups of people. First, think about people in your neighborhood. Generally speaking, would you say that you can trust them a lot, some, only a little, or not at all?

Trust them a lot; Trust them some; Trust them only a little; Trust them not at all; (VOLUNTEERED) Does not apply; Don't know; Refused

2D (TRUSTWH) (How about) White people?

2E (TRUSTBL) African Americans or Blacks?

2F (TRUSTHISP) Hispanics or Latinos?

10 (PERCEIVED HAPPINESS) All things considered, would you say you are

Very happy; Happy; Not very happy; Not happy at all; DK/NA

11 (PERCEIVED HEALTH) Now there are a few questions related to your personal health. Thinking about your health, how would you describe your health at this time? Would you say it is... [Read list except for DK/NA.]

Excellent; Good; Fair; Poor; DK/NA

6c probe (PUBLIC MEETING) How many times in the past twelve months have you attended any public meeting in which there was discussion of town or school affairs? (Response set for 6c-6h)

Never did this; Once; A few times (probe for more accurate number); 2-4 times; 5-9 times; About once a month on average; Twice a month; About once a week on average; More than once a week; DK/NA

6d probe (ORGAN MEETING) How many times in the past twelve months have you attended any club or organizational meeting (not including meetings for work)?

6e probe (FRIENDS) How many times in the past twelve months have you had friends over to your home?

6f probe (FRIEND DIFF RACE) How many times in the past twelve months have you been in the home of *a friend of a different race* or had them in your home?

6g probe (DIFFERENT NEIGHORHOOD) How many times in the past twelve months have you been in the home of *someone of a different neighborhood* or had them in your home?

6h probe (VOLUNTEERED) How many times in the past twelve months have you volunteered?

8 (RELIGIOSITY) Not including weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services?

Every week (or more often); Almost every week; Once or twice a month; A few times per year; Less often than that; Never; DK/NA

15 (EDUC) What is the highest educational degree you have COMPLETED?

Less than high school; High School degree; Associates degree; Bachelor's degree; Master's degree; PhD or professional degree

Other San Antonio Survey questions used for this study:

- (SOCIAL COHESION) Some people believe that San Antonio is a city strongly divided on the basis of race and ethnicity. Others argue that residents of San Antonio are more alike than they are different, suggesting a mostly unified city. How strongly would you say you agree or disagree with the belief that San Antonio is a DIVIDED city? Would you say you

Agree strongly; Agree; Disagree; Disagree strongly; Don't Know

- (YEARS LIVED IN BEXAR) How many years have you lived in the San Antonio area?
- (AGE) What is your current age?
- (INCOME) To the nearest thousand dollars, what was your total family income last year?
- (MARRIED) What is your present marital status? Are you:

Married; Divorced or separated; Widowed; Never married

- (SEX) THE SEX OF THE RESPONDENT

Male; Female

- (SPANISH SPEAKER) Record language of survey

English; Spanish

- (RACEETH) What is your race or ethnicity?

White, non-Hispanic; Mexican American/Latino/a; African American/Black; Asian; Native American; Other

- (ZIP CODE) Zip code

- RACIAL TRUST

If (raceth=1) racetrust2=MEAN (TR3BLK + TR3HISP)

If (raceth=2) racetrust2=MEAN (TR3BLK + TR3WH)

If (raceth=3) racetrust2=MEAN (TR3WH + TR3HISP)

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