

ENGAGEMENT, TRUST, AND RECIPROCITY:
EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL CAPITAL AND PARTICIPATION
IN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the extent to which various forms of social capital impact participation in nonprofit organizations. Previous research has focused on the importance of trust and engagement among social and political networks to form strong community ties that can cultivate the growth of social capital and promote participation in nonprofit organizations. The data analyzed in this study were derived from the Central Florida Social Capital Benchmark survey, collected at the University of Central Florida's Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences. To represent three specific aspects of social capital, related variables from the survey are combined to create indices that represent civic engagement, community trust and political trust. For the purposes of this study, participation in nonprofit organizations is defined by volunteerism and philanthropy. Results from this analysis provide evidence that (1) social capital assets are predictors of volunteerism and philanthropy and (2) higher levels of social capital are correlated with increased participation in nonprofit organizations. Although participation in nonprofit organizations can vary depending on a community's characteristics, social capital can be seen as an important element in the development of the nonprofit sector

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study examines the relationship between social capital and participation in nonprofit organizations. For the purposes of this study, social capital refers to “social networks, norms of reciprocity, mutual assistance and trustworthiness” (Putnam 2003:2). From a sociological perspective, this study encompasses several pertinent issues to the field. Studies of social capital reflect changes in society, and nonprofit organizations work to serve a diverse range of communities affected by these changes. Social capital is fostered as nonprofit organizations provide an outlet for community and civic engagement and create networks of trust and reciprocity. In exchange, nonprofits utilize social capital to fundraise, attract volunteers and develop community ties.

Previous research has focused on the importance of trust and engagement among social and political networks to form strong community ties that can cultivate the growth of social capital and nonprofit organizations (King 2004; Nunn 2000; Putnam 2000; Saxton and Benson 2005). In this study I focus on three components of social capital in Central Florida - civic engagement, community trust and political trust - to investigate if social capital assets are correlated with volunteerism and philanthropy. The intent is to examine if the community attachment attitudes indicated by the social capital assets translate into behaviors that reflect participation in nonprofit organizations.

To understand the dynamics of the relationship, a definition of social capital is provided from a review of literature and an explanation of the purpose and functions of nonprofit organizations is presented. Additionally, a theoretical interpretation is provided by applying concepts of social exchange theory to further interpret the relationship. The empirical analysis

performed in this research uses data derived from the Central Florida Social Capital Benchmark Survey 2005. The major research questions are as follows: (1) Are people with more social capital assets more likely to participate with nonprofit organizations? And (2) Are civic engagement, political trust and community trust predictors of involvement in nonprofit organizations?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Social Capital?

Social capital is not a tangible concept and it cannot be singularly defined. ‘Capital’ in social capital does not refer to money, financial gain, assets or even capitalism. Researchers have developed flexible definitions of themes and characteristics to help identify social capital. In 1916 Lyda Judson Hanifan, the state supervisor of West Virginia’s rural schools was the first person to use and define social capital as “goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy, and the social intercourse among a group of individuals and families” (cited in Smith and Kulynych 2002:154). She used the term to highlight the importance of community involvement in education.

In Pierre Bourdieu’s *The Forms of Capital*, (1986) he argues that any form of “capital” cannot be understood unless there is comprehension of the term in all of its uses. He discusses the “three fundamental guises” in which capital can be understood: economic, cultural, and social. He describes social capital as being made up of social obligations or connections. Bourdieu argues “Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition- or in other words, to membership in a group,” (1986:248).

The most commonly referenced definition of social capital is provided by James S. Coleman (1990). In Coleman’s definition, “Social capital is created when the relations among persons change in ways that facilitate action... social capital is embodied in the relations among people” (1990:300). He argues that the difference between social capital and other forms of

capital is that social capital facilitates a sense of unity and community attachment. In this definition social capital is more about power to people than power over people.

The development, ideals, purpose and functions of social capital have become a flourishing topic in current academic literature. Theories of social capital have been cited in numerous fields of study including political science, sociology, business management and international affairs (King 2004; Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000; Rich 1999; Saxton and Benson 2004; Tsai and Ghoshal 1998). Specific components of social capital have been identified as indicators, resources, or dimensions. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1997) identify three dimensional aspects: structural, relational and cognitive, which work together to facilitate social capital. In a continuation of the previous study, Tsai and Ghoshal (1998) discuss how the interactions and associations between these dimensions of social capital work together in an applied setting. The structural dimension consists of social interactions and networks that enable individuals to build upon their own personal resources. The structural dimension links to the relational dimension by the trust that is built from social networks and ties. The trust developed between individuals creates a support system that enables them to achieve personal and collective goals. The cognitive dimension embodies a united understanding of the workings within a social system. This dimension is developed from the strength initiated by structural and relational dimensions that all together create a shared vision or set of common values (Tsai and Ghoshal 1998).

The works of Robert Putnam (1993, 1995, 2000, 2003) have sparked recent debates over social capital and its effects on developing (and developed) societies. Putnam (1993) identifies social capital as a result of specific features within social organizations. This includes trust, norms and networks, also referred to as “stocks of social capital” (p. 36). These elements work

together to create coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. According to Putnam, the central premise of social capital is that social networks have value. He stresses the importance of civic engagement to increase reciprocal trust among a community.

In Putnam's writings on forms of social capital (2000, 2003) he makes an important distinction between *bonding* and *bridging* forms of social capital. Bonding social capital occurs within homogenous groups that come together because of shared commonalities. Examples of bonding social capital include a veteran's group, organizations for senior citizens, and ethnic, nationality or religion-based organizations. Putnam describes bonding forms of social capital as "exclusive and inward looking" (2000:22). Bridging social capital integrates diverse groups of people through a common cause. This would include various youth service groups, arts organizations such as a theatre group, and support or self-help programs. Bridging forms are characterized as "inclusive and outward looking" (2000:22). Bonding social capital organizes group unity which can be useful for maintaining community cohesiveness and support. Adversely, the solidarity cultivated by bonding can have negative implications by creating a feeling of segregation among non-group affiliates. Bridging social capital generates broader associations that are advantageous for linking various people or groups together and circulating information. Bridging is the type of social capital that is vital to public life in diverse societies, such as many American communities, but it is the hardest to build (Putnam 2000, 2003).

Putnam (1995) argues that social capital is a key component of building and maintaining democracy. Trends of diminishing political engagement have led to a decline in trust in the government. In *Bowling Alone* (2000) Putnam proposes that drops in civic engagement levels lead to lower levels of trust in a community and its government. He suggests that collective civic

engagement can help restore democracy through a collaborative focus on making public interest become public policy. In order to make the political system more responsive, members of a community must support each other to reach their common goal. The implication is that united civic participation can enhance the effectiveness of government action (Putnam 1993). Putnam's model of social capital is used in the Social Capital Benchmark Survey, which provides the data for this analysis. Therefore, his conceptualization of social capital and its components are applied in this study.

Nonprofit Organizations: Serving a Purpose

Nonprofit organizations serve a variety of needs and provide a broad range of services to communities. Rather than being centered on earning profits, nonprofits are mission-based organizations that fulfill a societal need. These types of organizations are oriented towards a value-driven rationale rather than means-driven rationale (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990). "The term nonprofit organization refers to those legally constituted, nongovernmental entities incorporated under state law as charitable or not-for-profit organizations that have been set up to serve some public purpose and are tax-exempt according to the IRS" (Wolf 1999:20). The earnings made by nonprofits are allocated to provide services that will work to fulfill the mission of the organization. The governance structure of nonprofit organizations must preclude self-interest and private financial gain (Wolf 1999).

Nonprofit organizations work to initiate and foster diversity and innovation within communities. Salamon and Anheier (1998) identify four main components of the variation of services that nonprofits provide: education and research, health, social services and culture and recreation. This includes organizations such as public universities, city hospitals, The American

Red Cross, The Coalition for the Homeless, art and science museums, The Boys and Girls Club and thousands of others. According to National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) website, in 2004 there were 1,397,263 nonprofit organizations America.

The nonprofit sector, also referred to as the third sector or the independent sector, is the fastest growing sector in America, with the number of organizations doubling within the last 25 years (Employment in the Nonprofit Sector 2001). Although nonprofits do not generate monetary incentives for themselves, they are an important element within the economy.

According to Salamon and Anheier (1998), the nonprofit sector represented 6.9% of the United States total employment in 1990. From 1997-2001, the nonprofit sector had the highest growth rate for employment, outnumbering the growth rate for both private and public sectors. By 2001, the percent of the nonprofit sector employment in the United States increased to 9.5%, consisting of 12.5 million employees.

From a sociological perspective, the nonprofit sector is often seen as the locus of societal values, encompassing volunteerism, pluralism, altruism and participation (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990). Sociological studies have noted the significant relationship between affiliation with nonprofit organizations and interpersonal trust (Anheier and Kendall 2002; DiMaggio and Anheier 1990; Putnam 2000; Rich 1999). Additionally, altruism is recognized as “an important diagnostic sign of social capital” (Putnam 2000:117). Therefore, this study provides an examination of trends in volunteering and philanthropy to provide an assessment of social capital development.

The Role of Civic and Community Engagement

“Volunteerism is one of the most powerful mechanisms through which individuals build community” (Nunn 2002:116). Civic and community engagement is the platform for social capital and the pillar of nonprofit organizations. Research has shown that volunteerism is positively correlated with increased levels of political interest, an understanding of local community needs, building personal bonds, structural capacity building, social trust, and high community and individual values (Anheier and Kendall 2002; Nunn 2000; Rich 1999). Nonprofit organizations foster their development through social capital. An important aspect of social capital is to build a strong network of relationships, which in return will enhance community cooperation to reach a vision created by the organizational values of nonprofits (King 2004). Nonprofits build social capital by providing needed services to a community, bringing constituents of the area together and creating networks of trust (Putnam 2000). Each component of social capital used in this research (i.e., civic engagement, political trust, and community trust) plays a role in the effective functioning of nonprofit organizations (Saxton and Benson 2005).

The existing literature focuses on specific aspects of social capital and the extent to which it can be mobilized to stimulate the development of nonprofit organizations (King 2004; Nunn 2000; Saxton and Benson 2005). Thus far, research has stressed the importance of civic engagement and political trust factors along with the development of interpersonal community trust and social ties as significant indicators of success for nonprofit organizations (Anheier and Kendall 2002; Campbell 2005; Saxton and Benson 2005). Previous studies have also discussed trends in volunteer activity and participation as an influential aspect rooted within a community’s social capital and its willingness to serve and foster local nonprofit organizations (Nunn 2000).

Socio-Demographic Attributes Related to Volunteerism

Putnam (2000) emphasizes how volunteering is associated with well-developed social connections and increased involvement with social networks. Additionally, he examines various socio-demographic characteristics as predictors of volunteerism and philanthropy. Education is one of the most influential predictors. College graduates were twice as likely to have volunteered in the past year compared to people with a high school education. Persons in their late thirties and early forties were the most active volunteers. In addition, part-time workers, small town residents and members of religious and/or secular organizations had higher rates of volunteerism. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005) reports that women volunteer at higher rates than men; one-third of women volunteered over the last year compared to one-fourth of men. Individuals age 35-44 were more likely to volunteer (34.5%), closely followed by 45 to 54 year olds (32.7%), and then teenagers (30.4%). Furthermore, whites, married individuals, and parents with children under the age of 18 maintained higher rates of volunteering. While the statistics provide comparative data according to demographics attributes, Putnam argues "...by far the most consistent predictor of giving time and money is involvement in community life" (2000:119).

Presently, there is limited literature specifically examining the relationship between social capital and participation in nonprofit organizations. Studies related to this area of interest have only been conducted within the last fifteen years. Of the earlier studies reviewed, only one tested this distinctive and specific relationship using empirical data analysis. Saxton and Benson's (2005) findings suggest that political engagement and "bridging" social ties are two main components of social capital that support the development of nonprofit organizations. The element of interpersonal trust was not a significant factor. Their results also indicated that growth

of the nonprofit sector is highly dependent on environmental and ecological factors, such as median household income, preexisting organizational density, unemployment and levels of governmental spending, factors not available to address in this study.

Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory helps to understand the relationship between social capital and participation in nonprofit organizations. First, social exchange theory and social capital are similar in that both place primary importance on the development and use of reciprocity and trust in relationships (Anstone, Nathanson, Schoen and Kim 1999; Cook 2005). Secondly, within the social exchange framework social capital emerges as a motivation for human behavior (Astone et al 1999). In short, the relationship between social capital and nonprofit organizations can be regarded as a reciprocal transaction within a generalized exchange.

The premise of social exchange theory is that that human beings act on the basis of exchange relationships (Blau 1964; Cook and Whitmeyer 1992; Emerson 1976; Homans 1958; Molm 2003; Uehara 1990). The theory posits that human interaction involves “an exchange of goods, material and non-material” (Homans 1958). Furthermore, the exchange of social and material resources is a fundamental form of human interaction (Blau 1964; Cook 1979; Emerson 1976; Homans 1958). In this theoretical framework, social behavior is viewed primarily in terms of the pursuit of rewards and the avoidance of punishment and other forms of cost (Homans 1958; Coleman 1990; Gouldner1960). A key component of social exchange theory is the norm of distributive justice (Homans 1958). This asserts that a fair exchange is maintained through equitable investments and outcomes. Therefore, decision-making is a subjective assessment of what we are willing to invest and what rewards we want to obtain.

According to Emerson (1976), as cited by Rosenberg and Turner (2004) social exchange theory upholds three core assumptions. The first is that human beings apply rationality in decision-making. The theory asserts that social action is “rational” behavior, thus an individual’s interactions are determined by a comparison of the benefits and costs of various options for action. The second assumption is that varying kinds of beneficial occurrences follow “a principle of satiation, value adaptation, or diminishing marginal utility” (2004:32). In this application ‘value’ refers to the degree of reinforcement within the capacity of the exchange to meet specific needs. Moreover, the proportion of unit value change is a variable used to test varying degrees of perceived benefits. The third assumption states that benefits or rewards accessed through social processes are conditional based upon the benefits or rewards distributed “in exchange” (2004:34). This assumption contends that social interaction initiates and follows the premise that each actor will provide benefits/rewards contingent upon what they will receive in exchange.

Micro and Macro Perspectives

Early interpretations of social exchange theory are derived from economic principles within neoclassical economic theory (Anstone et al 1999; Rosenberg and Turner 2004; Uehara 1990). Economic exchange analyzes exchange from a micro perspective of dyadic transactions occurring as independent events, referred to as markets. Within this viewpoint, actors are seen as rational and will distribute their resources in a manner that they expect will maintain a profitable return for themselves in as many ways as possible. Moreover, actors utilize cost benefit analysis in order to determine how to allocate resources to maximize rewards (Homans 1958; Rosenberg and Turner 2004; Zafirovski 2003). Similarly, social exchange from the micro perspective also analyzes dualistic relationships, consisting of a bilateral transaction that gives each partner

benefits of equal or unequal value. This form of exchange transaction is negotiated. Actors engage in a joint process, such as explicit bargaining to seek agreement of the terms of exchange (Homans 1958; Molm 2003).

Although the basic principles of economic exchange and social exchange maintain the same foundational concepts, economic principles do not always explain social behavior (Uehara 1990; Zafirovski 2003). According to Uehara (1990), social exchange differs from economic exchange in two major respects. “First, unlike economists, social exchange theorists are fundamentally concerned with the implications of exchange for the solidarity of the group. Second, social exchange theorists acknowledge more fully the social complexity of exchange than their economic counterparts” (1990:524). Social exchange theory is primarily interested in the reciprocity interactions and commitments created by the exchange more than material outcomes resulting from the exchange (Anstone et al 1999; Emerson 1972, Cook 1977; Cook and Whitmeyer 1992).

The macro orientation of social exchange theory encompasses a broader perspective by incorporating groups, networks and organizations. Emerson (1972) initiated the incorporation of social structure into social exchange theory by placing an emphasis on the social relations between the actors in an exchange rather than focusing on the context of the interaction or the characteristics of the actors. The key to this development was the concept of ‘exchange networks,’ where actors engage within structures of mutual dependence (Emerson 1972; Cook 1977; Cook and Whitmeyer 1992; Uehara 1990). Within larger exchange networks actors have an opportunity to seek choices from alternative partners for exchange, enabling them to exit the dyadic relation. The micro perspective analyzes negotiated exchange transactions, whereas the

macro perspective analyzes reciprocal exchange transactions. Here an actor's contribution is made individually- providing a benefit or giving a gift or service- without knowing whether, when or to what extent the other will reciprocate (Blau 1964; Cook 2005; Emerson 1976; Molm 2003).

Applying Social Exchange Theory to Social Capital and Nonprofit Organizations

Social exchange theory may be applicable in understanding the relationship between the development of social capital and the growth of the nonprofit sector because within the sociological framework of social exchange, individuals establish and sustain relationships because they expect them to be rewarding (Cook 2000; Emerson 1976; Zafirovski 2003). Cook (2000) suggests that "Social exchange theory provides sociology with a clear conception of the material and resource basis of social action" (688).

The relationship between social capital and nonprofit organizations can be regarded as a reciprocal transaction. Reciprocal transactions maybe initiated by an altruistic act or "gift" such as an individual or organization making a contribution to a nonprofit organization or volunteering time. In this form of transaction, contributions are made singly; the gift offered by one party is not expected to be returned concurrently. The contribution is presented as "free" (Blau 1964; Cook 2005). When the other party reciprocates with a contribution in return for the free gift, a reciprocal transaction occurs and the exchange is made (Emerson 1976). Over time, as a series of transactions take place, a long-term exchange relationship can develop and begin to incorporate additional actors and relations forming a network. Within this network a contribution made by one party can be received by another party and then reciprocate benefits to other various members within network (Molm 1994, 2003). For example, when an individual makes a

monetary donation or volunteers with a nonprofit organization whose mission is to reduce hunger, the organization may use the contribution to purchase food for an outreach program that will feed the population in need or utilize the individual's volunteer service to help bring and serve the food to the population. What the individual receives in return or in exchange for participating with nonprofit organizations is an opportunity to build and/or maintain a connection to the community, expand his or her social network, and develop trust among people in the community. All of these returns or exchanges represent reasons cited as altruistic motives that influence an individual to participate in the community. Additionally, the exchange results in the development of social capital assets.

This type of exchange is referred to as generalized exchange. Generalized exchange "occupies a unitary system of relationships in that it links all parties to the exchange together in an integrated transaction in which reciprocations are indirect, not mutual" (Ekeh 1974:52). Ekeh proposes that generalized exchange can be applied to interpret exchange relations within social action that occur between more than two parties. Additionally, Ekeh (1974) asserts that trust is the major attribute that enables this form of exchange relationship to function effectively. This characteristic can be seen in the relationship between community residents and nonprofit organizations. The functioning of a nonprofit organization is reliant on stakeholder involvement, specifically community volunteers, philanthropists and board members. In order to conduct its services and fulfill its mission, a nonprofit organization must trust that the community will take an active role to support its cause. Moreover, for constituents to become involved with the organization they must trust that the organization will uphold its mission and provide services that actively work to serve the specific cause.

As social exchange theorists have begun to focus more on the relations within the exchange as the unit of analysis, the concepts of trust and reciprocity have become features prominent to understanding modes of exchange (Cook 2005; Molm 1994, 2003; Zafirovski 2003). This shift in focus coincides with the progression of how the study of social behavior has changed. “The notion that we have moved from the kind of social order created by norms in relatively isolated groups and communities to networks of affiliation for various purposes is as central in the recent theorizing about the importance of social capital in civil society as in recent work in the significance of trust in social exchange relations” (Cook 2005:8). As discussed previously, reciprocal transactions of generalized exchange occur within structural networks. In these relations, trust is the link that holds societies together. Putnam (2000) asserts that “trustworthiness lubricates social life” (21). Moreover, as interactions and exchanges continue between groups of people, a norm of reciprocity begins to develop and social capital is built within these social networks (Cook 2005; Putnam 2000).

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This research attempts to further examine the dynamic relationship between social capital and participation in nonprofit organizations. It focuses on three specific components of social capital-- civic engagement, political trust, and community trust-- and how they relate to participation with nonprofit organizations as defined by volunteerism and philanthropic activity. I predict that higher levels of social capital will be associated with higher frequencies of volunteerism and philanthropy. Moreover, individuals with more social capital will contribute to the growth of nonprofit organizations by bringing constituents of the community together and building social networks of trust and reciprocity. Specifically, this research will test the following hypotheses:

1. Civic engagement, political trust and community trust are predictors of involvement in nonprofit organizations.
2. People with more social capital assets are more likely to participate in nonprofit organizations.

Data

The data for this analysis are taken from the Central Florida Social Capital Benchmark Survey. The original Social Capital Benchmark Survey was first developed at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Central Florida then conducted their version of the survey through telephone interviews from June to August 2005. The sixty seven question survey was slightly modified from its original form to address issues directly concerning social capital development

in the seven counties (Orange, Seminole, Polk, Osceola, Lake, Brevard and Volusia) that make up the Central Florida region. Therefore, the results are reflective of the Central Florida community. A total of 1,606 surveys were collected, with 1,437 full completions and 139 partial completions. For this particular study, a sample of 874 will be analyzed. This reduced sample size is a result of only incorporating respondents who answered all of the variables applied in this analysis. Individuals who did not reply to variables that correspond with one or more of the independent, dependent or control variables, were not included in the study.

Measures

Independent Variable: Social Capital

Civic engagement, political trust, and community trust are the three components of social capital used as the independent variables in this analysis.

To examine the levels of civic engagement, the following questions regarding the respondent's participation in various types of groups and organizations in past twelve months are incorporated:

(1) Have you worked on a community project in the past 12 months?, (2) Have you been involved in a charity or social welfare organization that provides services in such fields as health or service to the needy?, (3) Have you been involved in a service club or fraternal organization such as the Lions or Kiwanis or a local women's club or a college fraternity or sorority, including Alumni organizations in the last 12 months?, (4) (How about) an adults sports club or league, or an outdoor activity club? (5) (How about) a youth organization like youth sports leagues, the scouts, 4-H clubs, or Boys & Girls Club?, (6) A parents' association, like the PTA or

PTO, or other school support or service groups?, (7) A veteran's group?, (8) A neighborhood association, like a block association, a homeowner or tenant association, or a neighborhood crime watch group? (9) Clubs or organizations for senior citizens or older people?, (10) A labor union?, (11) A professional, trade, farm or business association?, (12) Ethnic, nationality or civil rights organizations, such as the National Organization for Women, the Mexican American Legal Defense or the NAACP?, (14) Other public interest groups, political action groups, political clubs, or party committees?, (15) A literary, art, discussion or study group or a musical, dancing, or singing group?, (16) Any other hobby, investment, or garden clubs or societies?, (17) A support group or self help program or group for people with specific illnesses, disabilities, problems, or addictions, or for their families?

For each of these questions, respondent's answers were originally coded as 1=yes, 2=no, and 9= don't know, not applicable or refused. To create dichotomous dummy variables, the responses are recoded as 1=yes, and 0=no. The don't know (DK) and not applicable (NA) or refused (REF) categories are excluded from the analysis. The 17 variables are combined to create a civic engagement index; from (0) the lowest level to (17) the highest level of civic engagement.

To represent levels of political trust in the Central Florida area, the following variables are used. (1) How much of the time can you trust the national government? (2) The state government? and (3) The county government? Each of these questions have the same original response categories, 1= Just about always, 2= Most of the time, 3= Some of the time, 4= Hardly ever, and 9= Don't know, not applicable, or refused. The response categories are recoded as 1= Hardly ever, 2= Some of the time, 3= Most of the time, and 4= Just about always. The DK and NA or REF categories are coded as missing data and excluded from the analysis. The three

government trust variables are combined to create a political trust index. The index ranged from 3 indicating that the respondent hardly ever trusts all three levels of government, to 12 indicating the respondent trusts all three levels of government just about always.

To represent the community trust aspect of social capital, five variables are used to measure how much the respondent trusts their community. The survey asked respondents how much they trust (1) People in your neighborhood, (2) People you work or go to school with, (3) People who work in the stores where you shop, (4) The local news media, and (5) The police in your local community. The response categories are originally coded as 1= A lot, 2= Some, 3= A little, 4= Not at all, and 9= Don't know. For the purposes of this research, responses are recoded as 1= Not at all, 2= A little, 3= Some, and 4= A lot. The DK and NA or REF categories are excluded from the analysis. The variable regarding trust of people you work with had a larger quantity of missing values than each of the other variables due to the number of respondents who were either retired, unemployed, self-employed, students or homemakers. To avoid reducing the sample size, mean substitution is used for that variable.

The five trust variables are combined into a community trust index. Values on the index range from 5 to 25. A score of 5 indicates that the respondent answered “not at all” to each of the five trust variables, the lowest level of community trust. A score of 25 indicates that the respondent answered “a lot” to all of the trust variables, the highest level of community trust.

Dependent Variable: Nonprofit Organizations

The two primary activities that contribute to the growth and success of nonprofit organizations are volunteerism and philanthropy. To determine involvement in the nonprofit sector from the data provided in the Central Florida Social Capital Benchmark Survey, two

variables are used; whether or not the respondent volunteered and if they contributed monetary donations to non-religious charities, organizations or causes.

Volunteerism is operationalized by the question, “Have you volunteered in the last 12 months?” The response category was originally 0= Never, 1= Once, 2= A few times, 3= About once a month on average, 4= Twice a month on average, 5= About once a week, 6= More often than once a week and 9= Don’t know, not applicable, or refused. Responses 1-6 were combined, recoded as yes= 1. Response 0 (never) was renamed to “no” and remained coded as 0. The missing data (9) are not included in the analysis.

Philanthropy is determined by whether the respondent had made a monetary contribution to a non-religious charity, organization or cause. “During the past 12 months, approximately how much money did you and other family members in your household contribute to all non-religious charities, organizations or causes?” This variable is specifically chosen to represent donations that are made to service and mission oriented nonprofits that are not affiliated with any religious ideology.

In the survey, non-religious contribution responses are coded as 1= none, 2= less than \$100, 3=\$100 to less than \$500, 4= \$500 to less than \$1000, 5=\$1000 to less than \$5000, 6= More than \$5000 and 9= Don’t know, not applicable or refused. For the purposes of this research, responses 2 through 6 are combined and recoded as 1= yes. Response 1 (none) was recoded as zero (0) and renamed “no.” The missing data (9) are excluded.

Control Variables: Demographics

The demographic characteristics used in the analysis are sex of the respondent, age, educational attainment, income, race, marital status, and having children 17 or younger in the

household. These attributes are chosen because they are cited in the literature as predictors of participation in nonprofit organizations (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005; Putnam 2000).

Although the literature reports that people who work part-time are more likely to participate in nonprofit organizations, that particular attribute is not a variable within the survey and cannot be included.

The sex variable is operationalized by whether the respondent is male or female. This variable is recoded as a dummy variable with 1= female and 0=male. The age variable is operationalized by the year the respondent was born. This variable is recoded to represent the specific age category when volunteerism is most active (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005; Putnam 2000). Therefore, age is recoded as a dummy variable with 1= 35-44 and 0= all other ages.

Educational attainment is operationalized as the highest grade of school or year of college the respondent completed. The response categories are 1= Less than high school (grade 11 or less), 2= High school diploma, 3= Some college, 4= Associates degree (2 year) or specialized technical training, 5= Bachelor's degree, 6= Some graduate training, 7= Graduate or professional degree, and 9= Don't know, not applicable or refused. This variable is recoded as 1= college graduates, combining the original categories 5, 6, and 7, and 0= other, combining response categories 1, 2, 3, and 4. The income variable is operationalized as the approximate combined yearly incomes, before taxes, for all members of the respondent's household for the year 2004. The response categories are 1= Less than \$10,000, 2= \$10,000-20,000, 3= \$20,000-40,000, 4= \$40,000-60,000, 5= \$60,000-80,000, 6= \$80,000-100,000, 7= \$100,000-150,000, 8= \$150,000-200,000, 9= \$200,000 or more, 98= Don't know and 99= Not applicable or refused. The race variable is defined by asking respondents to select which race they considered themselves to be. In the

survey responses are coded as 1= White, 2= African American or Black, 3= Asian or Pacific Islander, 4= Alaskan Native/Native American, 5= Other, 6= Mixed or biracial and 9= Don't know, not applicable, or refused. For the purposes of this analysis, responses are recoded as a dichotomous dummy variable with 1= white and 0= other. The other race categories are combined for two reasons. First, they only represented a small proportion of the sample, 6.7% black, 1.2% Asian or Pacific Islander, 0.6% are Alaskan or Native American, 4.5% other and 1.9% mixed or biracial. Secondly, empirical research has suggested that whites volunteer and donate money to non-religious charities more than African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005; Putnam 2000). Marital status is identified as 1= currently married, 2= separated, 3= divorced, 4= widowed, 5= never married and 9= refused. Responses are recoded as dichotomous dummy variable with 1= married and 0= other. Previous research suggests that married individuals are more likely to volunteer and engage in philanthropic activities. The last control variable asks respondents "How many children, age 17 or younger, live in your household?" Original responses range from 0 to 13. The variable is recoded as 1= has children 17 or younger living at home and 0= does not have children living at home.

Analytic Strategy

Univariate Analysis

The univariate analysis for the three independent variables displays the range, distribution, mean and median of the social capital indices. Frequency distributions for the dependent variables are conducted to identify the percentages of respondents that volunteered and made a monetary contribution to a non-religious charity, organization or cause. The

distribution and percentages of the control variables are given, as well as the median income for the sample (N= 874).

Bivariate and multivariate logistic regressions are employed to examine the relationship between three social capital assets-- civic engagement, community trust and political trust-- and participation in nonprofit organizations, defined by volunteerism and philanthropy.

Bivariate Analysis

Six bivariate logistic regression models test the hypothesis that people with more social capital are more likely to participate with nonprofit organizations. Two tables present the models for each of the independent variables tested with volunteerism and then philanthropy.

Multivariate Analysis

Multivariate logistic regressions test the hypothesis that civic engagement, community trust and political trust are predictors of participation in nonprofit organizations. The seven control variables used are gender, age, educational attainment, income, race, marital status and having children age of 17 or younger living at home. A total of ten models are presented. Six of the models present one social capital index and the seven control variables analyzed with volunteerism and philanthropy. The remaining four regression models incorporate the three social capital indices together, with and without control variables, to test which asset of social capital is the strongest predictor of participation in nonprofit organizations.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Findings

Univariate

The social capital indices are measured using scales. Each index has a sample size of 874, representing the total number of respondents within this analysis. Table 1 presents the distribution, range, mean and median for the civic engagement scale, which varies from 0 to 13. While the index represents 16 variables combined, 13 is the highest value because there are no respondents who participated in 14, 15 or 16 civic engagement activities

Table 1 Frequency Distribution, Mean and Median for the Independent Variable Measuring Civic Engagement (N=874)

Score	Frequency	Percent
0	164	18.7%
1	156	17.9%
2	150	17.2%
3	124	14.2%
4	92	10.6%
5	84	9.7%
6	42	4.8%
7	21	2.4%
8	20	2.3%
9	9	1.0%
10	7	0.8%
11	1	0.1%
12	1	0.1%
13	2	0.3%
Mean	2.72	
Median	2.00	

Note: The range of the civic engagement index is 0-13. Lower scores indicate lower levels of civic engagement and higher scores represent higher civic engagement levels.

Table 2 shows the distribution, mean, median and range for the community trust index. The index ranges from 5 to 25.

Table 2 Frequency Distribution, Mean and Median for the Independent Variable Measuring Community Trust (N=874)

Score	Frequency	Percent
5	4	0.4%
6	5	0.7%
7	8	0.9%
8	8	0.8%
9	14	2.1%
10	17	1.9%
11	32	3.7%
12	42	4.8%
13	65	7.5%
14	111	12.7%
15	102	11.7%
16	139	15.9%
17	124	14.3%
18	106	12%
19	53	6.0%
20	29	3.3%
21	1	0.1%
22	--	--
23	4	0.5%
24	1	0.1%
25	5	0.5%
Mean	15.16	
Median	15.61	

Note: The range of the community trust index is 5-25. Lower scores indicate lower community trust levels and higher score represent higher levels of trust.

Table 3 shows the distribution, mean, median and range for the political trust index. The political trust index ranges from 3 to 12.

Table 3 Frequency Distribution, Mean and Median for the Independent Variable Measuring Political Trust (N=874)

Score	Frequency	Percent
3	58	6.6%
4	31	3.6%
5	61	7.0%
6	271	31.0%
7	79	9.0%
8	79	9.0%
9	250	28.6%
10	16	1.8%
11	10	1.2%
12	19	2.2%
Mean	7.05	
Median	7.00	

Note: The range of the political trust index is 3-12. Lower scores on the scales represent lower political trust levels and higher scores indicate higher levels of political trust.

Table 4 shows the frequency distributions for the two dependent variables, volunteerism and philanthropy. Table 4 indicates that 58.9% of respondents had volunteered in the past year and 76.6% of respondents made a monetary donation to a non-religious organization, cause or charity.

Table 4 Frequency Distribution for Dependent Variable Measuring Participation in Nonprofit Organizations (N=874)

	Frequency	Percent
Volunteerism		
No	359	41.1%
Yes	515	58.9%
Philanthropy		
No	204	23.4%
Yes	670	76.6%

Table 5 displays the results for the frequency distribution of the control variables. The sociodemographic characteristics for this sample are as follows, 49% are females, 18.1% have a bachelor's, graduate or professional degree, 85.1% are white, 62.6% are married, and 36.0% have children 17 or younger living in their household. The income variable is an ordinal scale with a median of \$40-60,000.

Table 5 Frequency Distributions for Control Variables Measuring Sociodemographic Characteristics (N=874)

	Frequency	Percent
Female	428	49.0%
Age (35-44)	158	18.1%
College graduates	308	35.2%
Race (White)	743	85.1%
Marital Status (Married)	547	62.6%
Children in Household	314	36.0%
Income		
Less than 10,000	33	3.8%
\$10-20,000	80	9.1%
\$20-40,000	186	21.3%
\$40-60,000	192	21.9%
\$60-80,000	152	17.4%
\$80-100,000	83	9.5%
\$100-150,000	99	11.3%
\$150-200,000	28	3.2%
\$200,000 or more	21	2.4%
Median Income	\$40-60,000	

Bivariate

Bivariate logistic regressions are conducted to test the hypothesis that people with more social capital assets are more likely to participate in nonprofit organizations. Table 6 model I (A), model II (A) and model III (A) show the logistic regression results for the dependent

variable, volunteerism, divided according to each of the three independent variables-- civic engagement, community trust and political trust. Model I (A) in Table 6 is statistically significant (χ -square= 188.51, $p < .05$) and accounts for 17.7 percent of the variance for volunteerism. The logistic regression coefficient in Model I (A) indicates that a one unit increment in civic engagement leads to a .515 increment in the log of the odds of volunteering. The odds ratio for the scale is 1.67. In the bivariate case, a test of the model is a test of the coefficient and vice versa. Hence, as civic engagement increases so does the likelihood of volunteering. Model II (A) displays the bivariate logistic regression results for the dependent variable measuring volunteerism and the independent variable community trust. The model is statistically significant (χ -square= 7.142, $p < .05$) and accounts for 0.8 percent of the variance. The logistic regression coefficient signifies that a one unit increment in community trust leads to .061 increment in the log of the odds of volunteering and the odds ratio for the scale is 1.06. These results suggest that as community trust increases the likelihood of volunteering does as well. Model III (A) presents the results for the bivariate logistic regression for volunteerism and political trust. The model is statistically significant (χ -square= 5.17, $p < .05$) and explains for 0.6 percent of the variance for volunteerism. The logistic regression coefficient in model III (A) reports that a one unit increment in political trust leads to a .077 increment in the log of the odds of volunteering. The odds ratio for the scale is 1.08. The results for this test indicate that as political trust increases the likelihood of volunteering increases. In summary, bivariate analyses show all three independent variables to be significant indicators for the likelihood of volunteering.

Table 7 model I (A), model II (A) and model III (A) present the logistic regression results for the dependent variable measuring philanthropy, divided according to the three independent

variables. Model I (A) is statistically significant (χ -square= 64.15, $p<.05$) and explains 6.8 percent of the variance for philanthropy. The logistic regression coefficient indicates that a one unit increment in civic engagement leads to a .330 increment in the log of the odds of philanthropy. The odds ratio for the scale is 1.39. Moreover, as civic engagement increases so does the likelihood of philanthropy. Model II (A) in table 7 presents community trust as the independent variable. The test is statistically significant (χ -square=19.67, $p<.05$) and accounts for 2.2 percent of the variance for the dependent variable philanthropy. The logistic regression coefficient in this model demonstrates that a one unit increment in community trust results in a .115 increment in the log of the odds of philanthropic activity. The odds ratio for the scale is 1.12. These results imply that as community trust increases, the likelihood of philanthropy increases. The findings for model III (A) show that political trust is not a significant variable (χ -square =.435, $p=.509$) when philanthropy is the dependent variable. The results from the bivariate analyses display that the independent variables civic engagement and community trust are significant indicators for the likelihood of philanthropy.

Multivariate

Multivariate logistic regressions are implemented to test the hypothesis that civic engagement, community trust and political trust are predictors of participation in non-profit organizations. Ten logistic regressions are calculated. Table 6 displays the net effects of civic engagement, community trust and political trust on volunteering and table 7 exhibits the similar models for the dependent variable philanthropy. The regressions in both tables control for gender, age, education, race, marital status, income, and having children age 17 or younger in the household.

Model I (B) in table 6 is statistically significant (χ^2 -square= 214.90; $p < .05$) and accounts for 19.7 percent of the variance for volunteerism. The effect of civic engagement remains significant and shows that civic engagement increases the likelihood of volunteering holding all other variables constant. An increment in the civic engagement scale leads to a .477 increase in the log of the odds of volunteering net the effect of controls. Model II (B) demonstrates a similar result for the effect of community trust. The model is statistically significant (χ^2 -square =78.53; $p < .05$) and explains for 8.2 percent of the variance for volunteerism. An increment in the community trust scale leads to a .050 increase in the log of the odds of volunteering net the effect of controls. Essentially, respondents with higher levels of community trust are more prone to be volunteers. Model III (B) varies from model I (B) and II (B) in that the effect of the independent variable, political trust, is no longer a significant predictor of volunteering when holding constant all other variables in the model.

Table 7 displays the net effects of the logistic regression results for the dependent variable measuring philanthropy divided according to the independent variables-- civic engagement, community trust, and political trust. Model I (B) is significant (χ^2 -square =112.71; $p < .05$) and accounts for 11.2 percent of the variance for philanthropy. The effect of civic engagement remains significant when holding all other variables constant, indicating that respondents with higher civic engagement are more likely to engage in philanthropic activity. Table 7 model II (B) is significant (χ^2 -square = 9.97; $p < .05$) and explains for 9.3 percent of the variance for philanthropy, net the effects of controls. An increment in the community trust scale leads to a .101 increase in the log of the odds of philanthropy. These results suggest that higher community trust increases the likelihood of philanthropy. Consistent with the results from

previous analyses, model III (B) in Table 7 shows that when controlling for the other variables in the analysis, political trust is not a significant predictor of philanthropy.

Model IV (A and B) in both tables 6 and 7 include civic engagement, community trust, and political trust together. Model A in both tables presents the independent variables without controls and Model B incorporates the social capital indices with the controls. All models are statistically significant. Table 6 model IV (A) demonstrates that civic engagement is the only independent variable that is statistically significant once community trust and political trust are included in the analysis together. Chi-square = 192.42 at the .05 level and accounts for 18.0 percent of the variance for volunteerism. This effect remains when control variables are included in model IV (B), (χ^2 = 217.20, $p < .05$) and explains for 19.9 percent of the variance. Table 7 model IV (A) presents that civic engagement and community trust are statistically significant predictors of philanthropy. Chi-square = 78.38 at the .05 level and accounts for 8.2 percent of the variance for philanthropy. These two independent variables maintain statistical significance in the final model, IV (B), when the control variables are incorporated. Chi-square = 123.53 at the .05 level and explains for 12.4 percent of the variance.

The effects of education and having children 17 or younger living at home are consistent across the four models in table 6. Income is an important predictor of volunteering when included with community trust and political trust. The final model accounts for essentially 20 percent of the variation. Civic engagement, education, and children living at home are the prominent predictors of volunteering. Akin to these findings, results from table 7 indicates that civic engagement and additionally community trust are the statistically significant independent variables. The control variables that maintain statistical significance in all four models include

education, having children 17 or younger living at home and income. Model IV (B) in table 7 accounts for relatively 12 percent of the variation, and civic engagement, community trust, education, children living at home, and income are the primary predictors of philanthropy.

Table 6 Logistic Regression Results for the Dependent Variable Measuring Volunteerism

	I		II		III		IV	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Civic Engagement	.515/1.67 (.045) ^{***}	.477/1.61 (.046) ^{***}	x	x	x	x	.511/1.67 (.045) ^{***}	.475/1.61 (.047) ^{***}
Community Trust	x	x	.061/1.06 (.023) ^{**}	.050/1.05 (.024) [*]	x	x	.019/1.02 (.027)	.015/1.02 (.028)
Political Trust	x	x	x	x	.077/1.08 (.034) [*]	.058/1.06 (.036)	.060/1.06 (.040)	.047/1.05 (.041)
Female	x	.287/1.33 (.157)	x	.263/1.30 (.146)	x	.302/1.35 (.145) [*]	x	.271/1.31 (.158)
Age (35-44)	x	-.311/.733 (.224)	x	-.265/.767 (.205)	x	-.272/.762 (.204)	x	-.283/.754 (.225)
College education	x	.496/1.64 (.180) ^{**}	x	.893/2.44 (.163) ^{***}	x	.891/2.44 (.163) ^{***}	x	.493/1.64 (.180) ^{**}
Race	x	-.126/.881 (.232)	x	-.331/.718 (.215)	x	-.280/.756 (.213)	x	-.145/.865 (.234)
Marital status	x	.173/1.19 (.171)	x	.252/1.29 (.157)	x	.275/1.32 (.156)	x	.164/1.18 (.171)
Children in household	x	.503/1.65 (.185) ^{**}	x	.427/1.53 (.170) ^{**}	x	.418/1.52 (.170) ^{**}	x	.486/1.63 (.185) ^{**}
Income	x	.045/1.05 (.048)	x	.102/1.11 (.044) [*]	x	.102/1.11 (.044) ^{**}	x	.042/1.04 (.048)
Constant	-.872/1.67 (.045) ^{***}	-1.39/.248 (.294) ^{***}	-.556/.574 (.350)	-1.24/.290 (.416) ^{**}	-.185/.831 (.249)	-.958/.384 (.353) ^{**}	-1.57/.207 (.431)	-1.91/.149 (.477) ^{***}

	I		II		III		IV	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Chi-square	188.51***	214.90***	7.14**	78.53***	5.17*	76.92***	192.42***	217.20***
R ²	.177	.197	.008	.082	.006	.081	.180	.199
N	874	874	874	874	874	874	874	874

Note: Cell Entries are given as logistic regression coefficient/ odds ration, with the standard error given in parentheses.
p<.05= *, p<.01=**, p<.001=***

Table 7 Logistic Regression Results for the Dependent Variable Measuring Philanthropy

	I		II		III		IV	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Civic Engagement	.330/1.39 (.046) ^{***}	.267/1.31 (.048) ^{***}	x	x	x	x	.314/1.37 (.046) ^{***}	.253/1.29 (.048) ^{***}
Community Trust	x	x	.115/1.12 (.026) ^{***}	.101/1.11 (.028) ^{***}	x	x	.107/1.11 (.029) ^{***}	.100/1.11 (.031) ^{***}
Political Trust	x	x	x	x	.026/1.03 (.039)	.008/1.01 (.041)	-.046/.955 (.044)	-.053/.948 (.045)
Female	x	.225/1.25 (.173)	x	.159/1.17 (.171)	x	.236/1.27 (.169)	x	.156/1.17 (.175)
Age (35-44)	x	-.116/.891 (.239)	x	-.057/.945 (.237)	x	-.126/.882 (.235)	x	-.070/.933 (.243)
College education	x	.453/1.57 (.212) [*]	x	.744/2.11 (.205) ^{***}	x	.734/2.08 (.204) ^{***}	x	.492/1.64 (.214) [*]
Race	x	.345/1.41 (.237)	x	.126/1.14 (.233)	x	.229/1.26 (.229)	x	.230/1.26 (.242)
Marital status	x	.077/1.08 (.186)	x	.100/1.11 (.182)	x	.160/1.17 (.180)	x	.034/1.03 (.187)
Children in Household	x	-.404/.668 (.199) [*]	x	-.427/.652 (.197) [*]	x	-.412/.663 (.195) [*]	x	-.405/.667 (.201) [*]
Income	x	.269/1.31 (.057) ^{***}	x	.300/1.35 (.056) ^{***}	x	.303/1.35 (.056) ^{***}	x	.268/1.31 (.057) ^{***}
Constant	.439/1.55 (.120) ^{***}	-.937/.392 (.306) ^{***}	-.528/.590 (.391)	-1.84/.159 (.471) ^{***}	1.01/2.73 (.287) ^{***}	-.562/.570 (.396)	-.797/.450 (.431)	-1.88/.153 (.503) ^{***}

	I		II		III		IV	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Chi-square	64.15***	112.71***	19.67***	89.97***	.436	76.88***	78.38***	123.54***
R ²	.068	.114	.022	.093	--	.081	.082	.124
N	874	874	874	874	874	874	874	874

Note: Cell Entries are given as logistic regression coefficient/ odds ration, with the standard error given in parentheses.
p<.05= *, p<.01=**, p<.001=***

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This study attempts to ascertain if strong social capital assets are associated with participation in nonprofit organizations. The goal is to determine which social assets are the strongest predictors of participation and if people possessing more social capital assets are more likely to participate with nonprofit organizations. The literature does not indicate a consensus as to which elements of social capital are the strongest predictors of participation in nonprofit organizations but does concede that the development of social capital is a factor in the growth of nonprofit organizations (Nunn 2000; Putnam 2000; Saxton and Benson 2000). The results of the bivariate and multivariate logistic regressions used in this study indicate that civic engagement and community trust are predictors of participation in nonprofit organizations and that people who maintain higher levels of these two assets are more likely to volunteer and engage in philanthropy. The political trust component of social capital was only significant in one bivariate test conducted in the analysis. These results suggest that the political trust element of social capital is not a predictor or significant indicator of participation in nonprofit organizations. However, the multivariate logistic regressions for both dependent variables indicate that there are several control variables that attained statistical significance and serve to predict higher or lower instances of volunteerism and philanthropy.

The findings from this study show that higher levels of specific social capital components are associated with participation in nonprofit organization, although in many cases the relationships are weak. Moreover, the study provides further evidence that civic engagement and community trust are predictors of volunteerism and philanthropy. Out of the three social capital

variables, civic engagement is the only variable that is significant in each of the bivariate and multivariate logistic regression tests. Table 6 model IV (A) and table 7 model IV (A) present the regression models that incorporate the three social capital indices analyzed with volunteerism and philanthropy, and table 6 model IV (B) and table 7 model (B) present the regression models that incorporate the indices with the control variables. Results from these tests indicate that of the social capital assets, civic engagement is the strongest predictor of participation in nonprofit organizations. This may be related to the activities and networks created when individuals are civically engaged in their community. Civic engagement enables individuals to invest in the progression of their community and develop personal connections with others. As social ties grow and concern for community is enhanced, individuals are more likely to participate in nonprofit organizations that align with their visions to serve and improve the area.

The community trust bivariate and multiple regression models also indicate that this social capital asset is correlated with volunteering and philanthropy and a predictor of participation in nonprofit organizations. Table 6, model II (B) and Table 7 model II (B) show that when controlling for sociodemographic attributes, community trust is a significant predictor of volunteerism and philanthropy. In the social capital literature, trust is commonly cited as a causal element related to increased levels of volunteerism and philanthropy (Putnam 2000; Saxton and Benson 2000). In the logistic regression model presented in Table 6 models IV (A) and (B), community trust is only significant as a predictor of philanthropy. The community trust index is not statistically significant when combined with the other social capital indices and the control variables to predict the likelihood of volunteering. These results introduce a direction for further investigation. How does trust influence a person's decision to volunteer or make a

monetary donation? Is there a personal investment difference between the two activities that make one require more trust than the other? It may be that making a monetary donation requires more trust because the financial investment is based upon perceived assurance that the contribution will be allocated ethically and efficiently. With volunteering, the individual is an active participant in the organization's functioning. Due to the personal involvement of the activity, it may not require as much trust to volunteer.

The political trust index is associated with only volunteering in the bivariate logistic regression model presented in table 6 model III (A). It is not a statistically significant predictor of participation in nonprofit organizations in any of the multivariate logistic regression models. These results suggest that feelings of trust toward local, state or national government do not impact an individual's decision to volunteer or engage in philanthropy. However, political engagement may be a social capital asset that is a predictor of participation in nonprofit organizations. Future research should examine how political trust influences political engagement and if political engagement is associated with higher instances of volunteering and philanthropy.

Although the control variables are not the primary variables under examination, results from the multivariate logistic regressions show that a number of the sociodemographic attributes are statistically significant in predicting participation in nonprofit organizations. College education and higher income are significant predictors in majority of the regression models for the dependent variables. These findings are consistent with existing literature which recognizes that those with higher education and income are more inclined to be aware of societal and community needs and more likely to have resources that enable them to volunteer and donate

money (Putnam 2000). The control variable, having children 17 or younger in the home is also a consistently significant variable. While results from this analysis provide support for the literature, they also suggest that having children living at home can make people less likely to engage in philanthropy. An explanation for this finding may be that people with children living at home are less likely to give money because of increased financial obligations but more likely to volunteer because they want to spend time with their children and instill altruistic values.

As this project uses the Central Florida Social Capital Benchmark Survey data, the variables as well as the analysis and results that follow are limited. The survey does not explicitly ask whether respondents participate in nonprofit organizations. Therefore, two corresponding variables derived from the survey are used to represent participation. While some respondents may have volunteered or made a monetary contribution to a nonreligious organization, charity or cause, their actions may not constitute involvement with a nonprofit organization. For example, the volunteer activity or monetary contribution may have not been with a 501(c)3, tax-exempt, charitable, not-for-profit organization.

In addition to the results suggesting an association between social capital assets and participation in nonprofit organizations, they provide an examination of the Central Florida community. The “Central Florida Social Capital Survey Final Report” produced by the University of Central Florida’s Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences, challenges the idea that Florida is a “community of in-migrants” which implies that residents do not have strong ties to their current city, county or state (Wright and Jasinski 2005:7). The final report indicates that a large majority of the sample maintain a sense of community or feeling of belonging from people (neighbors, friends, co-workers, co-ethnics) and places (their city, county, place of worship) in

Central Florida. Wright and Jasinski (2005) argue that “Central Florida possesses an abundance of social capital assets” (6). This study offers further support for this argument. The analysis shows that 48.3% of respondents said that they trusted people in their neighborhood a lot; 34% worked on a community project in the last year; and on average respondents participated in 2.5 civic engagement activities.

The findings within this research serve to contribute to the body of literature available regarding social capital and participation in nonprofit organizations. These results further demonstrate that higher levels of social capital assets and specific sociodemographic characteristics are predictors of participation in nonprofit organizations. It is recommended that future studies draw samples from other geographic regions and incorporate data directly related to nonprofit organization participation rates. Future research should additionally attempt to address the reciprocal nature of this relationship. Is this relationship a reciprocal transaction as defined by social exchange theory? In future examinations of the relationship between social capital and participation in nonprofit organization it will be important to determine which direction the causal arrow points.

To conclude, it is important to address the sociological relevance of this study. In particular to acknowledge the value of engagement, trust and reciprocity that endures in communities. The findings suggest that people in the Central Florida area are maintaining involvement with local organizations, investing time to serve others and making contributions based on trust that these efforts are valuable and purposeful. Additionally, results indicate that attitudes reflective of the social capital assets-civic engagement and community trust- are

important variables in predicting behavioral outcomes related to involvement with nonprofit organizations. Prospective studies should endeavor to identify causal factors related to the attitudes associated with social capital assets, investigate why people offer their time and resources to nonprofit organizations and explore what returns individuals receive from participatory behaviors.

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