

AN EXPLORATION OF COERCIVE POWER AND TRUST IN COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Collaborations are increasingly looked to for the resolution of social problems, for example, in the establishment of market dominance on local and global levels, or within organizations as a method for increasing efficacy. Generally power and trust have been seen as critical elements to the development of successful collaborations (Vangen & Huxham, 2003). However, in community contexts collaborations must often be preceded by community involvement. Most social scientists would agree that any discussion of power leads into the “bottomless swamp” of difficulty defining what it is, whether it is an object or a tool used for good or evil, who has access to it, and so on (Barr, 1989, p. 1).

Power is commonly viewed as a negative, harmful, coercive, *yet* valuable commodity possessed by the wealthy, the strong, or the heartless. In this view coercive power is exercised over others to satisfy the self- interest of a few; trust is unimportant. I do not need to trust you if I have power over you: power to evict, fire, imprison, or in some cultures sentence you to death. Trust then becomes a tool of the powerless and the weak (women are often included in this category). So why explore power and trust together? My answer reflects my belief that power is gained, exercised, and maintained within the context of relationships (Granovetter, 1985); and relationships are developed and

maintained through the establishment of trust (Jones & George, 1998). Persons who have or exercise coercive power do so with the understanding and acceptance of their peers and with the passivity of those who believe themselves to be powerless (Freire, 1970).

Power “happens” in a relational context (Alinsky, 1971) and in any relationship we choose whether we will relate in a coercive or cooperative manner (Tjosvold, 1981; Tjosvold & Sun, 2001). This is why I believe that the coercive view of power described above cannot be the only form of power. We could choose to gain, exercise, and maintain power cooperatively. We could choose to use power in a synergistic way that allows us to create and sustain healthy communities and social structures in our society. I believe power is a tool that can be wielded by individual or group and at any given time thereby making the powerful become the powerless and vice versa (Freire, 1970). By using a paradigm that moves beyond conceptualizing power as simply coercive, it becomes transformative, recognizing that even in the old paradigm the understanding of power as coercive had to be shared in order to be sustained.

In this article I am asking the reader to consider the possibility of *shared* power where trust is not unimportant or worthless but a valuable and necessary part of successful collaborations (Child, 2001; Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998). I want to understand the relationship between trust and power under this paradigm in order to enhance efforts of social change for safe and habitable communities. However, given the limitations of the available data, I will first explore what is known about coercive power and trust to begin looking at how

they interact to influence community involvement. I have several assumptions that build on each other and form the foundation of this study and my future dissertation work.

The first assumption is that any activity engaged in by more than one person can be explored from a relational context (Granovetter, 1985). For example; business is conducted within relationships, sense of community is developed within relationships, coercive power is exercised within relationships, social capital with its strong emphasis on social networks is built within relationships, and so on. Collaborative efforts that bring multiple constituencies together without attending to the underlying (and often historical) relationships that exist between the groups, often fail (Vangen & Huxham, 2003). Leading to a second assumption, those persons who participate in large community-wide collaborations have already been involved in their community through political activity, membership in a local organization, or by attending public meetings. This is why in this study I am measuring the influence of coercive power and trust on community involvement.

To be successful, I believe collaborations must address issues of power, trust, and risk (Vangen & Huxham, 2003). Although risk will not be directly addressed by this study it is as important as trust in maintaining relationships and exercising power. For example, a risk assessment is often done before a business takeover is viewed as feasible, before a state legislator votes on a controversial bill, before a governor slashes spending on health care for the poor, and before an organization vies for funding with a previously successful partner

organization; and all can be viewed as an exercise of power. Having said all of this I believe successful collaborations are largely a function of sharing power, building trust and minimizing risk; especially in cases where a power differential between partners exist.

This relationship can best be represented in the formula below:

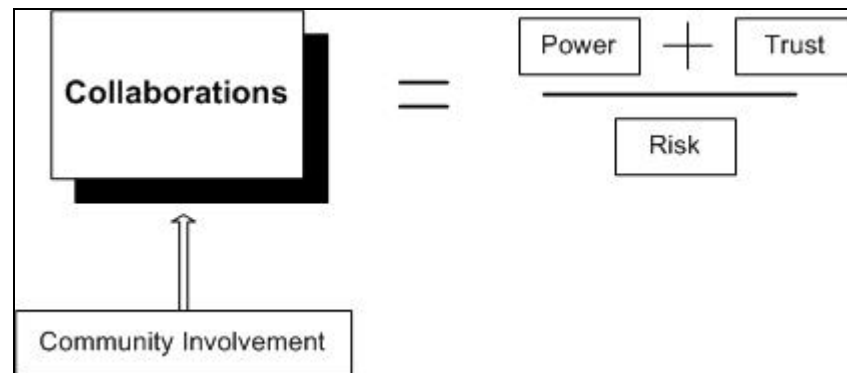


Figure 1: Modeling Successful Collaborations

The goal is to maximize success by having a higher product of shared power and trust among parties than the amount of risk taken by any member. This will be explored further in the literature review in the section on linking power and trust. This model is the basis for my research program, but first I must understand the relationship between trust, and, in this case, coercive power as it relates to getting people involved in community. The goal of the paper is to discover whether coercive power and trust lead people to become engaged and involved in their community.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will explore theories of empowerment, sense of community, and social capital as they relate to power and trust, recognizing the concepts of trust and power are just small parts of these theories. However small they may be in relation to the theories, they constitute critical elements of these constructs. For example, power is complicated by discipline boundaries in the form of different histories and theories in conceptualizing power (see Table 1). Trust is similarly complicated by the diversity of disciplines, vocabularies, contexts, and conceptualizations that address trust (see Table 2). Additionally, it is the aim of this paper to study them in tandem. Mostly the literatures reviewed here will focus on power and trust as they are separately studied although there is an exception; a study on trust, respect, and political engagement.

The literature review will reflect work at levels of analysis beyond interpersonal relationships; a level at which many previous studies of trust were focused (Holmes & Rempel, 1989). Therefore it will develop as follows: empowerment and power will be discussed, exploring the themes of empowerment linked to collaboration, empowerment linked to power, and synergic power as shared power. Also, trust will be discussed, highlighting its complexity and its link to sense of community and social capital. To conclude, the literature review will explore the link between power and trust, give a brief

comment on what the literature provides and does not provide for us, and present the research questions and hypotheses of this study.

Empowerment Theory and Power

Linking to collaborations. Collaborations are often seen as a vehicle for the empowerment of previously silenced or ignored voices and perspectives by granting members of such groups a seat at the table (Rappaport, 1981). Empowerment has been defined as a process that places a priority on working with people in a way that supports genuine collaboration through a mutual-influence process (Rappaport, 1990) and later as “an intentional, ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources” (Rappaport, 1995, p. 796).

Underlying those definitions is an assumption that if people are simply engaged in the process and respected then they will be empowered. However research demonstrated that this is not necessarily so, especially if systemic issues which create the power differentials are not addressed. Gruber and Trickett (1987) measured how much decision-making power people actually wielded in a case study in which those traditionally disempowered in school settings were given a seat at the decision-making table. In this study the teachers chose to share their decision-making power with parents and students.

The setting was an alternate public high school with a commitment to empowerment that was expressed through the creation of a governing board that allowed students, parents, and teachers to be equally represented. The governing board met two goals, the desire to empower parents and students and the need for parent involvement to receive federal funds. The board began as the central decision-making body of the school; although it was eventually bypassed on important issues until the end of the fourth year when the board became no longer relevant. The authors concluded the failure of the governing board was based on two things: the “tyranny of structurelessness (Gruber & Trickett, 1987, p. 363)” and “the paradox of empowerment (Gruber & Trickett, 1987, p. 366)”.

The tyranny of structurelessness can occur when a group believes that formal structures perpetuate existing inequalities. To compensate for this mechanism, groups move to an informal structure but this new structure has unanticipated consequences- groups then become tyrannized by the dynamics this new structurelessness creates. An exorbitant amount of energy is spent on group discussions about internal processes, informal leadership is resented and undercut, and inevitably initial goals are undermined. In the alternative school studied, the governing board often reflected on their role and their power and often nothing got done because there was no formal leader following up on reports, grievances, issues, or suggestions.

The paradox of empowerment is the failure of “the favored” in a group to successfully grant power to the “less favored” members of the group. This occurs

because “the favored” have much greater resources than others and although they give the others power they do so without changing the circumstances that created the inequality. Put differently, “there is a fundamental paradox in the idea of people empowering people because the very institutional structure that puts one group in a position to empower others also works to undermine the act of empowerment” (Gruber & Trickett, 1987, p. 370). This study demonstrated how a collaboration among teachers and students and parents, formerly excluded in decision- making on school policy, organization, etc, failed when teachers and other school personnel attempted to empower those groups without consideration for the power dynamics that would resist such an effort.

A situation was then created where parents often deferred to teachers, especially if there was disagreement between the teacher and student representatives; after all, teachers know best how to operate a school. Over time whatever real power was given to the body was gradually taken away as conflict arose between the body and the teacher population at large. In the end the governing body was no more than a toothless tiger, no longer a threat and no longer effective. Parents and students returned (if it is possible they ever left) to their disempowered roles. Researchers continued to question whether empowerment that was not linked to power was merely illusory (Speer & Hughey, 1995).

Linking to power. Before linking empowerment theory to power it is important to note that power, in the most general sense of the word, is a difficult concept to discuss given the different disciplines that investigate it, the different

history of the theories on power, and the different types of power (broadly and narrowly defined) (see Table 1 below for examples). Although this study will focus on coercive power, the ideas discussed throughout the literature review represent the diverse views of the different disciplines or theorists from which they are drawn (mostly theorists from the 1900's with the exception of Machiavelli & Marx).

Table 1: The Study of Power

Theorists		Disciplines	Types of Power
Hunter	Lukes	Psychology	Economic
Mill	Machiavelli	Community ψ	Political
Marx	Weber	Social ψ	Social
Dahl	Foucault	Sociology	Cultural (Ideology)
Hobbes	Habermas	Religion	Personal
Bachrach & Baratz	Locke	Political Science	Coercive
Freire	Nietzsche	Economics	Synergic

Riger (1993) believed the risk of taking empowerment (psychological attribute) out of the context of power (social reality) is the internalization of social problems, which makes the political (social problems) personal and supports the status quo. Empowerment theory must be linked to an understanding of power in order to learn how a once disempowered individual or group begins to make real contributions when taking a seat at the decision- making table or getting involved in their community. In a study designed to link empowerment theory to community participation, Speer (2000) developed a measure of interactional empowerment and compared it to intrapersonal empowerment. Both forms build

on a theory that psychological empowerment operated through three basic components: intrapersonal, interactional, and behavioral; and reflected an understanding of empowerment that included belief in one's own power (intrapersonal) and an understanding of how power shapes one's social environment (interactional).

In the study, respondents were classified as high or low on each dimension of intrapersonal and interactional empowerment, and then community participation and sense of community was measured for these four groups. The author found that the greater a person's intrapersonal empowerment (belief in one's own power) the greater a person's participation in community activities. In contrast the greater a person's interactional empowerment (understanding of how power shapes community), the greater a person's organizational involvement. At the same time Speer was also able to conclude,

“Persons may feel empowered without understanding how to act on that feeling to make changes in the conditions of their communities. Likewise, individuals may possess an understanding of the methods required to create social change but lack the sense of personal efficacy necessary to act on this understanding (p. 59).”

This is consistent with the Gruber and Trickett study discussed above where parents felt empowered by their inclusion on the governing board although there was no real shift in decision- making power.

Although, the paradigm for power shared by the participants of this study most likely reflected an understanding of coercive power, Speer suggests the measure of interactional empowerment (understanding of how power shapes community) supports Riger's (1993) perspective on community. Riger has

criticized empowerment theory for being too narrowly focused on individualism and conflict, ignoring cooperation and community which are also important values. A conceptualization of power that does incorporate cooperation and community is synergic power.

Synergic power as shared power. Craig and Craig (1971) defined synergic power as the ability of persons to increase the satisfactions of all participants by the intentional generation of increased energy and creativity. Katz (1984) discussed the use of power in healing from a synergy paradigm versus a scarcity paradigm. In synergistic paradigm collaboration rather than competition is promoted; resources expand and become renewable, the greater the amount of the resource shared the greater the resource. In a scarcity paradigm these resources are limited and therefore people and communities must compete for them. While empowerment has potential toward equitable distribution of resources it is severely limited when functioning from a scarcity paradigm.

Katz offers Friere's work as a link between the two paradigms because of his demonstration of how power as a resource expands when individuals work together to change systems. Also, he believes Rappaport's work (1981) contributes because of the non-linear thinking demonstrated in "praise of paradox", which suggests the importance of seemingly divergent and conflicting solutions to a problem. Finally, he cites the writings of other social scientists because of their contributions to his understanding of a synergistic community. There are four elements that define a synergistic community:

1. A valued resource is renewable, expandable, and accessible.

2. Mechanisms and attitudes exist which guarantee that the resource is shared equitably among community members.
3. What is good for one is good for all.
4. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Synergistic communities go through phases of synergy or lean toward synergy most of the time; however, a community cannot always function synergistically (anti- structure cannot exist without structure) and even a community that functions from a scarcity paradigm require brief moments of synergy to be sustained. This is similar to the concept of the sharing of an understanding of power as coercive in order for coercive power to be sustained.

Katz posits that synergy is inherent in all communities and references cross- cultural studies that provide evidence of the existence of self embedded in community and extensive sharing, which is essential to synergy. For example, in the Fiji society the “self is defined and experienced contextually, dependent on how one fulfills one’s social obligations (p. 205).” In Fiji, ceremonial life is essential and during a healing ceremony. Both “true” sicknesses (natural causes) and “spiritual” sicknesses (caused by witchcraft or a violation of cultural norms) are brought to the healer. Healers must exemplify the ideal Fijian.

The ideal Fijian follows the straight path against all odds. Resisting temptation the healer must lead by example doing such things as: 1) living and telling the truth; 2) having humility, respect for others and tradition, and a love for all; 3) demonstrating proper and traditional behavior, single- mindedness, and service, “so that the power is used only to heal and not for personal gain (p. 215).” The increasing empowerment of the healer is thereby reflected in the mutually increasing empowerment of the community.

Like the West, the Fijians are hierarchically organized and have specialized healers. Like the Fijian consumers, consumers in the West of the community mental health system forge “treatment packages” that contain different healing resources and reflect different healing paradigms. While these treatment packages begin to develop toward the synergy seen in the Fijian society, it is hindered by the providers of the system. The providers of the community mental health system fail to collaborate with each other and the consumers; also they lack knowledge and respect of the different healing resources available in the community. Synergy in this healing context becomes difficult, especially if the providers view each others efforts as misguided, ineffective, irrelevant, and harmful.

Power from the synergy paradigm emphasizes the importance of cooperation and collaboration; an emphasis that empowerment theory has failed to take into consideration. Simplistically stated, shared power in a synergistic community can create an environment in which even the quest for personal power can serve the whole and lead to an increase in the community’s power. In situations in which people choose to legitimately share power, trust is critical to success. Trust is critical to collaborating with others successfully (Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998).

Trust

Complexity of trust. Trust is a complex phenomena made more difficult by disciplinary boundedness: management, sociology, political science, psychology, business, and communication. There are many definitions which place emphasis on different aspects of trust; these different aspects are sometimes called antecedents, determinants, and components of trust (see Table 2 below for examples). Trust can also develop horizontally or vertically among various trustors and trustees, it has multiple types and develops from various sources.

Table 2: Complexity of Trust

Aspects of Trust	Language	Disciplines
Participants	Trustor, Trustee	Sociology (Coleman, 1990)
Types	Impersonal, Interpersonal; Specific, Generalized; Conditional, Unconditional	Management (Gabarro, 1978; Sheppard & Sherman, 1998)
Direction	Horizontal, Vertical	Political Science (Fukuyama, 1995)
Sources	Familiarity, Contractual,	Psychology (Holmes & Rempel, 1989)
Development	Spontaneous, Socially Controlled	Business (Sitkin & Roth, 1993)
Components	Cognitive, Affective, Behavioral	
Antecedents	Butler's 10	

Even the various definitions of trust have different emphases. For example, trust has been defined as a willingness to cooperate when an element of risk exists based on shared norms of reciprocity and exchange (Scanzoni, 1979). Elsewhere another definition of trust asserts that trust is an expectation that one can predict another's behavior, that neither will take malevolent or arbitrary actions, and that both are operating out of good faith (Gabarro, 1978). In an organizational context it has been defined as "the belief in a person's

competence to perform a specific task under specific circumstances (Sitkin & Roth, 1993, p. 373).

A central component to these definitions is the cognitive nature of determining whether to trust. Another theme signifies something other than cognitive, it is the sort of automatic behavioral component that is based on the shared rules and habits of a community, which also provides grounds for trust (Fukuyama, 1995). Despite a common perception that trust is mostly emotive many researchers in the management literature believe that specific trust (a more cognitive- based trust) is more relevant in terms of predicting outcomes than a global attitude of trust in generalized others (a more affect- based trust) (Butler, 1991) when measuring trust in organizations. However given the multiconditional and situational nature of trust, researchers have found it more productive to measure the conditions under which trust is developed.

In an attempt to identify these conditions and develop a scale Butler (1991) built on the work of Gabarro (1978) who studied how managerial relationships form and change over time and Jennings who measured conditions of trust while interviewing executives. The ten conditions found in the Butler (1991) study and included in the subsequent scale were: *availability* (being physically present when needed), *competence* (knowledge and skills related to specific task; people skills), *consistency* (reliability, predictability, and good judgment), *discreetness* (keeping confidences), *fairness*, *integrity* (honesty and truthfulness), *loyalty*, *openness* (freely sharing ideas and information), *promise fulfillment*, and *receptivity* (accepting ideas and information).

With the inclusion of an overall trust item the Conditions of Trust Inventory (CTI) was developed and measured in three other studies by the author that gave validity to the scale. The degrees to which the conditions are met reflect the degree to which a person is deemed credible thereby having influence within the areas in which she is trusted (Butler, 1991). In the discussion of these studies Butler (1991) concluded that given the power differential inherent in most (employer to employee) of the relationships examined, the trust conditions were only necessary for persons with less coercive power to control the behavior of others. In other words in relationships of equals or organizational structures that are more horizontal than vertical these trust conditions are very important but when a power differential exists the person or groups on top do not have to worry as much about trust.

Linking to SOC and SC. “Trust is an essential element of all social exchange relations and collective action (Sitkin & Roth, 1993). Collective action is cooperation among people to achieve common goals. A preferred definition of social capital, which like trust has also received many, is: social capital consists of the stock of active connections among people: the trust, mutual understanding, and shared values and behaviors that bind the members of human networks and communities and make cooperative action possible (Cohen & Prusak, 2001, p. 4). I acknowledge and respect the criticism that this definition does not adequately address the issue of power and therefore leads to bankrupt implications for the theory (Defilippis, 2001). However what this definition does well is highlight the centrality of trust as can be seen in the following:

“Trust between individuals thus becomes trust between strangers and trust of a broad fabric of social institutions; ultimately, it becomes a shared set of values, virtues, and expectations within society as a whole. Without this interaction, on the other hand, trust decays; at a certain point, this decay begins to manifest itself in serious social problems... The concept of social capital contends that building or rebuilding community and trust requires face-to-face encounters (Beem, 1999, p. 20).”

While sense of community theory did not initially explicate the role of trust, McMillan (1996), a co-creator of the commonly used definition (McMillan & Chavis, 1986) suggested that trust is the most salient ingredient in the element of influence, one of the four elements of sense of community (McMillan, 1996). Unfortunately research and discussion of trust and its role in the development and maintenance of sense of community is lacking. With the exception of the following study, research on trust and community involvement is also sorely lacking.

Linking power and trust. To my knowledge there is only one empirical study of the relationship between power and trust. Recently, Boeckmann and Tyler (2002) examined whether participation in local community activities influences trust in others and through it a willingness to participate in broader political activity. They proposed that a common sense of identity leads to a sense of generalized trust. The authors suggest that political participation is linked to issues of identity (such as a sense of belonging and respect) with one's community. Their argument, influenced by Putnam (1995) and social capital theory, is directional in that they propose a model where participation in voluntary community organizations leads to a sense of trust in others in society, which then leads to participation in the political process.

In the study, a telephone interview measured: civic engagement, generalized trust, political engagement, respect, pride, community identity, self-esteem, perceptions of the helpfulness or threat presented by others, and demographic variables were analyzed using a multiple regression and path analysis. The analysis of the data supports the model where participation in voluntary community organizations leads to a sense of trust in others in society, which then leads to participation in the political process. The authors conclude by noting, "Participation in civic activities will be effective in promoting democracy only to the extent that it engenders generalized trust of others (Boeckmann & Tyler, 2002, p. 2081)." This study demonstrated that trust in others is critical to community involvement.

Conclusion

What do we know? While much is still to be learned about trust and coercive power, we know more about how these concepts work in business and other formal organizational settings than we do in community and community organizations. Studies on trust and community involvement (as a participatory behavioral component) were absent in the literature. We know little about their relationship to each other or how they work in tandem within organizations. While the study by Boeckmann & Tyler (2002) has begun to address how trust relates to civic and political involvement more needs to be done to understand how these concepts relate in neighborhood and other community settings.

We know a lot about coercive power from a scarcity paradigm where it is often experienced as coercive but virtually nothing about power from a synergy

paradigm where it is experienced as shared. Unfortunately, given that this study uses data from a pre-existing database we will not directly be able to study how understanding of shared power and trust relate to community involvement.

However, we will be able to learn about how an understanding coercive power and trust relates to community involvement.

Research questions. This study seeks to explore the relationship between beliefs on how coercive power works in communities and the three forms of trust: trust in neighbors at the individual level, aggregate trust in neighbors at the community level, and trust in community organizations. Additionally, trust in neighbors at the individual level, aggregate trust in neighbors at the community level, versus trust in local community organizations and their influence on community involvement will be explored. Also to be examined is whether trust in neighbors at the individual level and coercive power interact to influence community involvement. Finally, I will explore whether living in a community of high or low trust influences trust in neighbors at the individual level, beliefs on coercive power, community involvement, and trust in community organizations. Four specific hypotheses are proposed,

1. The three forms of trust will have significant, negative relationships with beliefs on how coercive power works in communities,
2. Specific trust in community organizations will have a stronger influence than generalized trust in neighbors at the individual and aggregate community level on community involvement,
3. The interaction of trust in neighbors at the individual level and beliefs on how coercive power works in communities will not have a strong influence on community involvement, and
4. Communities of high trust will have significantly higher means on trust in neighbors at the individual level, community involvement, and trust in organizations and significantly lower means on coercive power than communities of low trust.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Sample

This study draws on existing data from the Urban Community Development Project conducted between 1993 and 1997 at Rutgers University. A random sample telephone survey was used to collect the data. The sample consists of 973 residents of 13 New Jersey and 3 Eastern Pennsylvania municipalities. Respondents age ranged from 18 to 75+ years (mean ~ 44). They were: 58% female, 42% male, with 33% being people of color (African American, Hispanic, etc) and 67% white. Approximately 7% had less than high school education, ~23% had some college, and another 23% had college degrees. While 15 percent had graduate or professional degrees and ~31% had high school diplomas only. Income ranged from under \$5, 000 (3%) to more than \$40,000 (~49%) a year. The average income was ~\$30,000 (~18%) a year. Residents had ~13 years of average years in residence and 39% had children.

Measure

The survey asked respondents to respond to 12 scales, which can be viewed below. Items were drawn from 7 of 12 scales [SOC, Community Empowerment, Community Action, Community Involvement, Perceptions of

Community/Organization, Organizational Characteristics, and Demographic] to create 5 scales for this analysis.

Table 3: The Development of Scales

Original scales of survey (12)	Original scales used in this study (7)	Scales created from original scales (5)
❖ Sense of Community	❖ Sense of Community	❖ Trust- Individual
❖ Empowerment Subscale	❖ Empowerment Subscale	❖ Trust- Community
❖ Civic Participation	❖ Civic Participation	❖ Specific Trust-organization
❖ Community Involvement	❖ Community Involvement	❖ Understanding of Coercive power
❖ Perceptions of Community/Organization	❖ Perceptions of Community/Organization	❖ Community Involvement
❖ Organizational Characteristics	❖ Organizational Characteristics	
❖ Demographics	❖ Demographics	
❖ Political Involvement		
❖ Alienation		
❖ Organizational Typology		
❖ Health		
❖ Substance Use		

The five scales include: trust in neighbors at the individual level, aggregate trust in neighbors at the community level, trust in community organizations, belief in how coercive power works in communities scale, and a participation scale for community involvement.

Table 4: Trust scale- individual level

1. People in my neighborhood do not share the same values
2. My neighbors and I want the same things from our neighborhood*
3. I can recognize most of the people who live in my neighborhood*
4. Very few of my neighbors know me
5. I have no influence over what my neighborhood is like
6. People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other

*Items were reverse coded.

The generalized trust in neighbors- individual level scale included 6 items from the SOC scale that asked respondents about people in their neighborhood. Respondents were asked to respond on a 4- point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree to items such as: “my neighbors and I want the same things from our neighborhood”, and “people in my neighborhood do not share the same values” (reverse coded). These items reflect a definition of trust as an expectation of shared rules, values, and habits of a community. The generalized trust in neighbors- community level is an aggregate variable based on the generalized trust in neighbors at the individual level scale for each of the sixteen communities represented.

Table 5: Trust Scale- community organizations

1. if I were in trouble I could count on people in the community group to help*
 2. I trust the leaders of the community group to do what is best for me*
 3. the group leaders are somewhat lacking in organizational skills and know-how
 4. the leaders are very committed and dedicated to the group*
 5. the leaders relate and respond well to group members*
 6. the group leadership is very talented as far as group operations are concerned*
 7. the leaders' own problems and personality get in the way of effective leadership
-

*Items reverse coded.

Trust at the organizational level included 2 items from the Perceptions of Community/Organization scale and 5 items from the Organizational Characteristics scale. Respondents were asked in both measures to think about the community organization they were most involved with and respond on a 5- point scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree. Items included “I trust the

leaders of the community group to do what is best for me” and “the group leaders are somewhat lacking in organizational skills and know-how”. These items reflect 7 out of 10 conditions of trust in organizations identified by Butler (1991).

Table 6: belief of how Coercive power works Scale

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | the powerful punish their enemies* |
| 2. | the powerful control what information gets to the public* |
| 3. | many issues are kept out of the news by those with community influence* |
| 4. | those with power shape how people think about community problems* |
| 5. | influential groups shape how a community interprets local events* |

*Items were reverse coded.

The coercive power scale included 5 items from the Community Empowerment scale. They included, “the powerful punish their enemies” and “those with power shape how people think about community problems”. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with these statements on a 5- point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. All items used were reverse coded for purposes of analysis. These items measure a persons understanding of how coercive power works in communities.

TABLE 7: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCALE

1.	signed a petition*
2.	participated in a protest march or rally*
3.	written a letter or made a telephone call to influence a policy or issue*
4.	attended an event promoting information about community services*
5.	arranged an agenda for a public meeting*
6.	had an in-depth, face-to-face conversation about an issue affecting your community*
7.	attended a public meeting to pressure for a policy change*
8.	attended a meeting to gather information about a neighborhood issue*
9.	participated in faith organization*
10.	participated in school group/parent group*
11.	participated in other civic organization or community group*

*Items are reverse coded.

The community involvement scale included all eight items on the Civic Participation scale, which measured individual involvement in the community. It included items like, “participated in protest march or rally”, “signed a petition”, and “attended a public meeting to pressure for a policy change”. Respondents indicated how often they had engaged in these activities over the last year. Responses ranged from not at all to 5 or more times. It also included 3 items measuring how involved individuals were in their local community organizations such as faith organizations, school groups, or civic/community groups such as block clubs and service organizations. For these items respondents recorded how many times they had participated in any of these groups activities in the past 3 months. They ranged from 5 or more times to not at all. Participation was considered separate from membership.

Scale Development

A maximum likelihood factor analysis was conducted using direct oblimin rotation for scale development. A preliminary factor analysis was done on the sense of community scale which identified two factors: trust in place and trust in neighbors. Items from the trust in neighbor’s factor were used in the factor analysis discussed in the table below (Table 8). These four factors accounted for 42.7 percent of the total variance. The critical value used for a significant loading was .35. Two items on the community involvement scale did not meet the .35 critical value and will be excluded in further analyses: 1) participated in faith organization and 2) participated in school group/parent group.

Table 8 – Rotated Factor Loadings for Trust- Individual, Trust- Organizations, Coercive Power, and Community Involvement Scales

Item	Trust-Ind.	Trust-Orgs.	Coercive Power	Community Involvement
Trust in Neighbors- Individual Level				
People in my neighborhood do not share the same values	0.448	-0.027	-0.154	-0.025
My neighbors and I want the same things from our neighborhood*	0.511	0.081	0.066	-0.109
I can recognize most of the people who live in my neighborhood*	0.411	0.079	0.070	-0.025
Very few of my neighbors know me	0.505	-0.007	-0.027	0.096
I have no influence over what my neighborhood is like	0.449	0.014	-0.093	0.172
People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other	0.503	-0.002	-0.013	0.039
Trust in Organizations				
if I were in trouble I could count on people in the community group to help*	0.039	0.467	0.001	0.058
I trust the leaders of the community group to do what is best for me*	0.069	0.510	0.030	-0.036
the group leaders are somewhat lacking in organizational skills and know-how	0.030	0.457	-0.163	0.030
the leaders are very committed and dedicated to the group*	0.006	0.793	0.088	0.011
the leaders relate and respond well to group members*	0.029	0.793	0.026	-0.014
the group leadership is very talented as far as group operations are concerned*	-0.039	0.825	0.092	-0.052
the leaders' own problems and personality get in the way of effective leadership	-0.012	0.463	-0.233	0.003
Understanding of coercive power				
the powerful punish their enemies*	-0.123	-0.030	0.535	0.012
the powerful control what information gets to the public*	-0.076	-0.024	0.637	-0.026
many issues are kept out of the news by those with community influence*	-0.140	0.016	0.683	0.029
those with power shape how people think about community problems*	0.044	0.009	0.651	0.055
influential groups shape how a community interprets local events*	0.111	0.005	0.469	-0.024

Table 8- Continued

Item	Trust-Individual	Trust-Community Organizations	Coercive power	Community Involvement
Community Involvement				
signed a petition*	0.074	-0.076	0.023	0.471
participated in a protest march or rally*	-0.047	-0.053	0.050	0.355
written a letter or made a telephone call to influence a policy or issue*	0.084	-0.075	0.048	0.556
attended an event promoting information about community services*	0.038	0.020	0.016	0.757
arranged an agenda for a public meeting*	-0.026	0.016	-0.046	0.523
had an in-depth, face-to-face conversation about an issue affecting your community*	-0.028	-0.010	-0.031	0.578
attended a public meeting to pressure for a policy change*	0.069	-0.023	0.071	0.729
attended a meeting to gather information about a neighborhood issue*	0.029	0.068	-0.002	0.708
participated in faith organization*	0.040	0.159	0.034	0.215
participated in school group/parent group*	-0.094	0.073	-0.037	0.307
participated in other civic organization or community group*	0.047	0.057	-0.092	0.495
Eigenvalues	4.90	3.33	2.40	1.75
Percent of total variance explained by the factors	16.89	11.48	8.29	6.02

A reliability analysis was run for the four scales in the table above. The results can be found in the table below (Table 9). The trust in community organizations, based on the conditions of trust identified by Butler, and the community involvement scales have the greatest reliability. The belief in how coercive power works scale has been used in numerous other studies and has a similar reliability ($\alpha = .78$) (Speer & Peterson, 2000). The weakest reliability was found for the trust in neighbors at the individual level scale, which is a subscale of the sense of community scale used in the original survey; however, it is deemed robust enough to continue.

Table 9: Reliability Analyses

Scale	<i>N</i> items	Mean	Range	<i>SD</i>	α
Trust- Individual	6	16.96	14.43	3.80	.65
Trust-Community Organizations	7	26.20	35.38	5.95	.82
Coercive power	6	22.31	26.32	5.13	.77
Community Involvement	9	14.93	29.40	5.42	.82

Analytic Strategy

Table 10 below shows the four research questions being asked in this study: 1) is there a relationship between beliefs on how coercive power works in communities and the three types of trust; trust in neighbors at the individual, aggregate community, and organizational levels; 2) which types of trust influence community involvement; 3) do trust and beliefs on how coercive power works interact to influence involvement in the community; and 4) does living in a high

versus low community of trust influence trust in neighbors at the individual level, beliefs on how coercive power works, community involvement, and trust in community organizations.

Table 10: Analytic Strategy

RESEARCH QUESTION	INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	DEPENDENT VARIABLE	ANALYTIC STRATEGY
Is there a relationship between trust and coercive power?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trust- Individual 2. Trust- Community (Aggregate) 3. Trust- Community Organizations 4. Coercive power 5. Demographic variables 		Correlation
Which types of trust influences community involvement, general or specific?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trust- Individual 2. Trust- Community (Aggregate) 3. Trust- Community Organizations 4. Demographic variables 	Community Involvement	Hierarchical Multiple Regression
Do trust and coercive power interact to influence community involvement?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trust- Individual 2. Trust- Community Organizations 3. Coercive power 4. Trust- Individual & Coercive power variable 5. Demographic variables 	Community Involvement	Hierarchical Multiple Regression
Does living in a high versus low community of trust influence trust- individual, trust- community organizations, coercive power, and community involvement?	Community of Trust (High versus Low)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trust- Individual 2. Trust- Community Organizations 3. Coercive power 4. Community Involvement 5. Demographic variables 	MANCOVA

The table also shows what the independent and dependent variables are for each question and how they will be analyzed. A correlation analysis will be used to answer for the first question, hierarchical multiple regressions will be used for the next two questions, and for the fourth question a MANCOVA will be run. For all analyses demographic variables will be entered and controlled for in the interpretations. The three trust variables fits Bronfenbrenner's ecological model.



Figure 2: Ecological Model of Trust in Community

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Using a bivariate correlation to answer the first research question, does a relationship exist between coercive power and the three types of trust, found a significant, negative relationship between the understanding of coercive power with trust in neighbors at the individual level (-.15, $p < .00$) and with trust in community organizations for which the respondent was a member (-.18, $p < .00$). The first hypothesis was supported with the exception of the relationship between coercive power and trust in neighbors at the community level (-.029, $p < .36$). Based on an understanding of synergistic power it is not surprising that a persons understanding of coercive power has a negative relationship with their level of trust in community organizations.

Table 11: Correlation Analysis

<i>Correlations</i>	<i>TRUST-INDIVIDUAL</i>	<i>TRUST-COMMUNITY</i>	<i>TRUST-ORGANIZATIONS</i>	<i>COERCIVE POWER</i>
TRUST- INDIVIDUAL	1	.164 (.00)	.265 (.00)	-.150 (.00)
TRUST- COMMUNITY	.164 (.00)	1	.099 (.00)	-.029 (.36)
TRUST- ORGANIZATIONS	.265 (.00)	.099 (.00)	1	-.183 (.00)
COERCIVE POWER	-.150 (.00)	-.029 (.36)	-.183 (.00)	1

*p values are in the parentheses.

The second research question- which types of trust influenced community involvement was answered using a hierarchical multiple regression analysis.

Demographic data were modeled first, next trust at the individual level and trust at the aggregate community level were added to the model, and finally trust in community organizations was added to test the hypothesis that trust in community organizations would have a stronger influence on community involvement than the others. Although modeled separately all variables were entered together. As seen in Table 12 below, all 3 models were significant and the addition of the blocks of independent variables doubled the amount of variance accounted for by demographic variables alone. Having both a generalized trust in neighbors at the individual and trust in community organizations significantly influences community involvement; $\beta = .235$ ($p < .00$) and $\beta = .068$ ($p < .04$) respectively. The second hypothesis was not supported; generalized individual trust had a greater influence on community involvement than either organizational or community trust.

Table 12: Relationship of Trust on Community Involvement

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>
Demographics			
Gender	-.002 (.99)	-.056 (.89)	-.13 (.75)
Education	.775 (.00)	.697 (.00)	.699 (.00)
Income	.38 (.017)	.389 (.017)	.359 (.02)
Ethnicity	-.143 (.738)	-.111 (.80)	-.072 (.87)
Independent Variables			
Trust- Individual		.261 (.00)	.235 (.00)
Trust- Community		-.199 (.49)	-.205 (.47)
Trust- Organizations			.068 (.04)
Model Statistics			
Adjusted R ²	.045 (.00)	.084 (.00)	.089 (.04)

*p values are in the parentheses.

The third analysis, also using a hierarchical multiple regression, examined whether trust and coercive power interacted to influence community involvement. Again the demographic data was modeled first, and the independent variables, trust at the individual level, and coercive power were added to the model, and finally, a coercive power by trust at the individual level interaction variable was also added to the model. As seen below, only 2 models were significant. Again, the addition of trust at the individual level and coercive power variables doubled the amount of variance accounted for by the demographic variables alone. As in the previous analysis, trust at the individual level significantly influenced community involvement ($\beta = .424$, $p < .02$), while coercive power did not have a significant influence ($\beta = .185$, $p < .24$). The interaction of the beliefs on how coercive power works and trust in neighbors at the individual level did not have a significant influence on community involvement ($\beta = -.008$, $p < .41$); therefore the hypothesis was supported.

Table 13: Relationship of Trust and Coercive power on Community Involvement

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>
Demographics			
Gender	-.032 (.93)	-.128 (.74)	-.116 (.76)
Education	.779 (.00)	.707 (.00)	.705 (.00)
Income	.433 (.005)	.428 (.004)	.432 (.00)
Ethnicity	.006 (.988)	.000 (1.00)	.008 (.98)
Independent Variables			
Trust- Individual		.283 (.00)	.424 (.02)
Coercive power		.061 (.16)	.185 (.24)
Trust* Coercive power			-.008 (.41)
Model Statistics			
Adjusted R ²	.050 (.00)	.100 (.00)	.099 (.41)

*p values are in the parentheses.

The fourth question asked if living in a high versus low community of trust influenced trust in neighbors- individual level, beliefs on how coercive power works, community involvement, and trust in community organizations using a multiple analysis of covariance (MANCOVA). The model, controlling for education and income, was significant ($F= 5.027$, $p <.00$), $\eta^2= .03$. The global analysis found a significant difference between living in a high or low community of trust, however, only two mean differences were significant; communities with high trust had a greater trust in neighbors at the individual level and greater trust in community organizations. The means of coercive power and community involvement were lower in communities of high trust; although these differences were not significant. The hypothesis was partially supported (see Table 14).

Table 14: Mean Differences of Trust- Individual, Coercive power, Community Involvement, & Trust- Organizations for High and Low Trust Communities

	<i>Means (Std. Error)</i>	<i>Mean Differences</i>	<i>P- value</i>	<i>Eta²</i>
Demographic Variables				
Education			.00	.028
Income			.01	.017
Dependent Variables				
Trust- Individual			.00	.022
High	16.73 (.24)	1.30	.00	
Low	15.43 (.22)			
Coercive power			.03	.008
High	18.47 (.24)	-.57	.08	
Low	19.04 (.22)			
Community Involvement			.00	.046
High	15.28 (.29)	-.09	.83	
Low	15.37 (.28)			
Trust- Organizations			.01	.012
High	26.56 (.34)	1.12	.02	
Low	25.44 (.32)			
Model Statistics			.00	.027

*Bolted p values represent the significance of the global analysis. Other p values represent the significance of the mean difference analysis.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Review of Findings

There were four hypotheses tested in this study. The first hypothesis was that an understanding of coercive power and the three types of trust would have significant and negative relationships. Trust in neighbors at the individual level and trust in community organizations did have significant, negative relationships with coercive power; the relationship between coercive power and community level trust in neighbors was not significantly correlated. The second hypothesis was that specific trust, in this case, trust in community organizations, would have a greater influence than generalized trust, trust in neighbors at the individual level, on community involvement. While both influenced community involvement, the findings revealed the reverse of the hypothesis. Generalized trust in neighbors had a greater influence than specific trust in a community organization.

The third hypothesis was an interaction of generalized trust in neighbors at the individual level and coercive power would not have a significant influence on involvement. The findings showed that coercive power did not significantly influence community involvement. Therefore the interaction was also insignificant and the hypothesis was supported. The fourth hypothesis addressed the contextual factor of living in a high or low community of trust. So, individuals living in a community of high trust would be more trusting, more

involved, and would be lower on an understanding of coercive power than those living in low trust communities. This hypothesis was partially supported. High trust communities had significantly greater individual trust and trust in community organizations.

To summarize the findings, if a person scored lower on the coercive power scale then they probably scored higher in their level of trust in their neighbors and community organizations. Also, scoring high on trust in neighbors had a greater influence on community involvement than trust in community organizations or power (which was not significant). Additionally, living in communities of high trust mostly influenced other trusting variables but not community involvement or beliefs about how coercive power worked in their community. The relationship between living in a high trust community and the other trust variables may merely be an artifact of the construction of the community trust variable (discussed further in the conclusion).

Key Points

There are some key points which provide the context for the study and explain why I do not wish to draw any strong conclusions from the findings. One point is the results do not allow us to infer the relationship between synergic power and trust because the data only allowed the measurement of coercive power; and coercive power and synergic power do not exist on a linear continuum (Craig & Craig, 1971). Craig and Craig (1971) modeled the

relationship between coercive power and synergic power as two of three approaches to the use of power (see figure below).

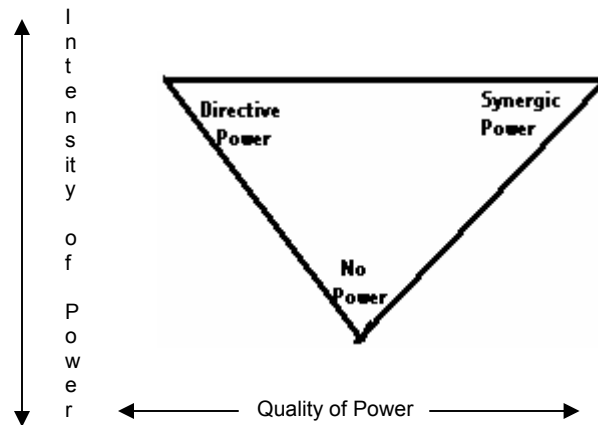


Figure 3: Model of Approaches to Power

Power in the model is the capacity of an individual to increase his satisfactions by intentionally affecting the behavior of others (Craig & Craig, 1971, p. 45). Directive power is the increasing of one's satisfactions by the intentional shaping and use of the behaviors of others to advance her/his interests (Craig & Craig, 1971, p. 60). While synergic power is the ability of persons to increase the satisfactions of all participants by the intentional generation of increased energy and creativity (Craig & Craig, 1971, p. 62). The first invokes a sense of competition and coercion and the latter a sense of cooperation and synergy. The third approach to exercising power in the model is to choose to be passive. Therefore the findings of this study only allow inferences to be made about coercive power. Another study should be done to

measure synergic power in order to directly test the relationships discussed in the introduction of this paper.

Another key point is examples of synergic power do exist in the United States. Katz postulates from his research that even in a world dominated by the scarcity paradigm there are moments of synergy that allow that view to be sustained. He lists four aspects of communities working from a synergy paradigm:

1. A valued resource is renewable, expandable, and accessible.
2. Mechanisms and attitudes exist which guarantee that the resource is shared equitably among community members.
3. What is good for one is good for all.
4. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

Examples of this exist in the United States in some community organizing models (Speer & Hughey, 1995). In these grassroots oriented models, power, a valued resources, is viewed as accessible to all. Mechanisms and attitudes in the process, such as the principle “everyone can be a leader” provide for this resource to be shared equitably. What is good for one is good for all as all members work on multiple issues addressing problems they may not personally share. Finally, in this model of organizing the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, as they represent a united front when working to alleviate the problems (see Speer & Hughey, 1995 for a larger discussion on community organizing models).

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Several limitations to this study stem from the way the variables were constructed. Speer was able to show that interactional empowerment influenced organizational involvement. If the constructed community involvement variable had retained the items measuring involvement in faith, school, and other types of community organizations then the results may have been different not only for the coercive power variable but also for the organizational trust variable. Also, the community level trust variable was merely an aggregate of the individual level trust variables. So communities of high trust had the most individuals with high trust in their neighbors. However, due to the fact that there was a great amount of variability of where people who had scores of high or low trust lived, it seemed like an interesting analysis to pursue.

The greatest limitation of this study was that I was unable to measure community level trust, organizational trust, and power in a way consistent with the theories discussed or in the direction of shared power and synergistic communities. For example, it would have been more interesting to measure an individual's trust in their neighbors and trust in their community with separate items. Although that design of community trust would not have allowed the embeddedness question to be explored. Another example is the organizational

trust scale, which could have included all of the conditions of trust identified by Butler.

Still, this study is an important first step in exploring power and trust in community contexts. It demonstrates that an understanding of how coercive power works in a community is not enough to encourage community involvement. It also demonstrates that trust has strong implications for community involvement; and while it is not usually measured in community psychology it has important implications for our work in the field. I think any researcher who has tried to establish and measure a successful collaboration could tell us how crucial trust is to the process.

It is true in the United States and other Western countries we often experience power from a scarcity paradigm. However, if what Katz postulates is also true, and there are moments or examples of synergic power in the West; then we have largely ignored them in our study of power. It seems to come down to the question; is there one reality or many? I believe as Rappaport suggests for the study of empowerment that there may be seemingly conflicting answers to the resolution of a problem (or the study of power). From this framework I plan to continue to do research that looks for multiple realities, multiple seemingly conflicting answers to the questions posed by my research agenda. In this way I hope to influence the work to create healthy and sustainable communities.

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