SOCIAL CAPITAL: THE LINK BETWEEN STATE POLITICAL CULTURE AND CIVIC AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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ABSTRACT

Systemic racism inhibits African Americans' civic and political participation, yet the scholarship on this topic is scarce and examines Black behavior as homogenous. This study utilizes Putnam's social capital theory and Elazar's state political culture typology to identify social and regional distinctions in African American civic and political behavior. Both social capital and state political culture have been linked to civic and political participation, however, not much is known about how these two constructs specifically influence African American civic and political behavior. Utilizing data from the 2016 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, this study conducts five logistic regression models to examine the effects of state political culture on African Americans' bonding and bridging social capital, civic participation, non-traditional political participation, and traditional political participation. Because the current literature suggests that social capital may mediate state political culture's effect on civic and political participation, three parallel mediator models are also conducted. All U.S. southern states have a traditionalistic political culture, but contrary to past observations, African Americans residing in traditionalistic states are now less likely to participate in non-traditional political activities (i.e., protests, boycotts, etc.) compared to those residing in moralistic and individualistic states. Additionally, this study finds evidence that bonding and bridging social capital can serve as mediators. First, African Americans residing in moralistic states have a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional political activities than those residing in individualistic states because they cultivate greater bridging social capital. Second, African Americans residing in individualistic states have a higher likelihood of participating in civic

activities than those residing in moralistic states because they cultivate less bridging social capital. Additionally, this study finds that bonding and bridging social capital have a positive direct effect on the civic participation of African Americans residing in moralistic, traditionalistic, and individualistic states. Ultimately, this study offers insight into a geographical region's impact on African American social capital and civic and political participation, suggesting that social work methods used to promote civic and political participation should consider the culture of specific populations.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my daughter, my sister, and my parents.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Research Problem and Study Aims

Civic and Political Participation

Civic and political participation form the foundation of a democratic society (Littenberg-Tobias & Cohen, 2016; Tocqueville, 2002). They allow citizens to be active participants in decision-making processes at a local and national level that influence various aspects of their lives (Farmer & Piotrkowski, 2009; Littenberg-Tobias et al., 2016). However, civic and political participation is not observed equally across groups of people (Gaby, 2017; Suttie, 2021). Despite the fact that African American civic and political participation has increased in the past two decades (Clark, 2020; Harris et al., 2005), White Americans continue to vote at a higher rate (71%) than Black (63%), Asian (59%), and Latino Americans (54%; Fabina, 2021).

Voting is widely viewed as a symbol of democracy in the U.S. and prioritized as a political activity; largely because many social groups (e.g., poor, Black people, and women) were lawfully prohibited from voting and struggled to gain voting rights. Nonetheless, political participation can include any action that intends to influence the political system, such as writing to legislators, campaigning for a political candidate, attending public debates or meetings, or engagement in protests (Wicks et al., 2014). Political participation is broadly defined as "activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action—either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (Verba et al., 1995, p. 38). Different types of political participation

have been conceptualized to reflect current societal trends and new participatory activities. Two defined types of political participation are: traditional and non-traditional.

Traditional political activities are actions that have historically been exclusive to White, wealthy men (Amenta, 2005) and directly engage mainstream political systems such as the three branches of U.S. government (e.g., executive office, legislature, and judicial courts) that operate on a macro-level scale and represent political order (e.g., bureaucracy; Amenta, 2005; Youniss et al., 2002). Forms of traditional political participation are voting, writing to legislators, and political campaigning (Amenta, 2005; Youniss et al., 2002). The general public perceives mainstream or traditional political systems as operating in reserved settings using unclear processes (Youniss et al., 2002), therefore, traditional political activities may appear exclusive to certain groups (e.g., men, high-income, white-collar professionals, etc.).

Contrarily, non-traditional political activities have historically been utilized by disenfranchised populations either in retaliation of or to challenge mainstream political systems (Amenta, 2005). Non-traditional political activities emphasize collective social action and are considered hostile and disruptive to mainstream political systems and actors (Amenta, 2005). Examples of non-traditional political activities are protests and boycotts (Amenta, 2005; Meyer & Minkoff, 2004; Youniss et al., 2002). Non-traditional political activities are generally not perceived to have the political leverage as traditional political activities (Meyer & Minkoff, 2004). African Americans primarily participate in "non-traditional" political activities (e.g., protests, etc.) that are considered inferior to "traditional" activities such as voting (Robinson, 2019). White Americans are more likely to participate in traditional activities such as writing letters to policymakers and political campaigning (Littenberg-Tobias & Cohen, 2016).

There is no scholarly consensus on the definition or conceptualization of political participation (Gaby, 2017). The evolution of political participation has resulted in scholars expanding the concept such as differentiating between traditional and non-traditional forms of participation; this ongoing process has also involved the concept of civic participation (Gaby, 2017; Ohme et al., 2018; van Holm, 2019; Weiss, 2020). Some scholars include civic activities in the conceptualization of political participation (Gaby, 2017; Hope et al., 2016; Van Deth, 2014). For instance, some studies operationalize civic participation as both political (e.g., voting, political campaigning) and non-political (e.g., volunteering, charitable giving, etc.) activities (Gaby, 2017; Hope et al., 2016; Van Deth, 2014).

As previously stated, political participation is broadly defined as activity that intends to influence government processes and policy (Verba et al., 1995). Civic participation can involve politics and impact policy but it is not always political (Gaby, 2017; Hope et al., 2016). For example, volunteering can involve distributing merchandise and pamphlets for a political candidate's campaign or distributing food to those experiencing food insecurity. For purposes of this study, civic and political participation will be examined separately to differentiate between political and non-political behavior.

Civic participation is generally defined as actions intended to make an impact on the overall economic, social, and political wellbeing of others within their communities (Gaby, 2017; Hope et al., 2016; McBride et al., 2006; Wicks et al., 2014) and emphasize service and cooperation with others over politics (Zukin et al., 2006). Volunteering is a primary form of civic participation (Amenta, 2005). Other civic activities included solving a problem through group organizing, raising money for a charitable cause, and working on a community project (Harp et al., 2010; Zukin et al., 2006). Similar to traditional political activities, civic activities have

historically been exclusive to White people and engage mainstream civic organizations (e.g., Rotary club) that emphasize service (Amenta, 2005). Civic and traditional political activities are also considered methods that help one assimilate into mainstream society (Youniss et al., 2002). Nevertheless, civic activities can be used to push one's agendas that "fulfill their interests and protect their beliefs" (Youniss et al., 2002, p. 125). There are also civic activities that emphasize advocacy, collective social action, and community building **(**Youniss et al., 2002).

Civic participation is also greater among White Americans than African Americans (Chan & Jasso, 2021; Farmer & Piotrkowski, 2009; Gaby, 2017; Robinson, 2019; Verba, et al., 1995). White Americans are more likely to volunteer, be members of a local organization, attend local organizational meetings, and report work on a community project in comparison to African Americans (Farmer & Piotrkowski, 2009; Gaby, 2017; Musick et al., 2000; Verba et al., 1995; Wilson, 2000). African Americans often engage in civic activities through the Black churches which they attend (Farmer & Piotrkowski, 2009; Hayes & Greer, 2014; Verba et al., 1995).

African American participation in traditional and non-traditional political activities are positively associated with Black congressional representation, political efficacy, and legislation that supports African Americans (Enos et al., 2019; Gay, 2024). Furthermore, civic and political participation are associated with positive life outcomes such as improved mental health, greater educational attainment, and higher socioeconomic status (Hope, 2022). Participation in civic and political activities is essential to the overall wellbeing of African Americans.

Social Capital

Resources are essential to motivating African American civic and political participation. Income, education, and political knowledge are significantly associated with civic and political participation across racial and ethnic groups (Gaby, 2017; Verba et al., 1995). However, there

are particular social relationships and institutions that are pertinent to African American civic and political participation and not pertinent to White Americans. Black organizations, Black churches, and close family and friend ties are significant sources of political knowledge and information that encourage African American civic and political participation (Hyman, 2002; Putnam, 2000). These organizations and relationships generate social capital which some scholars have noted is essential to civic and political participation (e.g., Jennings & Stoker, 2004; Putnam, 2000).

Social capital is broadly defined as the various social networks that take the form of people, actions, organizations, rules, and/or policies and can be used to obtain and maintain opportunities and resources that promote individual and societal progression (Coleman, 1988; Halpern, 2005; Putnam, 2000). Social capital is useful in addressing local and societal issues by motivating collective action, obtaining, and disseminating knowledge and information, and building additional capital, both social and monetary (Sawhill, 2020). However, social capital is not comparable among race and ethnic groups. African Americans primarily form and sustain close, racially homogenous social relationships, and lack ties with those from different cultural backgrounds (Putnam, 2000). There is evidence that when African Americans have diverse social networks (e.g., racial/ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, educational, and socioeconomic) they are more likely to participate in both civic and political activities (Farmer, 2006). Unfortunately, discriminatory and exclusionary practices prevent African Americans from cultivating socially diverse relationships (Feagin & Ducey, 2018) that promote civic and political participation that leads to social change and mobility (Flanagan & Levine, 2010).

State Political Culture

African American civic and political participation looks different across regions of the U.S. African Americans living outside of the South are significantly more likely to sign a petition and participate in a protest than those living in the South, when controlling for church attendance and community-based organization membership (Swain, 2010). Black electoral participation has historically been greater in Northern states in comparison to Southern states, even after the passage of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965 (Beyerlien & Andrews, 2008). Scholars (e.g., Almond & Verba, 1963; Bourdieu, 1998; Elazar, 1994; Key, 1949; Putnam, 1993; Tocqueville, 2002) have posited that a region's (e.g., neighborhood, county, state, nation, etc.) culture influences its citizens' civic and political behavior and institutions (Gendzel, 1997). The cultural patterns (e.g., beliefs, symbols, values, etc.) unique to a region's political system is referred to as political culture; however, there is great disagreement with the conceptualization and operationalization of political culture (Gendzel, 1997; Mamadouh, 1997). Nevertheless, the concept of political culture has been useful in characterizing and comparing politics across regions (Gendzel, 1997).

Building upon the political culture concept, political scientists interested in examining regional variations in U.S. government suggested that states be examined as "mini-nations with distinct political cultures" (p. 230); this theoretical framework is referred to as state political culture (Gendzel, 1997). Elazar (1994), arguably the leading scholar of state political culture (Gendzel, 1997), defines state political culture as "the particular pattern of orientation to political action in which each political system is embedded" (p. 9).

State political culture has been used to examine state differences in politics and policymaking and how they influence mass and individual political behavior (Carman & Barker,

2005; Heck et al., 2014; Jaeger et al., 2017; King, 1994; Wirt et al., 1985). Guided by the state political cultural concept, studies have found that Northern states generally produce higher levels of general voter turnout than Southern states (King, 1994; Lieske, 2005). This can be explained by the cultural differences observed among U.S. state political governments, which impact the collective and individual behaviors of state residents (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). For instance, many Southern states have passed restrictive voting laws since 2011 and continue to have ongoing litigation against voting restrictions (Weiser & Feldman, 2018). African Americans who live in these states are vulnerable to these types of legislation since they are more likely to be disenfranchised (Weiser & Feldman, 2018).

Some scholars (e.g., Elazar, 1994; Key, 1949) have examined the influence of state political culture on civic and political participation; however, there is limited scholarship that examines how state political culture specifically influences African American civic and political participation. Furthermore, there is a scarce amount of literature that has examined the relationship between state political culture and social capital; literature focusing on the African American population is even more scarce. In this study, I will examine the relationship between state political culture and specific forms of social capital (e.g., bridging and bonding) among African Americans. Then, I will assess the effects state political culture has on African American civic and political participation to determine if certain state political cultures foster certain civic and political activities (e.g., traditional and non-traditional) among African Americans and the frequency in which they participate?

Contextualizing African American civic and political participation will help in identifying and removing barriers that impede their democratic engagement as U.S. citizens. Additionally, it can help contextualize social work practice (Zimmerman, 2003). Certain state

political cultures are more aligned with social work's purpose and values, and social workers residing in those states are more likely to receive support for their work than others elsewhere (Zimmerman, 2003). If social workers can contextualize their work according to the state in which they live in, they can gain a better understanding of how that state's particular political culture impacts their work and their clients (Pharris & Natale, 2020). This knowledge could promote critical examination among social workers in how to best develop their skills, mobilize, and gather resources that will allow them to advocate for themselves and the people they serve.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Empirical evidence shows that African American civic and political participation has fluctuated (Abramson & Aldrich, 1982; Harris et al., 2005; Putnam, 2000). This is reflective of the social status of African Americans changing throughout U.S. history. Because of the distinct social experience of African Americans, various scholars (Dawson, 1994; Omi & Winant, 2014; Wilson, 2012; Zuckerman, 2004) have developed frameworks to help explain African American civic and political behavior. Political behavior scholarship has primarily drawn from economic theories of rational choice and political psychology theories.

This literature review will first provide a brief description of political science theories traditionally used to explain general U.S. civic and political participation and their limitations in explaining African American civic and political participation. Second, I will describe theories and theoretical frameworks that specifically explain African American civic and political participation. Following this description, I will present Putnam's (2000) social capital theory and Elazar's (1994) state political theory and explain how they help formulate my research questions. Lastly, I will discuss the limitations of Putnam's and Elazar's theories and their contribution to the literature.

Theories Explaining General Civic and Political Participation

Rational Choice Theories

Rational choice theories attempt to explain the collective action of voter behavior (Aldrich, 1993). According to the rational choice theories, voter behavior is determined after individuals weigh the costs and outcomes of voting. The basic choice model of turnout is

considered the rational choice theory that provides the ‘“fundamental equation” of political behavior (Aldrich, 1993, p. 247). The basic choice model equation determines the probability that an individual will choose to take one of three basic actions (i.e., outcome): 1) vote for one candidate, 2) vote for the other candidate, or 3) not vote. Individuals’ choices are calculated by measuring their preferences, costs of voting, and collective actions.

Preferences refer to whether an individual prefers one candidate winning over another. Costs of voting can include the costs of obtaining and processing information, deciding to vote, registering to vote, and the act of voting itself (e.g., going to the polls, obtaining a ballot, etc.). Lastly, collective actions are the voting choices of others (e.g., what action will others take).

Scholars generally agree with the basic choice model; however, this model is incomplete because it does not consider other variables that increase or decrease the likelihood of voting (Aldrich, 1993). Other rational choice models such as the calculus of voting and the minimax regret model attempt to complete or extend the basic choice model. Downs' (1957) calculus of voting model includes “civic duty” as a determinant in the basic choice equation. Civic duty is defined as one seeing voting as their moral responsibility as a citizen. The minimax regret model rejects the basic choice model and proposes that individuals do not generally form “probability assessments” (p. 253) due to difficulty and uncertainty. Instead, individuals’ vote choice (i.e., outcome) is decided by determining how much they would regret not voting given the current state of the world (i.e., minimax regret).

To sum up, rational choice models provide narrow interpretations of voter turnout which make them inappropriate for measuring general political participation. Furthermore, they assume that individuals’ voting choices (e.g., deciding to vote, candidate vote choice) are largely determined by a rational cost-benefit analysis dismissing other factors that may impact their civic

and political behavior (Brady et al., 1995). Rational choice models' interpretations are so narrow that they do not consider the influence of other variables such as numerous election contests, strategic politicians, race and ethnicity, collective group behavior, and resources. Furthermore, civic and political participation come in various forms making them too complex to be explained using the rational choice models.

Political Psychology Theories

Political psychology theories attempt to describe how individuals process information cognitively and the influence of collective group behavior (Campbell et al., 1960; Dawson, 1994). According to these theories, there are "psychological" forces that influence individuals' attitudes toward politics and their political behavior (Campbell et al., 1960; Conover & Feldman, 1981). Campbell et al. (1960) theorized that individuals choose their party identification (e.g., Democrat, Republican) according to social factors (e.g., family background, group attachment, historical events, state of residence, etc.) that influence their interpretation of political elements. These interpretations are psychological processes that shape individuals' attitudes and perceptions towards politics, which essentially influence their voting behavior and party identification choice. For instance, prior to the New Deal, African Americans living in the South generally identified as Republicans because of their attachment to Abraham Lincoln, a member of the Republican Party, who abolished slavery by signing the Emancipation Proclamation (Campbell et al., 1960). Although, after the New Deal, three out of four African Americans reported that they were Democrats (Campbell et al., 1960). This shift possibly occurred because of African Americans alignment with the Roosevelt Administration's New Deal policies. The Roosevelt Administration's philosophy of social responsibility also appealed to low-income,

working-class people living in the North which strengthened these groups attachment to the Democratic party (Campbell et al., 1960).

Campbell et al. (1960) found that national political events, social status, economic position, and other elements influence individuals' political behavior, nevertheless, they recognize that different social groups "think and behave politically in distinctive ways" (p. 295). Campbell et al. (1960) could not make empirical conclusions regarding African Americans due to a small sample size, nor do they consider social factors that may impact African American political behavior.

Unlike Campbell et al., (1960), who focused on party identification, Conover and Feldman (1981) examined individuals' psychological attachment to ideology. Conover and Feldman (1981) posited that individuals' attachments to ideological labels (e.g., liberal, conservative) serve as cognitive and evaluative symbols that drive political behavior. The cognitive symbolism of ideological labels provides "objective information" associated with different ideologies; while the evaluative symbolism of ideological labels refers to the feelings that different ideologies elicit from individuals. Conover and Feldman (1981) found that self-identified ideology is strongly influenced by one's evaluation of liberals and conservatives.

Campbell et al. (1960) and Conover and Feldman (1981) emphasize that "psychological attachment" to groups (e.g., Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives) greatly influences civic and political behavior, which has been confirmed by other scholars (Bobo & Gilliam, 1990; Chan & Jasso, 2021; Dawson, 1994). Nevertheless, their data sources are dated and time-bound and they do not extensively account for variations across groups or contexts (e.g., place/location, social status). Most traditional political psychology theories do not consider group interests exclusive to African Americans that impact their ideology, partisanship, policy preferences, and

presidential approval (Dawson, 1994). Furthermore, there is a misconception that African American politics is equally applicable to the broader cultural sphere of U.S. politics; while in fact, African American politics, including civic and political participation, is "different" (Dawson, 1994).

Theoretical Frameworks Explaining African American Civic and Political Behavior

The Socioeconomic Model

Traditional economic and political psychology theories fall short in explaining African American political participation because they do not fully consider the historical forces that have shaped the pattern of African American participation differently from White Americans (Dawson, 1994). The socioeconomic model, which dominated the study of "Black Politics" for decades (Gay, 2024), posited that African Americans participate in politics at lower rates than White Americans because African Americans on average have lower levels of educational attainment, occupational status, and income (Bobo & Gilliam, 1990). The socioeconomic model attempts to account for racial differences; however, it does not account for the social oppression that has impeded African American educational attainment, occupational status, and income. Furthermore, the socioeconomic model has been contradicted by numerous empirical studies that have found that, when socioeconomic status is held constant, African Americans participate in political activities at higher rates than Whites (Bobo & Gilliam, 1990; Gay, 2024).

Isolation and Ethnic Community Theories

To move beyond the traditional theories and to better explain African American civic and political participation, social scientists have developed competing theories to identify whether race-related factors or socioeconomic status are better determinants of African American civic and political participation (Danigelis, 1978). Two earlier competing theories on

African American civic and political participation were the isolation and ethnic community theories (Danigelis, 1977). The isolation theory argues that the social segregation of African Americans via social structural barriers such as discrimination, violence, Jim Crow laws, and other disenfranchisement methods, has created political apathy among African Americans, as well as, prevented them from participating in traditional economic, political, and social activities. According to the isolation theory, these barriers and apathy have contributed to low levels of African American civic and political participation (Danigelis, 1977, 1978). Contrarily, the ethnic community theory opposes the isolation theory postulating that these structural barriers and social isolation incite a sense of community and social solidarity among African Americans (Danigelis, 1977, 1978; Farmer, 2006). This sense of community and solidarity leads to increased feelings of political efficacy (e.g., whether or not one believes that their actions and beliefs influence government) and political interests (Danigelis, 1977, 1978) and motivates collective social action (Farmer, 2006). The ethnic community theory has been supported by empirical studies' findings that African Americans participate in civic and political activities at higher rates than Whites, when controlling for socioeconomic status (Danigelis, 1977, 1978).

Nevertheless, the findings of the empirical studies that support the isolation and ethnic community theories should be considered in light of several methodological limitations: small sample sizes of African Americans, time-bound data, and misguided measurement and operationalization of theoretical concepts (Ellison & London, 1992; Gay, 2024). This may explain why studies driven by these theories have inconsistent findings on African American and White American civic and political participation (Danigelis, 1977, 1978).

Racial Group Solidarity and Consciousness

After studies in the mid-1960s and early 1970s found evidence of African Americans participating in political activities at higher rates than White Americans of a similar socioeconomic status, scholars further explored possible explanations (Chong & Rogers, 2005). The growing Black middle class also incited theoretical assumptions of how the increasing economic polarization among African Americans may alter their civic and political behavior (Dawson, 1994). Besides socioeconomic status, racial group solidarity was identified as a pertinent motivator of civic and political participation, especially among African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities (Campbell et al., 1960; Chong & Rogers, 2005; Conover & Feldman, 1981), even despite the growing Black middle class (Dawson, 1994).

No matter how economically polarized African Americans become in the U.S., they remain politically homogenous (Dawson, 1994). Traditional political psychology theories have not been able to fully explain this political homogeneity; nevertheless, theories such as the black utility heuristic, which builds upon Down's rational choice theory and cognitive psychology theories, considers racial group solidarity as the best determinant of African American civic and political participation. The black utility heuristic, commonly known as the linked fate theory, posits that African Americans use their racial group status (e.g., social hierarchy in society) as a proxy when analyzing politics (e.g., pieces of legislation, policy outcomes, legislator performance, etc.) and choosing how to behave civically and politically (Dawson, 1994). Dawson's (1994) linked fate theory assumes "that cognitive psychological processes are critical in shaping perceptions of racial group status" (p. 11) which reinforce racial group solidarity and consciousness.

There is strong empirical evidence of African American civic and political behavior being largely driven by racial group interests, that stem from group solidarity and consciousness, rather than class interests (Dawson, 1994). Racial group solidarity is broadly conceptualized as the psychological identification with or attachment to a racial group that influences one's ideological beliefs and perceptions of the world (Chong & Rogers, 2005). Racial group solidarity stems from an expansive consciousness of a racial group's social status in society, this is often referred to as race consciousness (Chong & Rogers, 2005). Racial group consciousness involves combining "in-group identification with a set of ideas about the group's status and strategies for improving it" (Chong & Rogers, 2005, p. 350). Chong and Rogers (2005) found that racial group solidarity and racial group consciousness have significant effects on both traditional and non-traditional political activities such as campaigning and protests, respectively. Nevertheless, both racial group solidarity and racial group consciousness have the largest effects on collective political activities among African Americans such as protests and boycotts (Chong & Rogers, 2005).

Racial group solidarity, racial group consciousness, and the linked fate theory help to explain the rational and psychological processes behind African American civic and political participation. Furthermore, findings such as Chong's and Rogers' (2005) provide preliminary evidence on how racial group interests influence the types of civic and political activities in which African Americans choose to participate. Racial group solidarity and racial group consciousness among African Americans is formed by their collective historical experience of U.S. societal oppression that continues to persist today. In response to discriminatory exclusion from major U.S. institutions (e.g., economic, political, and social), African Americans largely participated in protests (Morris, 1984). There is a long history of protest tradition among African

Americans including slave revolts and mass movements (i.e., Garvey movement, Black Power; Morris, 1984). These protest tactics were organized by numerous abolitionist groups (i.e., American Anti-Slavery Society), protest organizations (i.e., Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee [SNCC]), and civil rights organizations (i.e., National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP]). Churches, religious organizations, and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUS) were integral to the running of these organizations (Morris, 1984).

These organizations have been successful in passing landmark policies such as Brown v. Board of Education, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the 1965 Voting Rights Act (DiNitto & Johnson, 2016; Wiggins, 2022) which have increased African Americans' access to major, traditional U.S. institutions such as predominately White schools and universities and political office (Omi & Winant, 2014). Nevertheless, due to structural discrimination and racism, African Americans encounter challenges in these environments that impede their performance (e.g., passing legislation; Omi & Winant, 2014) and exclude them from systems within these institutions (e.g., high-level positions; Feagin & Ducey, 2018). Therefore, Black churches and civil rights organizations continue to be essential in reinforcing racial group solidarity and consciousness (Alex-Assensoh & Assensoh, 2001; McKenzie, 2004), promoting African American social mobility (Gilbert et al., 2022), and African American civic and political participation (Beyerlein & Andrews, 2008; Brown & Brown, 2003; Liu et al., 2009).

Furthermore, these Black organizations and institutions provide African Americans with the opportunities to socially engage with others and access political and civic knowledge, skills, opportunities, and resources to do certain activities (e.g., collective action, voter mobilization, etc.; Brown & Brown, 2003; Farmer, 2006; Gowan, 2011; Morris, 1984; Palmer &

Gasman, 2008). These social networks also serve as wellbeing supports (e.g., Gilbert et al., 2022), connections to outside opportunities (Farmer, 2006), and provide opportunities to expand and diversify one's social networks (Gowan, 2011). These social networks are considered types of social capital (Putnam, 2000).

Social Capital Theory

The concept of social capital was made popular by Robert Putnam (2000; Halpern, 2005; Hero, 2007). Putnam (2000) developed the social capital theory to gain deeper understanding of civil society and proposed that social capital has a significantly positive effect on a society's overall well-being. Putnam (2000) defines social capital as "connections among individuals" or "social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). As previously mentioned, social capital can take the form of people, actions, and organizations that can be used to obtain and sustain opportunities and resources that promote upward mobility in society (Coleman, 1988; Halpern, 2005; Putnam, 2000).

Bridging and Bonding Social Capital

Putnam (2000) distinguishes between two dimensions of social capital: bonding and bridging. Bonding capital is defined as social networks that consists of kinship and friend ties and certain local community connections such as religious affiliation (Putnam, 2000; Sørensen, 2016). In contrast, bridging capital are social networks made outside of kinship and friend ties and rather through both local (e.g., civic associations) and non-local (e.g., national associations) organizational groups (Putnam, 2000; Sørensen, 2016). Both bonding and bridging social capital are positively associated with civic and political participation (Hero, 2007; Putnam, 2000). In *Bowling Alone* (2000), Putnam expresses concern for the deterioration of U.S. civil society due to an overall decline in civic and political participation among U.S. citizens (Siisiainen, 2003).

Between the 1960s and 1990s, there has been a decrease in voter turnout, a rise in government distrust, and a steady decline of membership in voluntary and religious associations, and trade unions. Putnam (2000) posits that this depreciation is directly linked to a decline in social capital.

Networks, Norms, and Trust

Networks

According to Putnam (2000), social networks, shared norms, and trust are the three major components of social capital (i.e., bridging and bonding) that cultivate citizens' civic and political participation, which is essential to a civil society. Networks refers to the members that make up one's social network or connections; this includes family, friends, neighbors, work colleagues, peers, and acquaintances in which one has similar interests. Outside of family, these social networks tend to develop from shared or similar interests through professional associations, group or club membership, and religious organizations (Halpern, 2005). Simple association with particular groups can also serve as a social resource, therefore, political party affiliations and a shared identity with an ethnic community are considered sources of social capital (Halpern, 2005).

African Americans' social networks generally comprise of bonding social capital (Putnam, 2000). The period between the beginning of Reconstruction and the beginning of World War I was critical in fortifying the link between African American group interests and Black politics (Dawson, 1994). Southern politics, in particular, experienced a great share of African American voting and elected officials; however, when Reconstruction ended, African Americans were forcibly excluded from politics and mainstream institutions, suddenly losing "economic and social rights" (Dawson, 1994, p. 48). The social exclusion and oppression of

African Americans throughout U.S. history has influenced African Americans to rely on bonding social capital (Hunter et al., 2019).

Kinship, friend, church, and community social networks are strongly rooted among African Americans (Hunter et al., 2019). These forms of bonding social capital help to provide basic needs such as housing, food, and cash (Gowan, 2011) and support civic and political competencies to address community and group-based needs (e.g., discrimination, education, poverty, police brutality, etc.; Hunter et al., 2019). Social networks formed outside of kinship and predominately Black institutions (e.g., bridging social capital) also promote African American civic and political participation (Braunstein et al., 2014; Farmer, 2006). Bridging social capital arguably cultivates more legitimate and stable networks by opening access to broader domains in society, "including the education system, the health care system, the labor market, and housing markets, as well as political processes and institutions including voting laws" (Gilbert et al., 2022, p. 175). Nevertheless, bridging social capital can also lead to misaligned power dynamics and covert racism that "constricts" or limits African American civic and political participation (Braunstein et al., 2014; Hampton, 2010).

Norms

Norms are defined as rules and understandings. Norms may be explicitly or implicitly enforced and guide how one behaves within their network. For example, depending on where you reside geographically it may be the norm to acknowledge those passing by, even though this norm is not explicitly announced. On the other hand, the U.S. policymaking process is comprised of explicit norms such as, having a bill go through the legislature before it is implemented. Likewise, states may have specific norms that govern their political institutions depending on their "culture" (Elazar, 1994).

Racial group solidarity, regular church attendance, and collective action are norms among African Americans that originated from chattel slavery and the modern Civil Rights movement (Dawson, 1994; Holt et al., 2012; Morris, 1984). The modern Civil Rights movement relied on organized collective action (e.g., boycotts, protests) that helped galvanize racial group solidarity among African Americans and solidified the importance and normality of community and kinship ties during periods of extensive social exclusion and inferiority (Dawson, 1994; Morris, 1984). Social customs and bonds, such as those previously mentioned, are essential to the development and maintaining of kinship, church, and community networks (Halpern, 2005). Norms rooted in African American culture, such as racial group solidarity and regular church attendance, are imperative promotors of African American civic and political participation, including collective action (Leath & Chavous, 2017; Riley et al., 2021; Wilson, 2012).

Trust

Trust is defined as one's confidence in an individual, society, or community and is determined by the reciprocity between two entities and the expectations that are met (Putnam, 2000; Siisiainen, 2003). Trust is believed to not only strengthen in-group social networks (e.g., bonding social capital) but connect people with different social backgrounds (Uslaner, 2004). High levels of trust in society, systems and institutions, and people increases one's propensity to feel a moral responsibility for others (Uslaner, 2004), cooperate and interact with others (Mangum, 2012; Sørensen, 2016), and increases trust in the government (Mangum, 2012). Trust is also associated with civic and political participation (Mangum, 2012; Sørensen, 2016). Furthermore, trust and civic participation have a bidirectional relationship (Wollebæk & Strømsnes, 2008). Participation in civic organizations builds trust, and vice versa, participation in

civic organizations helps develop trust and reinforce norms within social networks (Mangum, 2012; Wollebæk & Strømsnes, 2008).

African Americans have significantly lower levels of trust in other people and the government in comparison to White Americans (Wilson, 2005). African Americans' level of trust is likely a reflection of their historical and current experiences in the U.S. (Mangum, 2012). Like its effect on African American networks and norms, the Black church is an important facilitator of trust among African Americans (Mangum, 2012). The Black church promotes racial group solidarity among African Americans which bolsters a sense of trust within this group (Mangum, 2012). In the Black church, African Americans learn how to participate in the electoral process and which political candidates they can trust. So, the Black church can influence African Americans' trust in the government (Mangum, 2012). High levels of trust in the government are associated with increased political participation among African Americans (Mangum, 2012).

Social Capital and Civic and Political Participation Among African Americans

The Black Church

Black churches and Black organizations (fraternal orders, civil rights organizations, etc.) are forms of social capital that have been instrumental to African American civic and political participation (Farmer, 2006; Mangum, 2012; Putnam, 2000; Swain, 2010). Historically, the Black church has been central to "the social fabric of Black communities," reinforcing the collective identity of African Americans in response to social exclusion (Morris, 1984; Swain, 2008). Also, the Black church provided African Americans with opportunities to enhance their civic participation and bonding social capital through practicing their leadership and organizational skills within the church and Black communities (Morris, 1984).

Unlike predominately White churches, Black churches are more likely to be politicized (Liu et al., 2009). Black clergies are more likely to mention political topics and civic opportunities in their sermons (Greenberg, 2000; Mohamed et al., 2021), and political candidates are more likely to visit Black churches in comparison to White churches (Harris, 1999; Liu et al., 2009; Walton, 1985). Also, Black church leaders encourage voting and political activism (Calhoun-Brown, 1996; Liu et al., 2009). The politicization of Black churches helps explain why church attendance has a greater influence on African Americans' civic and political participation in comparison to White Americans (Hoffman & Appiah, 2008; Mohamed et al., 2021). Also, moral responsibility and civic duty are often messages that are taught in religious institutions like Black churches (Liu et al., 2009).

The political nature of Black churches makes them important promotors of bonding social capital (Brown & Brown, 2003; Mangum, 2012). Church attendance increases and strengthens social networks and trust among church attendees and those with similar interests (e.g., Black political candidates, community members; Brown & Brown, 2003; Mangum, 2012). Political messages heard during church services and organized civic and political church-related events held outside services (e.g., voter registration and toiletries drives) also equip African Americans with the political knowledge and skills essential to organizing and participating in civic and political activities (Hoffman & Appiah, 2008; McClerking & McDaniel, 2005; McKenzie, 2008). Civic and political activities carried out by Black churches also legitimize and normalize civic and political participation among African Americans (Calhoun-Brown, 1996; Liu et al., 2009).

African Americans who regularly attend church are more likely to participate in politics, be aware of policy issues, be exposed to political information, and have an increased sense of

civic duty in comparison to those who do not regularly attend church (Alex-Assensoh & Assensoh, 2001; Brown & Brown, 2003; Harris, 1999). As previously mentioned, Black churches also serve as social networks that coordinate social and political activities within Black communities (Harris, 1999; Mc Kenzie, 2008). Even when controlling for the influence of clergies, the social networks that African Americans develop in Black churches continue to increase their "civic capacities" (McKenzie, 2008, p. 629). Additionally, regular contact with church members increases the "effectiveness of civic norm enforcement and the sanctioning of 'deviant' political behavior" (McKenzie, 2008, p. 626). Black churches play a critical role in mobilizing African American civic and political participation, nevertheless, this participation varies according to African American individuals' church attendance and involvement.

The Black church also promotes bridging social capital by encouraging collective activism and membership in civil rights organizations (Morris, 1984; Swain, 2008). However, collective activism and membership incited by church attendance has primarily been limited to Black individuals and organizations, limiting diverse social networks. Black institutions (e.g., churches and membership organizations) appear to play a major role in racial group solidarity and racial group consciousness, while bridging social capital promotes meaningful cross-cultural interactions that create broader opportunities for African Americans in economic, education, health, and political domains (Hampton, 2010).

There are few regional differences among African Americans' church attendance (Mohamed & Diamant, 2021); nevertheless, African Americans living in the South are more likely to attend a predominately Black church (65%) in comparison to those living in the Northeast (52%), Midwest (60%), and the West (38%; Mohamed & Diamant, 2021). African Americans in the South are also more likely to regularly attend worship services (37%) than

those living in the Northeast (25%), Midwest (31%), and West (26%; Mohamed & Diamant, 2021). These higher rates of church attendance are likely explained by the fact that more than half of the U.S. Black population (56%) live in the South (Moslimani et al., 2024). African Americans living in Southern states may be more civically and political engaged than those living in other states; however, to my knowledge, recent empirical evidence supporting this is missing in the literature.

Black Organizations

Black organizations are also promoters of African American civic and political participation; providing opportunities to obtain and sustain social capital and be viewed as "legitimate political actors" (Ginwright, 2007). Black organizations strengthen racial group solidarity and consciousness that unifies African Americans (Ginwright, 2007) and are pivotal in advancing African Americans' political and social interests (McKenzie, 2008). They have provided necessary organizational resources that have facilitated movements (i.e., modern Civil Rights Movement) through the usage of innovative civic and political tactics (i.e., sit-ins, marches, boycotts; Morris, 1984) that have resulted in the successful passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act (McKenzie, 2008).

Today, Black organizations continue to be influential by serving as "agents of social reform" on issues such as poverty, healthcare, and education disparities, voter suppression, and police brutality (McKenzie, 2008). Black organizational membership increases African Americans' odds of voting in national elections (Alex-Assensoh & Assensoh, 2001), as well as, increases access to diverse social networks (McClerking & McDaniel, 2005). However, membership in Black organizations has decreased (i.e., less than a third) and largely in the South (McClerking & McDaniel, 2005).

According to McAdam (1982), many Black organizations in the U.S. abandoned their "indigenous" ties in the South and established new organizations in the North. However, many of these new organizations dismantled because these leaders from the South lacked the organizational strategic knowledge to survive and build repertoire with their new Northern community members. Therefore, Black organizational leaders originally from the South were not able to mobilize collective action for a common cause in the North (McAdam, 1982). Contemporary Black organizations are having less success in their mobilization efforts in producing meaningful policy outcomes and encouraging Black voter turnout (McAdam, 1982), although, recent grassroots mobilization efforts led to an increase in African American voter turnout rates in Georgia during the 2020 U.S. presidential election and 2022 U.S. Senate election (Breuninger, 2022). Nevertheless, today, Black organizations encounter structural issues such as disorganization and diminished social capital (McAdam, 1982). These issues reduce Black organizations' effectiveness in strengthening civic and political participation among African Americans (McAdam, 1982).

State Political Culture

The concept of culture has been used to explain variations in state political characteristics and policy processes (Johnson, 1976). State political culture captures important historical and cultural forces embedded in the U.S. political system that influence civic and political behavior. Therefore, state political culture may help identify additional barriers and promoters of African American civic and political participation. Several scholars have claimed that political behavior is "contingent" on context (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 1992; Key, 1949; Walton, 1985). Overall, the historical context of the U.S. has influenced the civic and political behavior of all its residents. Nevertheless, U.S. states are distinct according to their geographical and historical contexts.

Elazar (1994) postulated that states' political cultures are substantially determined by immigration and migration patterns of different ethnic and religious groups in the U.S. (Johnson, 1976). According to Elazar (1994), a state's political culture reflects the cultural characteristics of the people who dominated the first U.S. settlements (Fisher, 2016). These cultural characteristics persists over time even when there are demographic changes (Fisher, 2016).

Elazar (1994) conducted a historical analysis to categorize states according to the migration patterns of members of different religious affiliations (Johnson, 1976). Elazar did not imply that dominate religious affiliations determined a state's political culture, instead, he used U.S. census data (e.g., U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1941) and religious affiliations as indicators to trace migration streams and identify dominate political cultures (Johnson, 1976). Elazar (1994) traced the migration of different migrant groups who each had their own ethnic identity, religious beliefs, and cultural values (Morgan & Watson, 1991). These characteristics of migrant groups established norms and rules in the regions where they settled and maintained patterns of political processes unique to their political systems (Morgan & Watson, 1991). These norms and rules subliminally govern state residents' political behavior, by placing boundaries on activities that either embrace or exclude certain groups of people (Elazar, 1994). Therefore, a state's political culture can establish a type of social hierarchy, influencing individuals' social capital and civic and political participation.

Elazar's (1994) state political culture theory claims that there are three U.S. political subcultures: individualistic, moralistic, and traditionalistic. States are classified according to their dominant subculture which is defined by "shared beliefs about politics, political institutions, and political action" (Erikson et al., 1993, p. 151). Table 1 presents the 50 U.S. states according to the classification of their dominate subculture. The individualistic political culture embraces

utilitarianism in which its political system prioritizes the private marketplace and not public interests (Elazar, 1994). The moralistic political culture adopts a commonwealth mentality and utilizes the government to promote the public good by advancing public interests (Elazar, 1994). The traditionalistic political culture is characterized as having a political system that expresses ambivalence toward the marketplace and embraces a paternalistic and elitist approach to the commonwealth (Elazar, 1994).

Elazar's typology of political culture has been used to explain various political processes and outcomes such as descriptive representation, public opinion (Coffey, 2009; Erikson et al., 1993), voter turnout (Darmofal, 2006; Elazar, 1984; King, 1994), political behavior (Mondak & Canache, 2014; Ritt, 1974), legislative processes (Carman & Barker, 2005; F. Wirt et al., 1985), and policymaking (Heck et al., 2014; Jaeger et al., 2017). Most empirical work has examined these processes on an aggregate level primarily utilizing Elazar's typology (Chamberlain, 2013; Lieske, 2005). Studies have been able to distinguish moralistic, individualistic, and traditionalistic states according to the amount and type of policies they enact.

Erikson et al. (1993) found that Southern, traditionalistic states tend to enact more conservative policies in comparison to states with a moralistic political culture which enact more liberal policies. Liberal policies tend to be more socially beneficial to African Americans (Hawes & Rocha, 2011). In Zimmerman's (2003) analysis of four states (i.e., California, Florida, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, and South Carolina), states with a moralistic political culture tend to enact more family-oriented legislation and policies that promote wellbeing in comparison to states with a traditionalistic or an individualistic political culture. These findings align with Elazar's (1994) claim that states with a moralistic political culture tend to have higher levels of

performance on aggregate educational and health indicators while states with a traditionalistic political culture exhibit lower levels of performance.

States with a moralistic political culture not only foster political participation but also civic participation. States with a moralistic political culture exhibit higher levels of volunteerism than states with either a traditionalistic or an individualistic political culture. Furthermore, different state political cultures encourage certain types of civic activities. Individuals residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture participate in more "traditional" types of civic activities, such as religious volunteering, rather than "progressive" activities such as environmental volunteering. Individuals who reside in states with a traditionalistic political culture are also less likely to volunteer at political and advocacy organizations (Vansuch, 2017). Individuals who reside in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture are more likely to work with their neighbors to solve a problem and volunteer in arts or cultural organizations than those who reside in states with a traditionalistic political culture (Vansuch, 2017). Arts and cultural organizations are important in that they promote diversity and racial solidarity (Vansuch, 2017). This may explain why we see a shortage of these organizations in Southern, traditionalistic states that are characterized as being more socially prejudiced and less progressive.

There is also evidence of state political culture influencing the social outcomes of African Americans using Elazar's (1994) typology. African Americans residing in states with a moralistic political culture have higher educational outcomes than those residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture (Hawes & Rocha, 2011; Hero, 2007). Liberal leaning states, which are characteristic of states with a moralistic political culture, exhibit more equitable educational and criminal justice outcomes for African Americans and Latinos relative to Whites

(Hawes, 2019; Hawes & Rocha, 2011). However, these outcomes only appear when these states have lower levels of racial/ethnic diversity.

Hero (1998) argued that states' political cultures are influenced by the racial/ethnic diversity composition within those states. Hero (1998) found that racial/ethnic minorities living in states with a moralistic political culture have better outcomes than those living in states with a traditionalistic political culture but only when those states with a moralistic political culture were less racially diverse. Hero (2007) also found that the effects of social capital are also contingent on racial diversity. The social outcomes (e.g., graduation rates, infant mortality ratios, poverty and income ratios, voter registration and turnout rates) of racial/ethnic minorities living in states with higher aggregate social capital, looked no different from racial/ethnic minorities living in states with lower aggregate social capital and lower racial/ethnic diversity.

Similar to Hero (2007), Lieske (2005) found that Elazar's typology of state political culture and social diversity, rather than other individual factors such as education, age, and party identification, best predicted voter turnout. Congruent with previous scholarship, Lieske (2005) found that states with a moralistic political culture have higher voter turnout than states with an individualistic or a traditionalistic political culture. However, states with a moralistic political culture with a larger racial minority population had lower turnout rates than states with a moralistic political culture with a smaller racial minority population. Higher minority concentration in states with a traditionalistic political culture had no significant effect on turnout. This suggests that while voter turnout is higher in states with a moralistic political culture, racial/ethnic context negatively influences turnout in these states and states with an individualistic political culture, but not states with a traditionalistic political culture.

Like Hero (2007), Hawes and Rocha (2011) linked traditionalistic states to lower levels of social capital and moralistic states to higher levels of social capital, reflecting moralistic states' emphasis on "communitarian values." However, states with higher levels of social capital (e.g., states with a moralistic political culture) demonstrate greater racial inequality (Hawes & Rocha, 2011). Hawes' and Rocha's (2011) major findings were that both African American and Latino students were suspended at higher rates than White students in states with a moralistic political culture than those residing in states with a traditionalistic or an individualistic political culture. Hawes and Rocha (2011) also found that when moving from the lowest level of state social capital to the highest, Latino/White suspension ratio increased by 0.73 and the Black/White suspension ratio increased by 1.06 (Hawes & Rocha, 2011). Additionally, as the social capital of a state increases, so does the Black/White and Latino/ White incarceration ratios (Hawes & Rocha, 2011). These studies show that the effect of social capital does not have an equal influence across race and ethnic groups.

Table 1. Elazar's State Political Culture Typology.

Moralistic	Individualistic	Traditionalistic
California	Alaska	Alabama
Colorado	Connecticut	Arizona
Idaho	Delaware	Arkansas
Iowa	Hawaii	Florida
Kansas	Illinois	Georgia
Maine	Indiana	Kentucky
Michigan	Nebraska	Louisiana
Minnesota	Nevada	Mississippi
Montana	Maryland	New Mexico
New Hampshire	Massachusetts	North Carolina
North Dakota	Missouri	Oklahoma
Oregon	New Jersey	South Carolina
South Dakota	New York	Tennessee
Utah	Ohio	Texas
Vermont	Pennsylvania	Virginia
Washington	Rhode Island	West Virginia
Wisconsin	Wyoming	

Limitations

Scholars claim that Putnam's social capital theory and research ignores the implications related to the U.S.'s history with race and ethnicity and inaccurately generalizes his findings and assumptions to racial and ethnic minorities (Hero, 2007; Liu et al., 2009). Putnam (2000) has asserted that African Americans primarily cultivate bonding social capital but offers no further explanation for this behavior. State political culture may help provide an explanation.

Elazar's state political culture typology can help identify contextual determinants of African American social capital and civic and political participation. However, there is not much literature that examines the relationship between social capital and state political culture. This may be because of two arguments scholars have presented on the influence state political institutions have on social capital (Stolle & Hooghe, 2004). First, there is disagreement concerning the extent to which states have an independent effect on social capital. Second, there are disputes concerning whether social capital is "purely" a product of one's civic behavior (Mohan & Mohan, 2002; Stolle & Hooghe, 2004). The latter is argued by Putnam (2000) which has been refuted by scholars that argue that state and other institutional structures play a large role in shaping the civic and political capacity of individuals and their social capital (Mohan & Mohan, 2002; Stolle & Hooghe, 2004). In studies, social capital is primarily utilized as a predictor variable and not an outcome variable; therefore, we have a limited knowledge of in what context best predicts social capital and its direct effect on civic and political participation (Hero, 2003), especially among racial and ethnic minorities.

Literature examining social capital, civic participation, and political participation, has largely ignored the influences of contextual factors such as neighborhood or state-level characteristics (e.g., race/ethnic composition, resident income levels, etc.; Alex-Assensoh &

Assensoh, 2001). Some have argued that geographic contexts of political behavior are oversimplified and that the relationship between race and state culture needs further critical examination (Weaver & Bagchi-Sen, 2015). Putnam (2000) himself acknowledges that studies should further examine the relationship between systems, identity, and social capital (Hampton, 2010). There is limited empirical evidence of context influencing African American social capital, civic participation, and political participation. This study aims to address some of the gaps within the literature.

This study argues that certain state political cultures may encourage African Americans to nurture specific types of social capital (e.g., bonding and bridging) and participate in certain types of civic and political activities (e.g., traditional and non-traditional). The current literature has not adequately established this relationship. Furthermore, this study proposes that state political culture may shape African American social capital, which, in turn, influences their civic and political participation.

This study has four goals. First, this study aims to establish a relationship between state political culture and social capital. This will help determine if residing in a state with a certain political culture is more likely to encourage bonding or bridging social capital among African Americans. Second, this study will assess if there is a relationship between state political culture and political participation. Thirdly, this study will examine the relationship between state political culture and civic participation. This will help to uncover if certain state political cultures promote or inhibit African American social capital and civic and political participation. For example, African Americans living in the South may continue to encounter barriers to civic and traditional modes of political participation as well as exclusion from certain social groups given the history of Jim Crow segregation and increased legislation of voter suppression laws (Feagin

& Ducey, 2018). Lastly, the current literature suggests that social capital may mediate the relationship between state political culture and civic participation as well as the relationship between state political culture and political participation. Therefore, this study will employ three parallel mediator models to estimate the total, direct, and indirect effects of state political culture on traditional political participation, non-traditional political participation, and civic participation, through bonding and bridging social capital.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Hypotheses

Following Elazar's typology, all U.S. Southern states are classified as having a traditionalistic political culture (see Table 1). The historical and cultural context of the U.S. South reflects the hierarchical (Hero, 2007), paternalistic, and exclusionary nature of the traditionalistic political culture (Elazar, 1994). The traditionalistic culture has promoted a political culture that is historically oppressive of African Americans but has also played a critical role in driving and normalizing African American participation in religious services, social movements, political organizing, and activism (Morris, 1984; Williams, 2002).

States with a traditionalistic political culture are home to approximately half of the U.S. African American population (Moslimani et al., 2024). Also, African Americans living in states with a traditionalistic political culture attend Black church services more frequently than African Americans living in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture (Mohamed & Diamant, 2021). Therefore, African Americans living in states with a traditionalistic political culture are likely to have frequent interaction with other African Americans allowing them to possibly build greater racial group solidarity and consciousness than their counterparts living in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture.

Racial group solidarity and consciousness among African Americans was prominent in the U.S. South during Reconstruction and the modern Civil Rights Movement (Morris, 1984). Black churches, Black organizations, and kinship ties were integral sources of social capital

during these periods of time and continue to have relevance today (Feagin & Ducey, 2018; Morris, 1984). Therefore, I hypothesize that:

> ***(Hypothesis 1)*** *African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital than African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture.*

States that have either a moralistic or an individualistic political culture are less diverse and have larger White populations than states with a traditionalistic political culture. This may help explain why African Americans living in these states are less likely to attend Black churches than those living in states with a traditionalistic political culture (Mohamed & Diamant, 2021). Furthermore, the smaller percentage of African American residents in moralistic and individualistic states may influence African Americans living in these states to have more diverse social networks than those living in states with a traditionalistic political culture. Therefore, I hypothesize that:

> ***(Hypothesis 2)*** *African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.*

As previously stated, Black churches, Black organizations, and kinship ties help generate social capital among African Americans, promoting their participation in politics and civics (Hyman, 2002; Putnam, 2000). These institutional and familial connections provide African Americans with the opportunities to develop interpersonal and organizational social networks as well as racial group solidarity, which are all important in mobilizing resources and shaping norms that incite people to act politically (Williams, 2002). Black churches and Black organizations have historically facilitated collective action among African Americans,

normalizing non-traditional modes of political participation such as protest, especially in Southern states (Morris, 1984).

Bonding social capital is associated with general African American civic and political participation (Putnam, 2000), however, the types of laws (e.g., voter disenfranchisement and suppression laws) generally passed in states with a traditionalistic political culture create barriers for African American political participation, specifically traditional modes of participation like voting (Hero, 2007). This helps explain why states with a traditionalistic political culture have lower voter turnout rates than states with either a moralistic or an individualistic political culture (Hero, 2007; Lieske, 2005). Furthermore, Black electoral participation has always been greater in Northern states in comparison to Southern states, even after the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act (Beyerlien & Andrews, 2008). This information generates the following hypotheses:

> ***(Hypothesis 3)*** *African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional forms of political participation than African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture.*
>
> ***(Hypothesis 4)*** *African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in traditional forms of political participation than African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.*

As previously stated, this study hypothesizes that states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture are associated with a greater likelihood of bridging social capital among African Americans in comparison to states with a traditionalistic political culture. This is partly expected because moralistic and individualistic states have smaller percentages of African

American residents in comparison to states with a traditionalistic political culture, encouraging African Americans to diversify their social networks. There is evidence of diversity "constricting" African American civic and political participation (Braunstein et al., 2014; Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2010; Hampton, 2010), however, Lieske (2005) found that Elazar's state political culture typology was a better predictor of political participation than diversity.

Nevertheless, many "1840s–1860s antislavery abolitionists and 1950s–1960s civil rights activists" were White (Feagin & Ducey, 2018) and originally from the North (Congress of Racial Equality, 2021; Rothschild, 1979). The moralistic state political culture's emphasis on the common good and concern for public welfare (Elazar, 1994; Zimmerman, 2003) may help explain the support Whites from these states give to antiracist movements. Also, there is evidence of moralistic and individualistic states promoting higher rates of civic participation such as helping neighbors solve a problem and volunteering in arts or cultural organizations than states with a traditionalistic political culture (Vansuch, 2017). These states also have higher rates of volunteering in political and advocacy organizations than states with a traditionalistic political culture (Vansuch, 2017). The current literature is not clear if this specifically pertains to African Americans. However, since states with a moralistic political culture support diversity and social equality policies and outcomes (Vansuch, 2017) they may not only encourage bridging social capital but also civic participation among African Americans. Therefore, I hypothesize the following:

> ***(Hypothesis 5)*** *African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities than African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.*

The current literature not only suggests that state political culture is associated with social capital, civic participation, and political participation but that social capital may also mediate the relationship between state political culture and civic participation as well as the relationship between state political culture and political participation. As aforementioned, social networks are integral in building African Americans' racial group identity, political knowledge, and political efficacy which encourage African Americans' participation in civic and political activities (Dawson, 1994). The literature suggests that bonding social capital promotes non-traditional modes of political participation like collective activism while bridging social capital promotes traditional modes of political participation (e.g., voting) as well as civic participation. As previously hypothesized, it is expected that states with a traditionalistic political culture will be associated with a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital and participation in non-traditional forms of political activities among African Americans. It is also expected that states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture will be associated with a higher likelihood of bridging social capital and participation in traditional forms of political activities and civic activities among African Americans. Therefore, I hypothesize the following:

> ***(Hypothesis 6)*** *African Americans living in states with a traditionalistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital, which, in turn, is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional modes of political activities.*
>
> ***(Hypothesis 7)*** *African Americans living in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital, which, in turn, is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in traditional modes of political activities.*

(Hypothesis 8) *African Americans living in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital, which, in turn, is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities.*

Methodology and Preliminary Data Analysis Plan

Research Design

This study examines five different binary logistic regression models among African Americans. First, I examined the relationship between state political culture and two types of social capital: bonding and bridging. Then, I examined the relationship between state political culture and civic and political participation. Two different modes of political participation are examined: traditional and non-traditional. Afterwards, I employed three parallel multiple mediator models.

The first parallel multiple mediator model estimates the effect of state political culture on traditional modes of political participation through bonding and bridging social capital (see Figure 1). The second parallel multiple mediator model estimates the effect of state political culture on non-traditional modes of political participation through bonding and bridging social capital (see Figure 2). Lastly, the third parallel multiple mediator model estimates the effect of state political culture on civic participation through bonding and bridging social capital (see Figure 3).

Figure 1. Direct and Indirect Effects of State Political Culture on Traditional Political Participation.

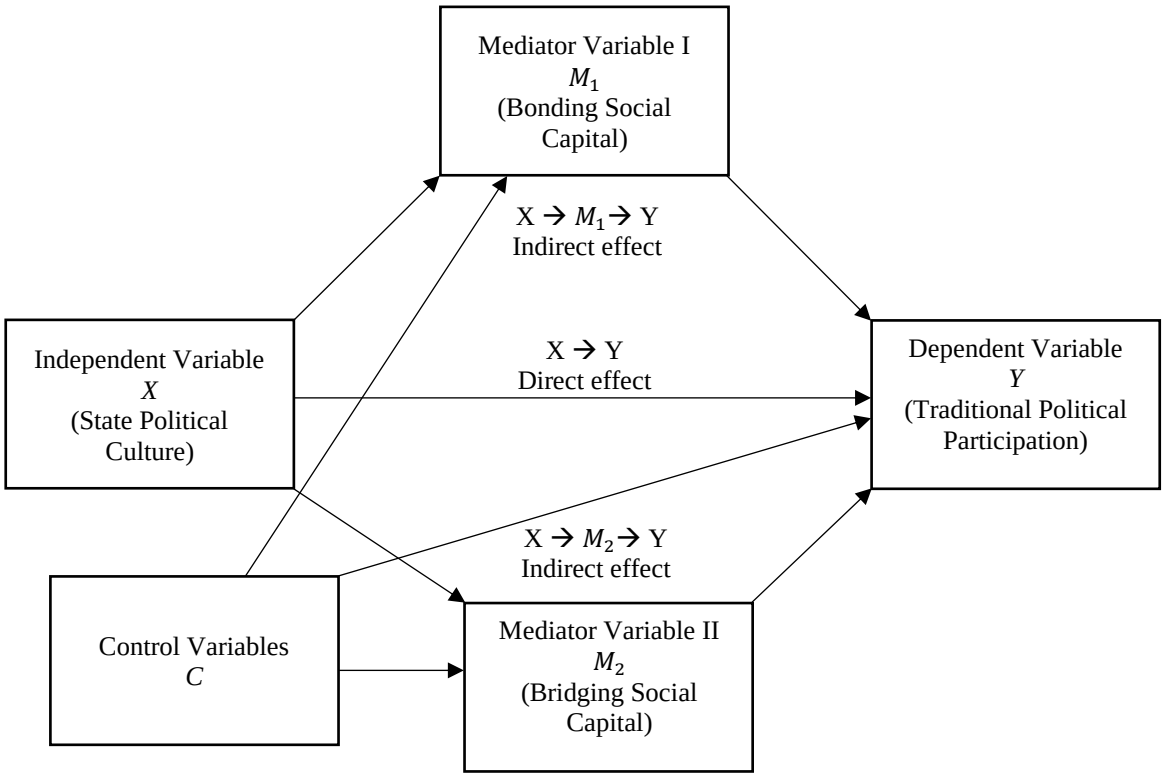


Figure 2. Direct and Indirect Effects of State Political Culture on Non-Traditional Political Participation.

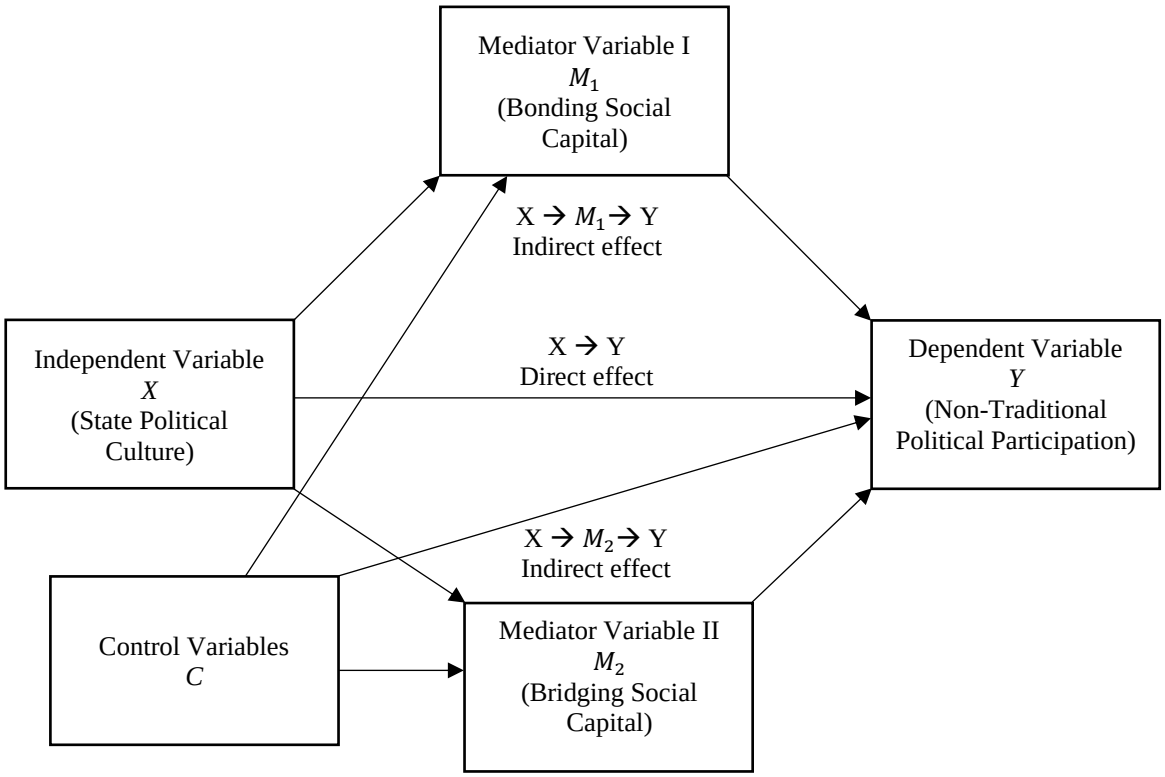
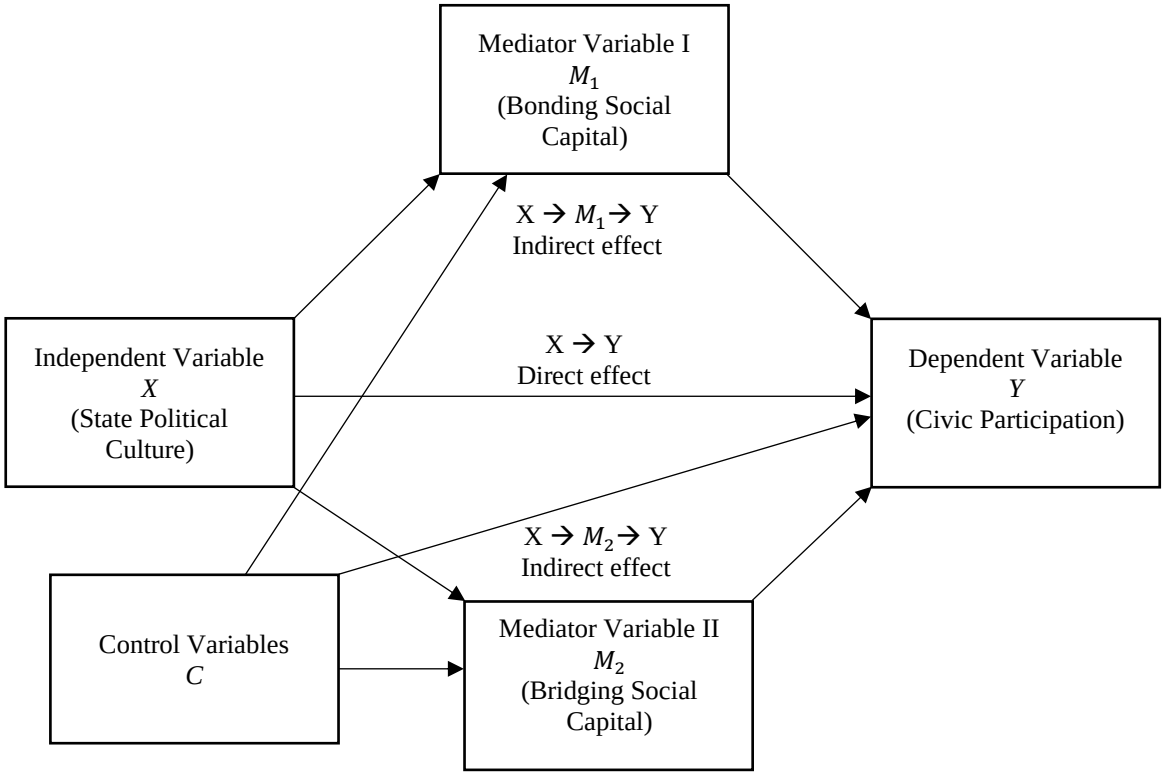


Figure 3. Direct and Indirect Effects of State Political Culture on Civic Participation.



Dataset and Sample

The 2016 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey ([CMPS]; Frasure et al., 2022) was utilized to examine the proposed research hypotheses. The 2016 CMPS was the "first cooperative, multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, post-election online survey in race, ethnicity, and politics in the U.S." (Frasure et al., 2022, p. 58). In spring 2016, scholars throughout the U.S. were invited to join a cooperative to self-fund the development and dissemination of the 2016 CMPS (Frasure et al., 2022). The survey's primary aim is to collect information on attitudes about the 2016 presidential election and candidates, debates over

immigration, policing, and racial equality, and experiences with racial discrimination in everyday life.

A total of 10,145 interviews were completed and collected online from December 3, 2016 to February 15, 2017. The survey was made available to respondents in five languages—English, Spanish, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Korean, and Vietnamese. As aforementioned, the survey's primary interest was in the 2016 election, therefore, the project started with a large sample of registered voters so that there was a large sample size for analyses. Also, the data includes an adult sample (age 18 or older) of non-registered voters and non-U.S. citizens. The survey includes large and generalizable samples of Blacks (n = 3102), Latinos (n = 3003), Asian Americans (n = 3006), and Whites (n = 1034) allowing for individual racial group, analysis and comparative analysis across racial groups.

This study's population of focus are those who identify as Black or African American. The 2016 CMPS' large, national sample of African Americans allows for comparative examination of civic and political behavior across all 50 U.S. states. The 2016 CMPS has a total of 1,311 individuals identifying as Black or African American, non-Hispanic, with completed responses which are included in this study.

Dependent Variables

Civic and Political Participation

In this study, the dependent variables are civic and political participation. Political participation is operationalized into two different categories: traditional and non-traditional. As previously stated, African Americans primarily participate in "non-traditional" forms of civic and political participation due to societal oppression. In their examination of the relationship between minority linked fate and political participation among African Americans, Asian

Americans, and Latino/as, Chan and Jasso (2021) operationalized political participation as three measures: 1) voter turnout, 2) conventional (e.g., traditional) political participation, and 3) unconventional (e.g., non-traditional) political participation. This study follows Chan's and Jasso's (2021) operationalization but categorizes voting as a traditional method of political participation; therefore, having two measures of political participation.

Traditional and Non-Traditional Political Participation. Traditional political participation is assessed by measuring four traditional political activities involved with the electoral process. The four traditional activities are measured according to whether respondents report that they have: 1) voted in the 2016 presidential election; 2) worked for a candidate, campaign, or party organization; 3) contributed money to a candidate, political party, ballot issue, or some other campaign organization; or 4) contacted an elected representative or government official. Non-traditional political participation is assessed by three measures including 1) having protested; 2) boycotted a company or product for political reasons; or 3) signed a petition regarding an issue or problem that concerned them. The responses to the traditional and non-traditional political participation items were initially measured as dichotomous variables (1 = yes and 2 = no) and recoded using indicator coding (0 = yes and 1 = no). This study measured both traditional and non-traditional political participation by combining their respective item responses and measuring them as dichotomous variables (e.g., 0 = yes and 1 = no).

Civic Participation. As previously stated, civic participation is often defined as social capital (Chetty et al., 2022; Putnam, 2000; Sørensen, 2016; Wollebæk & Strømsnes, 2008). To my knowledge, there are no clear distinctions between traditional and non-traditional forms of civic participation. There are arguments that some types of civic participation are more passive

than others regarding intensity of social interaction and purpose (e.g., moral or social; Almond & Verba, 1963; Brady et al., 1995; Wollebæk & Strømsnes, 2008). Furthermore, civic activities are often considered political, and therefore, operationalized as political participation (Almond & Verba, 1963; Brady et al., 1995; Campbell et al., 1960; Gaby, 2017; Salisbury, 1975), however, I argue that not every collective action among African Americans is political. For instance, organizing of health and resource drives (e.g., food, clothes, toiletries, etc.) by churches and other organizations are common in majority Black communities that have moderate to high levels of poverty. This collective action may be a response to political inaction but is primarily driven by morality and solidarity. Furthermore, these activities may be considered as non-traditional because they are organized by predominately Black institutions that operate independently from mainstream and predominately White institutions.

This study does not distinguish between "traditional" and "non-traditional" civic activities or "passive" and "active" civic participation due to lack of empirical evidence supporting these distinctions. Furthermore, the 2016 CMPS does not include a measure of community or organizational volunteering which is often considered a "traditional" form of civic participation (Almond & Verba, 1963; Wollebæk & Strømsnes, 2008). Therefore, civic participation is conceptualized as activities intended to make a positive difference in one's local community and operationalized according to whether respondents report that they have: 1) worked or cooperated with others to try to solve a problem affecting their city or neighborhood and/or 2) attended a meeting to discuss issues facing the community over the span of a year. The responses to the two civic participation items were initially measured as dichotomous variables (1 = yes and 2 = no) and recoded using indicator coding (0 = yes and 1 = no). This study

measured civic participation by combining the item responses and measuring them as dichotomous variables (e.g., 0 = yes and 1 = no).

Mediator Variable

Social Capital

In this study, bonding and bridging social capital are dependent variables in two binary logistic regression models and as mediator variables in three parallel multiple mediator models. The logistic regression models will estimate the effect of state political culture on both bonding and bridging social capital, respectively. Parallel multiple mediator models will estimate the effect of state political culture on traditional modes of political participation, non-traditional modes of political participation, and civic participation, through both bonding and bridging social capital. In the parallel multiple mediator models the indirect effects of bonding and bridging social capital on civic and political participation will be estimated while controlling for state political culture (Hayes, 2022). The parallel multiple mediator models will also estimate the indirect effects of state political culture on both bonding and bridging social capital, respectively. Therefore, as mediator variables, bonding and bridging social capital are also considered to be dependent and independent variables (Hayes, 2022).

As previously discussed, African Americans have historically been excluded from traditional civic and political activities that maintain democracy and strengthen communities (Swain, 2008); therefore, African Americans are more likely to possess bonding social capital than bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000). Many modern social movements, including the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter movements, African Americans have predominately participated in marches and community organizing, and have depended on civic organizations and churches for support (Crowley, 2013; Farmer, 2006). These civic and political activities or resources are

considered forms of bonding social capital because they develop trust, involve people who have shared societal norms, and promote reciprocity (Halpern, 2005).

Civic participation in organizations and local initiatives are often considered forms of social capital in the literature (Putnam, 2000; Sørensen, 2016) because they aid in bonding and bridging social capital. Therefore, organizational membership is defined as a form of social capital in this study. The possession and use of bonding and bridging social capital looks different among African Americans, therefore, both concepts are examined separately and serve as two mediator variables in this study.

Bonding Social Capital. In this study, bonding social capital is operationalized as close social relationships (e.g., family and friends) and church attendance. Bonding social capital is measured according to four items. The first item is based on whether respondents have discussed politics with family and friends in the last twelve months. This item was initially measured as a dichotomous variable (1 = yes and 2 = no) and recoded using indicator coding (0 = yes and 1 = no).

The second item asks, "how often do you talk with or visit with their nearest neighbors?" This item was initially measured on an 8-point scale ranging from 1 = never to 8 = just about every day. This item was recoded as a dichotomous variable (0 = yes and 1 = no) by combining responses ranging from 2 (once a year or less) to 8 (just about every day) and coding them as 0 = yes, indicating that respondents spoke with their neighbors at least once a year to up to every day. The never response was recoded as 1 = no.

The third item asks, "Overall, how would you rate your community as a place to live?" This item was initially measured on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = excellent to 5 = poor. This item was recoded as a dichotomous variable (0 = yes and 1 = no) by combining responses

ranging from 1 (excellent) to 4 (fair) and coding them as 0 = yes, indicating that respondents perceive their community positively. The poor response was recoded as 1 = no, indicating that respondents do not perceive their community positively.

Lastly, the fourth item indicates whether respondents regularly attend a predominately Black church or not. This item was initially measured as a ratio variable on a scale that ranges from zero percent to 100 percent. Respondents who reported that they attend a religious service or gathering a few times a month (3) to at least every week (1) were prompted to indicate the approximate racial/ethnic composition of their place of religious worship or gathering. This item was recoded as a dichotomous variable (0 = yes and 1 = no) by combining responses that reported that 51 percent to 100 percent of people that attended respondents' place of religious worship were Black and coding them as 0 = yes; indicating that these respondents regularly attend a predominately Black church. Responses that reported that zero percent to 50 percent of people that attended a respondent's place of religious worship were Black was coded as 1 = no; indicating that these respondents did not regularly attend a predominately Black church. To form the bonding social capital variable these four items were combined and measured as dichotomous variables (e.g., 0 = yes and 1 = no).

The CMPS lacks measurements that explicitly assess trust (e.g., social trust, trust in people from the local community) and reciprocity (e.g., help among community members, solidarity among community members, knowing each other in local community, and feeling safe and secure in local community). However, each of these measures require or involve some level of trust and reciprocity and closely resemble other studies'(Kaasa & Parts, 2008; Sørensen, 2016; Wollebæk & Strømsnes, 2008) measures of social capital. This is a limitation of this dataset but is more current than the Social Capital Benchmark Survey (Saguaro Seminar at the John F.

Kennedy School of Government, 2001; 2009) which lacks social capital measures relevant to African Americans.

Bridging Social Capital. In this study, bridging social capital is conceptualized as social networks that foster connections outside of one's close family and friends, and possibly, their local community. Bridging social capital is measured according to two variables. The first item asks, "Do you participate in one or more than one social, cultural, civic, political group or union or do you not participate in the activities of any such groups?" This item was initially measured on a 3-point scale (1 = yes, one, 2 = yes, more than one, 3 = none. This item was recoded as a dichotomous variable (0 = yes and 1 = no) by combining responses ranging from 1 to 2 and coding them as 0 = yes, indicating that respondents do participate in more than one social, cultural, civic, political group, or union. The "none" response was recoded as 1 = no, indicating that respondents do not participate in more than one social, cultural, civic, political group, or union. The second item asks, "Are you a member of any organization working to improve the status of African Americans?" This item was initially measured as a dichotomous variable (1 = yes and 2 = no) and recoded using indicator coding (0 = yes and 1 = no).

Again, a limitation of the CMPS 2016 dataset is that it lacks social capital measures, however, it can still provide insight on the forms of social capital that are prominent among African Americans. This study measured bridging social capital by combining the two item responses and measuring them as dichotomous variables (e.g., 0 = yes and 1 = no).

Independent Variable

Elazar's State Political Culture Typology

This study's independent variable is state political culture. State political culture will be conceptualized according to Elazar's (1994) three-category typology. Elazar's (1994) typology

provides a theoretical explanation of differences in attitudes and approaches among state governments (Wirt, 1991; Zimmerman, 2003). Elazar's (1994) typology has been used in much of the state political culture literature, nevertheless, a prominent issue with Elazar's classification is operationalizing it for empirical analysis (Mondak & Canache, 2014). First, Elazar not only categorized states but "regions within states" (Mondak & Canache, 2014; p. 31), therefore two states may share the same culture but at varying degrees. Sharkansky (1969) suggested that states should be operationalized on a numerical, unidimensional scale that orders them according to how much they represent a political culture typology (Sharkansky, 1969). Secondly, a state may possess more than one political culture according to state regional differences (Mondak & Canache, 2014). Scholars have noted that it is important to "capture" these "distinctions" (Leiske, n.d.; Mondak & Canache, 2014, p. 31; Sharkansky, 1969); however, measuring states on a unidimensional scale or assigning more than one culture may cause the theoretical assumptions of state political culture to be lost.

Furthermore, there are arguments that Elazar's typology is dated (e.g., over 50 years old) and is therefore no longer applicable (Mondak & Canache, 2014). Elazar's typology drew upon the migration patterns of ethnic and religious groups in the U.S. (Johnson, 1976). As the U.S. becomes more culturally diverse and exhibits changing migration patterns, there are assertations that Elazar's typology is no longer applicable (Lieske, 2007). Although the cultural and religious makeup of the U.S. is changing and becoming increasingly diverse culturally, Elazar's state political culture theory continues to be relevant.

In conjunction to ethnic, racial, and religious factors, state political culture is the result of the historical relationships (e.g., cooperation, competition, and/or conflict) among groups within a state (Hero & Tolbert, 1996; Key, 1949) that continue to exist in modern times

demonstrating the continued relevance of Elazar's (1994) typology. Furthermore, there is empirical evidence of Elazar's typology significantly corresponding with differences among states (Hero, 2007; Mondak & Canache, 2014, p. 35). This study utilizes Elazar's original three-category typology; code each state according to its dominant state political culture (e.g., 0 = traditional, 1 = moralistic, 2 = individualistic; see Table 1 below).

Control Variables

Demographic variables including education, income, age, and gender are utilized as control variables. Previous work has found that education, income, age, and gender are associated with civic and political participation (Alex-Assensoh & Assensoh, 2001; Bobo & Gilliam, 1990; Brady et al., 1995; Verba et al., 1995). I also control for political orientations including partisanship, strength of partisan identity, ideology, and perceptions of political efficacy: 1) external efficacy (e.g., How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: public officials don't care much what people like me think?) and 2) internal efficacy (e.g., How much do you agree or disagree with the statement: Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.) because they can influence African Americans' navigation of politics (Dawson, 1994). Lastly, homeownership, health insurance coverage, and concern for crime in one's city are included as controls given that they are significantly associated with African American civic and political participation (Farmer, 2006; McClerking & McDaniel, 2005; van Holm, 2019; Wilson, 2012).

Statistical Analysis

Preliminary data analyses were conducted to test for normality and multicollinearity, confirm the measurement theory (e.g., exploratory factor analysis), and obtain descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, percentages, etc.). Afterwards, the relationship between state political

culture and the five dependent variables: 1) bonding social capital, 2) bridging social capital, 3) traditional political participation, 4) non-traditional political participation, and 5) civic participation, while controlling for the aforementioned control variables, were examined. The dependent variables are coded as binary outcomes; therefore, I conducted five binary logistic regression models. First, two models estimated the direct effect of state political culture on bonding social capital and bridging social capital as dependent variables, respectively. Second, two models estimated the direct effect of state political culture on non-traditional and traditional forms of participation, respectively. Then, another binary logistic regression model was employed to estimate the direct effect of state political culture on civic participation. The change in predicted probabilities are reported below under the findings and in Table 5.

After conducting the five full regression models, three parallel multiple mediator models using structural equation modeling (SEM) were employed, with bonding social capital and bridging social capital serving as the mediator variables. SEM is appropriate for estimating the effects of multiple paths into political and civic participation because it allows for the specification of multiple mediators and dependent (endogenous) variables (Walker, 2008). The first parallel multiple mediator model estimated the total, direct, and indirect effects of state political culture on traditional modes of political participation through bonding and bridging social capital. The second parallel multiple mediator model estimated the total, direct, and indirect effects of state political culture on non-traditional modes of political participation through bonding and bridging social capital. Then, the third parallel multiple mediator model estimated the total, direct, and indirect effects of state political culture on civic participation through bonding and bridging social capital.

The five full logistic regression models and three parallel multiple mediator models were estimated using the method of maximum likelihood with robust standard errors to account for any nonnormality in the sample. The inferential tests for the indirect effects of the mediation analyses were estimated using the normal approach theory or Sobel test. The significance of mediating effect was determined by the confidence intervals. All analyses were performed using STATA Statistical Software (Release 18; StataCorp, 2023).

The model fit for the five logistic regression models was assessed by commonly used model maximum likelihood ratio test ($\chi 2$) and pseudo $R2$. A limitation of conducting the SEM in STATA is that you cannot run a SEM fitting a binomial, logit model using the command "sem". The sem command, by default, runs a linear model. However, you can run a SEM fitting a binomial, logit model using the command "gsem." However, a limitation of the gsem command is that you cannot assess the SEM model fit by using goodness of fit indices, including maximum likelihood ratio chi-square statistics ($\chi 2$), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). In this study, I decided to use the gsem command because my dependent and mediator variables were dichotomous. This is a limitation of my data analysis which is addressed in the limitations section in chapter five.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents results from the logistic regression analyses and the mediation analyses conducted to examine the dissertation's eight hypotheses. First, a summary of the descriptive, logistic, and mediation analyses is discussed. The descriptive statistics provide a summary of the variables in the logistic and mediation models. The logistic regression models provided analyses of the first five hypotheses. The final section of this chapter discusses the three mediation models and their findings as it relates to the last three hypotheses.

The logistic regression and mediation models and their results are introduced in sequential order of the hypotheses (i.e., H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7 and H8), and thus relevant data are presented beginning with Hypothesis #1. In each of the logistic regression analyses, the discussion of results focuses on the logistic regressions' beta coefficients strength and direction between regression results of the following state political cultures: moralistic, individualistic, and traditionalistic. Logistic regression beta coefficients cannot be interpreted directly because they reflect both: (1) the relationship between the x's and y* (e.g., latent variable) and (2) the identifying assumptions about the variance of the error (Long, 1997, p. 49). Since "the probability of an event is unaffected by the identifying assumption regarding the variance of the error" (Long, 1997, p. 50), the predicted probabilities and marginal effects (e.g., partial change in the probability) will be reported and interpreted. The alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests. The models' corresponding tables provide more detailed information. Tables with results for the logistic regressions display the model likelihood ratio test ($\chi 2$), pseudo $R2$, p-value, parameter estimates, and standard errors.

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 provide a summary of the variables in the logistic regression and mediation models. This section will provide a substantive review of the variables used in the study. Among the final sample of 1,311 respondents, the average reported income is between $50,000 to $59,999, the mean age is 47 years of age (SD = 14.10, range = 18–82) and 69% were female. Most of the respondents' highest level of education was some college/2-year degree (41.27%). The majority of the respondents identified as being Democrats (89.70%). Approximately half reported having a liberal ideology (45.46%) and 39.38% having a moderate ideology.

Regarding political efficacy, 38.67% reporting low internal efficacy agreed with the statement, "sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on." Thirty-seven percent of respondents had high internal efficacy. More than half (54%) of participants reported having low external efficacy; they agreed with the statement that "public officials don't care much what people like me think."

Most of the respondents were employed full-time (49%), approximately half (52%) of the respondents do not own the home they live in, and the vast majority of them reported having health insurance (90.92%). The majority of the respondents reported some concern with crime in their city (89%), with 48% reporting that they were very concerned with crime in their city and 41% reporting that they were a little concerned. Nearly all respondents, approximately 97%, reported that they participate in activities that cultivate bonding social capital, whereas 35% reported that they participate in activities that cultivate bridging social capital. More than half (56%) of the respondents reported that they participate in non-traditional political activities. Reflecting the current literature, most of the respondents reported that they participate in

traditional political activities (94.81%) while approximately 36% reported that they participate in civic activities.

The state political culture variables included three different state political cultures: moralistic (n = 183), individualistic (n = 469), and traditionalistic (n = 659). As expected, approximately 50% of the respondents live in traditionalistic states since most of the U.S. African American/Black population live in the Southern region. Some studies examine state political cultures by including moralistic and individualistic as one measure and traditionalistic as another. However, for this study, I was interested in the comparisons between all three types of state political cultures (e.g., moralistic relative to individualistic; moralistic relative to traditionalistic; individualistic relative to traditionalistic); therefore, I utilized indicator coding.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

State Political Cultures	**Moralistic**	**Individualistic**	**Traditionalistic**	
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	Total
	183 (14.0%)	469 (35.8%)	659 (50.3%)	*N* = 1,311
Income				
Below 20,000 to 29,999	43 (23.5%)	122 (26.0%)	185 (28.1%)	350 (26.7%)
30,000 to 49,999	47 (25.7%)	109 (23.2%)	148 (22.5%)	304 (23.2%)
50,000 to 79,999	45 (24.6%)	110 (23.5%)	170 (25.8%)	325 (24.8%)
80,000 and more	48 (26.2%)	128 (27.3%)	156 (23.7%)	332 (25.3%)

State Political Cultures	**Moralistic**	**Individualistic**	**Traditionalistic**	
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	Total
Gender				
Male	58 (31.7%)	143 (30.5%)	202 (30.7%)	403 (30.7%)
Female	125 (68.3%)	326 (69.5%)	457 (69.3%)	908 (69.3%)
Education				
Some high school, high school graduate/GED	19 (10.4%)	81 (17.3%)	114 (17.3%)	214 (16.3%)
Some college, 2-year degree	77 (42.1%)	193 (41.2%)	271 (41.1%)	541 (41.3%)
4-year college graduate	59 (32.2%)	110 (23.5%)	170 (25.8%)	339 (25.9%)
Post-graduate	28 (15.3%)	85 (18.1%)	104 (15.8%)	217 (16.6%)
Age				
18 to 35 years old	39 (21.3%)	106 (22.6%)	143 (21.7%)	288 (21.9%)
36 to 45 years old	35 (19.1%)	109 (23.2%)	161 (24.4%)	305 (23.3%)
46 to 55 years old	45 (24.6%)	114 (24.3%)	140 (21.2%)	299 (22.8%)
56 to 65 years old	34 (18.6%)	84 (17.9%)	125 (19.0%)	243 (18.5%)
66 years old and over	30 (16.4%)	56 (11.9%)	90 (13.7%)	176 (13.4%)

State Political Cultures	**Moralistic**	**Individualistic**	**Traditionalistic**	
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	Total
Ideology				
Liberal	79 (43.2%)	232 (49.5%)	285 (43.2%)	596 (45.5%)
Moderate	75 (41.0%)	178 (38.0%)	262 (39.8%)	515 (39.3%)
Conservative	29 (15.8%)	59 (12.6%)	112 (17.0%)	200 (15.3%)
Party identification				
Democrat	153 (83.6%)	426 (90.8%)	597 (90.6%)	1,176 (89.7%)
Republican	14 (7.7%)	18 (3.8%)	25 (3.8%)	57 (4.4%)
Independent	16 (8.7%)	25 (5.3%)	37 (5.6%)	78 (5.9%)
Internal political efficacy				
Agree	75 (41.0%)	177 (37.7%)	255 (38.7%)	507 (38.7%)
Neither agree nor disagree	35 (19.1%)	116 (24.7%)	168 (25.5%)	319 (24.3%)
Disagree	73 (39.9%)	176 (37.5%)	236 (35.8%)	485 (36.9%)
External political efficacy				
Agree	94 (51.4%)	250 (53.3%)	366 (55.5%)	710 (54.2%)
Neither agree nor disagree	61 (33.3%)	148 (31.6%)	207 (31.4%)	416 (31.7%)
Disagree	28 (15.3%)	71 (15.1%)	86 (13.1%)	185 (14.1%)

State Political Cultures	**Moralistic**	**Individualistic**	**Traditionalistic**	
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	Total
Employment				
Employed Full-Time	90 (49.2%)	242 (51.6%)	315 (47.8%)	647 (49.4%)
Employed Part-Time	19 (10.4%)	47 (10.0%)	65 (9.9%)	131 (9.9%)
Retired	44 (24.0%)	88 (18.8%)	168 (25.5%)	300 (22.9%)
Unemployed	30 (16.4%)	92 (19.6%)	111 (16.8%)	233 (17.8%)
Homeowner				
No	93 (50.8%)	269 (57.4%)	324 (49.2%)	686 (52.3%)
Yes	90 (49.2%)	200 (42.6%)	335 (50.8%)	625 (47.7%)
Health insurance coverage				
No	8 (4.4%)	35 (7.5%)	76 (11.5%)	119 (9.1%)
Yes	175 (95.6%)	434 (92.5%)	583 (88.5%)	1,192 (90.9%)
How concerned are you about crime in your city?				
Very concerned	83 (45.4%)	251 (53.5%)	299 (45.4%)	633 (48.3%)
A little concerned	77 (42.1%)	181 (38.6%)	280 (42.5%)	538 (41.0%)
Not at all concerned	23 (12.6%)	37 (7.9%)	80 (12.1%)	140 (10.7%)

State Political Cultures	**Moralistic**	**Individualistic**	**Traditionalistic**	
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	Total
Traditional political participation				
No	7 (3.8%)	27 (5.8%)	34 (5.2%)	68 (5.2%)
Yes	176 (96.2%)	442 (94.2%)	625 (94.8%)	1,243 (94.8%)
Non-traditional political participation				
No	68 (37.2%)	169 (36.0%)	339 (51.4%)	576 (43.9%)
Yes	115 (62.8%)	300 (64.0%)	320 (48.6%)	735 (56.1%)
Civic participation				
No	116 (63.4%)	295 (62.9%)	432 (65.6%)	843 (64.3%)
Yes	67 (36.6%)	174 (37.1%)	227 (34.4%)	468 (35.7%)
Bonding social capital				
No	8 (4.4%)	10 (2.1%)	24 (3.6%)	42 (3.2%)
Yes	175 (95.6%)	459 (97.9%)	635 (96.4%)	1,269 (96.8%)
Bridging social capital				
No	104 (56.8%)	317 (67.6%)	433 (65.7%)	854 (65.1%)
Yes	79 (43.2%)	152 (32.4%)	226 (34.3%)	457 (34.9%)

Logistic Regression Results

The results in this section examine five binary logistic regression models conducted to assess if state political culture influences the five outcome variables: bonding social capital, bridging social capital, traditional political participation, non-traditional political participation, and civic participation among African Americans. The results of the binary logistic regression models are presented in Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6. None of the analyses provide support for my hypotheses due to some plausible limitations of the study which will be discussed in detail in chapter 5 under the limitations section.

Findings for Hypothesis 1 (H1): African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital than African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture.

Bonding Social Capital. The findings for H1 show that African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher probability of cultivating bonding social capital than those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture (β = 0.54, p = 0.239; see Table 3). However, this probability is not statistically significant. As displayed in Table 5, the predicted probability of African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture and cultivating bonding social capital increases by approximately two percentage points when compared to African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture, holding all other variables at their medians; however, this change in predicted probability is small and was not found to be statistically significant (β = .015, p = 0.356).

Contrary to the hypothesis, it was found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a higher probability of cultivating bonding social capital than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (β = 0.39, p =

0.338; see Table 4). As displayed in Table 5, the predicted probability of African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture and cultivating bonding social capital decreases by approximately one percentage point when compared to African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture, holding all other variables at their medians; however, this change in predicted probability was small and not found to be statistically significant (β = -.007, p = 0.382).

Findings for Hypothesis 2 (H2): African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.

Bridging Social Capital. The findings for H2 show that African Americans who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture have a higher probability of cultivating bridging social capital than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture; however, this probability is not statistically significant (β = 0.29, p = 0.145; see Table 3). As displayed in Table 5, the predicted probability of African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture and cultivating bridging social capital increases by six percentage points when compared to African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture, holding all other variables at their medians. However, this change in predicted probability was not found to be statistically significant (β = 0.060, p = 0.157).

Contrary to H2, it was found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a lower probability of cultivating bridging social than those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (β = -0.28, p = 0.055; see Table 4). This probability is not statistically significant but almost meets statistical significance. As displayed in Table 5, the predicted probability of African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic

political culture and cultivating bridging social capital significantly decreases by approximately five percentage points when compared to African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture, holding all other variables at their medians. This change in predicted probability was not found to be statistically significant (β = 0.052, p = 0.058).

Although a comparison of the relationship between individualistic political culture and moralistic state culture and bridging social capital was not hypothesized. It was found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a statistically significant lower probability of cultivating bridging social capital compared to African Americans that reside in a state with a moralistic political culture (β = -0.57, p = 0.005; see Table 3). As displayed in Table 5, the predicted probability of African Americans cultivating bridging social capital while residing in a state with an individualistic political culture compared to African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture significantly decreases by 11 percentage points, holding all other variables at their medians. This change in predicted probability was to be statistically significant (β = -0.111, p = 0.009).

Table 3

Logistic Regression Analysis of Bonding and Bridging Social Capital (Dependent Variables) Associated with the Three Types of State Political Culture

	Bonding social capital			Bridging social capital		
State political culture	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI
Individualistic vs Moralistic	0.94 (0.52)	0.070	[-0.10, 2.00]	-0.57** (0.21)	0.005	[-1.00, -0.20]
Traditionalistic vs Moralistic	0.54 (0.46)	0.239	[-0.40, 1.40]	-0.29 (0.20)	0.145	[-0.70, 0.10]
Constant	0.09 (1.37)	0.950	[-2.59, 2.76]	-3.64** (0.95)	0.000	[-5.50, -1.80]
Observations	1311			1311		
Log likelihood	-147.01			-694.47		
	B (SE)	*p*		*B (SE)*	*p*	
Likelihood ratio test ($\chi 2$)	77.65	0.000		306.37	0.000	
Pseudo R^2	0.21			0.18		

Note. Moralistic state culture as reference variable. Logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

* p<.05. ** p<.01.

Table 4

Logistic Regression Analysis of Bonding and Bridging Social Capital (Dependent Variables) Associated with the Three Types of State Political Culture

	Bonding social capital			Bridging social capital		
State political culture	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI
Individualistic vs Traditionalistic	0.39 (0.41)	0.338	[-0.40, 1.20]	-0.28 (0.15)	0.055	[-0.60, 0.00]
Constant	0.63 (1.26)	0.619	[-1.85, 3.11]	-3.93** (0.94)	0.000	[-5.76, -2.09]
Observations	1311			1311		
Log likelihood	-147.01			-694.47		
	B (SE)		*p*	*B (SE)*		*p*
Likelihood ratio test ($\chi 2$)	77.65		0.000	306.37		0.000
Pseudo R^2	0.21			0.18		

Note. Traditionalistic state culture as reference variable. Logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

* p<.05. ** p<.01.

Table 5

Discrete Change in the Predicted Probability of Dependent Variables Associated with State Political Culture for the Logit Model

	Predicted probability		
	Change from 0 to 1		
Predictor variable: State political culture	Individualistic vs. Moralistic	Traditionalistic vs. Moralistic	Traditionalistic vs. Individualistic
Bonding social capital	0.022 [-0.014, 0.059]	0.015 [-0.017, 0.048]	-0.007 [-0.023, 0.009]
Bridging social capital	-0.111** [-0.195, -0.027]	-0.060 [-0.142, 0.023]	0.052 [-0.002, 0.105]
Traditional pol. participation	-0.007 [-0.026, 0.013]	-0.002 [-0.020, 0.016]	0.004 [-0.010, 0.019]
Non-traditional pol. participation	0.020 [-0.077, 0.117]	-0.142** [-0.233, -0.051]	-0.162** [-0.227, -0.097]
Civic participation	0.031 [-0.037, 0.099]	0.041 [-0.026, 0.107]	0.009 [-0.043, 0.062]

Note. 95% CIs are in parentheses. All other predictors and covariates set at their medians.

*p < .05. **p < .01. All *p* values in this table are two-tailed.

Findings for Hypothesis 3 (H3): African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional forms of political participation than African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture.

Non-Traditional Political Participation. The statistical findings did not support H3, instead, an opposite effect was found. The findings for H3 show that when African Americans reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture the probability of them participating in non-traditional political activities significantly decreases in comparison to African Americans that reside in states with either a moralistic (β = -0.58, p = 0.002; see Table 6) or an individualistic (β = -0.66, p = 0.000; see Table 7) political culture.

As displayed in Table 5, the predicted probability of participating in non-traditional political activities while residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture compared to residing in a state with a moralistic political culture significantly decreases by 14 percentage points among African Americans, holding all other variables at their medians (β = -0.142, p = 0.002). Additionally, the predicted probability of participating in non-traditional political activities while residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture compared to residing in a state with an individualistic political culture significantly decreases by 16 percentage points among African Americans, holding all other variables at their medians (β = -0.162, p = 0.000; see Table 5).

Findings for Hypothesis 4 (H4): African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in traditional forms of political participation than African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.

Traditional Political Participation. The findings did not reveal any statistically significant evidence that supports H4. The findings show that African Americans who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture do have a higher probability of participating in traditional political activities than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (β = 0.10, p = 0.827; see Table 6). The predicted probability of African Americans who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture participating in traditional political activities in comparison to those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture increases by 0.2 percentage points, holding all other variables at their medians (see Table 5). This change in predicted probability was not found to be statistically significant (β = -0.002, p = 0.822).

Contrary to H4, African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a lower probability of participating in traditional political activities than African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (β = -0.18, p = 0.533; see Table 7). As displayed in Table 5, the predicted probability of African Americans participating in traditional political activities while residing in a state with an individualistic political culture decreases by 0.4 percentage points in comparison to African Americans who reside in state with a traditionalistic political culture. This change in predicted probability was not found to be statistically significant (β = -0.004, p = 0.542).

Findings for Hypothesis 5 (H5): African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities than African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.

Civic Participation. The H5 statistical findings failed to show that African Americans residing in states with moralistic and individualistic political cultures have a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities than African Americans residing in states with traditionalistic

political cultures. Contrarily, an opposite effect was found. The findings show that African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher probability of participating in civic activities compared to those residing in a state with either a moralistic (β = 0.23, p = 0.242; see Table 6) or an individualistic (β = 0.05, p = 0.726; see Table 7) political culture; however, these effects are not statistically significant.

The predicted probability of African Americans participating in civic activities while residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture compared to those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture increases by four percentage points, holding all other variables at their medians (β = 0.041, p = 0.228; see Table 5). The predicted probability of African Americans participating in civic activities while residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture compared to those who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture increases by approximately 1 percentage point, holding all other variables at their medians (see Table 5). These changes in predicted probability were not found to be statistically significant (β = -0.009, p = 0.726).

Table 6

Logistic Regression Analysis of Traditional Political Participation, Non-Traditional Political Participation, and Civic Participation (Dependent Variables) Associated with the Three Types of State Political Culture

	Traditional political participation			Non-traditional political participation			Civic participation		
State political culture	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI
Individualistic vs Moralistic	-0.28 (0.47)	0.545	[-1.20, 0.60]	0.08 (0.20)	0.683	[-0.30, 0.50]	0.18 (0.21)	0.377	[-0.20, 0.60]
Traditionalistic vs Moralistic	-0.10 (0.46)	0.827	[-1.00, 0.80]	-0.58** (0.19)	0.002	[-0.90, -0.20]	0.23 (0.20)	0.242	[-0.20, 0.60]
Constant	0.94 (1.20)	0.431	[-1.40, 3.30]	-1.17 (0.62)	0.060	[-2.40, 0.05]	-5.32** (1.18)	0.000	[-7.63, -3.01]
Observations	1311			1311			1311		
Log likelihood	-215.45			-776.94			-698.05		
	B (SE)	*p*		*B (SE)*	*p*		*B (SE)*	*p*	
Likelihood ratio test ($\chi 2$)	103.95	0.000		244.22	0.000		312.56	0.000	
Pseudo R^2	0.19			0.14			0.18		

Note. Moralistic state culture as reference variable. Logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

* p<.05. ** p<.01.

Table 7

Logistic Regression Analysis of Traditional Political Participation, Non-Traditional Political Participation, and Civic Participation (Dependent Variables) Associated with the Three Types of State Political Culture

	Traditional political participation			Non-traditional political participation			Civic participation		
State political culture	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI	*B (SE)*	*p*	95% CI
Individualistic vs Traditionalistic	-0.18 (0.29)	0.533	[-0.80, 0.40]	0.66** (0.14)	0.000	[0.40, 0.90]	-0.05 (0.15)	0.726	[-0.30, 0.20]
Constant	0.84 (1.12)	0.449	[-1.34, 3.03]	-1.75** (0.60)	0.004	[-2.93, -0.57]	-5.09** (1.16)	0.000	[-7.37, -2.81]
Observations	1311			1311			1311		
Log likelihood	-215.45			-776.94			-698.05		
	B (SE)		*p*	*B (SE)*		*p*	*B (SE)*		*p*
Likelihood Ratio Test ($\chi 2$)	103.95		0.000	244.22		0.000	312.56		0.000
Pseudo R^2	0.19			0.14			0.18		

Note. Traditionalistic state culture as reference variable. Logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

* p<.05. ** p<.01.

Mediation Model Results

The results in this section examine three parallel mediation models using SEM. They were conducted to assess if the effect of state political culture on traditional political participation, non-traditional political participation, and civic participation is an indirect effect of bonding and bridging social capital among African Americans. The results of the mediation models are presented in Tables 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Tables 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 present the direct and indirect effects of bonding and bridging social capital on the relationships, after controlling for covariates. The confidence interval produced by the Sobel test are also reported in the tables. The Sobel test is conducted to determine whether a mediator variable carries the influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable (MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, 2009). An indirect effect is quantified as the product of paths; therefore, it is not appropriate to utilize p-values as an inferential test to support claims of indirect effects (Hayes, 2022). Therefore, I report the point estimate of the indirect effect and the Sobel test confidence intervals to support my claim that the indirect is not zero (Hayes, 2022). It is recommended that you use bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals produced through bootstrapping as an inferential test instead of the Sobel test (Hayes, 2022). A limitation of STATA is that it cannot produce bootstrapped, bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals of the indirect effects, therefore, the Sobel test was conducted. This limitation is further explained in chapter 5. None of the analyses, except for one which is partially supported, provide support for my hypotheses due to some limitations of the study which will be discussed in detail in chapter 5 under the limitations section.

Findings for Hypothesis 6 (H6): African Americans living in states with a traditionalistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital which in turn is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional modes of political activities.

Traditionalistic v. Moralistic. The findings did not reveal any statistically significant evidence that supports H6. As can be seen in Table 8, African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture appear to have a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital than those residing in a state with a moralistic political culture ($a = 0.32$, $p = 0.478$), and African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture are more likely to participate in non-traditional political activities ($b = 0.66$, $p = 0.074$) but none of these direct effects were found to be statistically significant. A confidence interval for the indirect effect ($ab = 0.21$) based on the Sobel test was not entirely above zero (-0.75 to 1.17), therefore, there was no evidence found that when African Americans reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture their participation in non-traditional political activity is indirectly through bonding social capital.

Traditionalistic v. Individualistic. In opposition to H6, African Americans that reside in a state with an individualistic political culture appear to have a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital than those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture ($a = 0.49$, $p = 0.219$; see Table 9), which in turn is positively related to African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture participation in non-traditional political activities ($b = 0.66$, $p = 0.074$); however, none of these direct effects were found to be statistically significant. A confidence interval for the indirect effect ($ab = 0.32$) based on the Sobel test was not entirely above zero (-0.43 to 1.08) so there was no evidence found that

bonding social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture participation in non-traditional political activity in comparison to those who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture.

Findings for Hypothesis 7 (H7): African Americans living in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital, which, in turn, is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in traditional modes of political activities.

Moralistic v. Traditionalistic. Congruent to H7, African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture appear to have a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (a = 0.28, p = 0.148; see Table 8), and African Americans who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture are more likely to participate in traditional political activities (b = 0.52, p = 0.202) but none of these direct effects were found to be statistically significant. A confidence interval for the indirect effect (ab = 0.15) based on the Sobel test was not entirely above zero (-0.56 to 0.27), therefore, we cannot claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture participation in traditional political activity in comparison to those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture.

Individualistic v. Traditionalistic. Contrary to H7, African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture appear to have a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those residing in a state with an individualistic political culture (a = 0.28, p = 0.061; see Table 9), and African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture are more likely to participate in traditional political activities (b = 0.52, p = 0.202) but none of these direct effects were found to be statistically significant. A confidence interval for

the indirect effect (*ab* = 0.14) based on the Sobel test was not entirely above zero (-0.50, 0.21), therefore, we cannot claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture participation in traditional political activity in comparison to those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture.

Table 8

Indirect Mediation Effects of Traditionalistic State Political Culture on Non-Traditional Political Participation and Traditional Political Participation (Dependent Variables) in Comparison to Moralistic State Political Culture

	Non-traditional political participation			Traditional political participation		
Direct Effects	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI
T → BO (a_1)	0.32 (0.45)	0.478 [-0.56, 1.20]	[-0.90, 1.54]	0.48 (0.45)	0.292 [-0.41, 1.36]	[-0.71, 1.66]
BO → DV (b_1)	0.66 (0.37)	0.074 [-0.06, 1.37]	[-0.12, 1.43]	-1.12 (0.77)	0.142 [-2.62, 0.38]	[-9.84, 7.59]
T → BR (a_2)	-0.37 (0.19)	0.052 [-0.75, 0.00]	[-0.77, 0.02]	-0.28 (0.20)	0.148 [-0.67, 0.10]	[-0.69, 0.12]
BR → DV (b_2)	0.76*** (0.14)	0.000 [0.47, 1.04]	[0.47, 1.04]	0.52 (0.40)	0.202 [-0.28, 1.31]	[-0.51, 1.54]
Indirect Effects						
T → BO → DV ($a_1 b_1$)	0.21 (0.36)	0.558 [-0.49, 0.91]	[-0.75, 1.17]	-0.54 (0.71)	0.454 [-1.93, 0.86]	[-7.36, 6.29]
T → BR → DV ($a_2 b_2$)	-0.28 (0.16)	0.073 [-0.59, 0.03]	[-0.61, 0.04]	-0.15 (0.17)	0.396 [-0.48, 0.19]	[-0.56, 0.27]

Note. Moralistic state culture as reference variable. Direct and indirect effect coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. T → BO = traditionalistic political culture effect on bonding social capital; BO → DV = bonding social capital effect on dependent variable; T → BR = traditionalistic political culture effect on bridging social capital; BR → DV = bridging social capital effect on dependent variable; T → BO → DV = traditionalistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bonding social capital; T → BR → DV = traditionalistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bridging social capital.

*p <.05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 9

Indirect Mediation Effects of Individualistic State Political Culture on Non-Traditional Political Participation and Traditional Political Participation (Dependent Variables) in Comparison to Traditionalistic State Political Culture

	Non-traditional political participation			Traditional political participation		
Direct Effects	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI
I → BO (a_1)	0.49 (0.40)	0.219 [-0.29, 1.28]	[-0.36, 1.35]	0.38 (0.41)	0.356 [-0.42, 1.17]	[-0.51, 1.26]
BO → DV (b_1)	0.66 (0.37)	0.074 [-0.06, 1.37]	[-0.12, 1.43]	-1.12 (0.77)	0.142 [-2.62, 0.38]	[-9.84, 7.59]
I → BR (a_2)	-0.18 (0.15)	0.213 [-0.47, 0.10]	[-0.47, 0.11]	-0.28 (0.15)	0.061 [-0.57, 0.01]	[-0.57, 0.02]
BR → DV (b_2)	0.76*** (0.14)	0.000 [0.47, 1.04]	[0.47, 1.04]	0.52 (0.40)	0.202 [-0.28, 1.31]	[-0.51, 1.54]
Indirect Effects						
I → BO → DV (a_1b_1)	0.32 (0.35)	0.358 [-0.37, 1.01]	[-0.43, 1.08]	-0.42 (0.62)	0.499 [-1.65, 0.80]	[-5.65, 4.80]
I → BR → DV (a_2b_2)	-0.14 (0.11)	0.234 [-0.36, 0.09]	[-0.36, 0.09]	-0.14 (0.15)	0.334 [-0.43, 0.15]	[-0.50, 0.21]

Note. Traditionalistic state culture as reference variable. Direct and indirect effect coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. I → BO = individualistic political culture effect on bonding social capital; BO → DV = bonding social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BR = individualistic political culture effect on bridging social capital; BR → DV = bridging social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BO → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bonding social capital; I → BR → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bridging social capital. *p <.05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Findings for Hypothesis 8 (H8): African Americans living in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital, which, in turn, is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities.

Moralistic v. Traditionalistic. In support of H8, African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture appear to have a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (a = 0.20, p = 0.271; see Table 10) but it is not statistically significant and African Americans residing in state with a moralistic political culture are significantly more likely to participate in civic activities (b = 1.46, p = 0.000). A confidence interval for the indirect effect (ab = 0.30) based on the Sobel test was not entirely above zero (-0.87, 0.28), therefore, we cannot claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture civic participation in comparison to those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture. However, it is noteworthy that the direct effect of bridging social capital on civic participation is significantly positive among African Americans residing in states with moralistic, traditionalistic, and individualistic political cultures (b = 1.46, p = 0.000).

Table 10

Indirect Mediation Effects of Traditionalistic State Political Culture on Civic Participation (Dependent Variable) in Comparison to Moralistic State Political Culture

	Civic participation		
Direct Effects	*B (SE)*	*P*>|*z*|	Bias-corrected 95% CI
T → BO (a_1)	0.51 (0.45)	0.256 [-0.37, 1.39]	[-0.59, 1.61]
BO → DV (b_1)	2.48* (1.02)	0.016 [0.47, 4.48]	[-10.26, 15.21]
T → BR (a_2)	-0.20 (0.18)	0.271 [-0.56, 0.16]	[-0.59, 0.19]
BR → DV (b_2)	1.46*** (0.14)	0.000 [1.19, 1.73]	[1.17, 1.74]
Indirect Effects			
T → BO → DV ($a_1 b_1$)	1.26 (1.31)	0.335 [-1.30, 3.82]	[-8.77, 11.29]
T → BR → DV ($a_2 b_2$)	-0.30 (0.27)	0.276 [-0.83, 0.24]	[-0.87, 0.28]

Note. Moralistic state culture as reference variable. Direct and indirect effect coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. T → BO = traditionalistic political culture effect on bonding social capital; BO → DV = bonding social capital effect on dependent variable; T → BR = traditionalistic political culture effect on bridging social capital; BR → DV = bridging social capital effect on dependent variable; T → BO → DV = traditionalistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bonding social capital; T → BR → DV = traditionalistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bridging social capital. *p <.05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Individualistic v. Traditionalistic. Contrary to H8, African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a significantly higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those residing in a state with an individualistic political culture (a = 0.28, p = 0.043; see Table 11). This direct effect was not found to be statistically significant in the logistic regression model assessing the relationship between state political culture and bridging social capital (β = 0.28, p = 0.055; see Table 4), however, it was close to statistical significance. Also, African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture are significantly more likely to participate in civic activities (b = 1.46, p = 0.000). Nevertheless, a confidence interval for the indirect effect (ab = 0.41) based on the Sobel test was not entirely above zero (-0.83, 0.00), therefore, we cannot claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture civic participation in comparison to those who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture.

Table 11

Indirect Mediation Effects of Individualistic State Political Culture on Civic Participation (Dependent Variable) in Comparison to Traditionalistic State Political Culture

	Civic participation		
Direct Effects	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI
I → BO (a_1)	0.30 (0.40)	0.461 [-0.49, 1.08]	[-0.58, 1.17]
BO → DV (b_1)	2.48* (1.02)	0.016 [0.47, 4.48]	[-10.26, 15.21]
I → BR (a_2)	-0.28* (0.14)	0.043 [-0.56, -0.01]	[-0.56, -0.01]
BR → DV (b_2)	1.46*** (0.14)	0.000 [1.19, 1.72]	[1.17, 1.74]
Indirect Effects			
I → BO → DV ($a_1 b_1$)	0.73 (1.11)	0.512 [-1.45, 2.91]	[-6.40, 7.86]
I → BR → DV ($a_2 b_2$)	-0.41* (0.21)	0.048 [-0.82, -0.00]	[-0.83, 0.00]

Note. Traditionalistic state culture as reference variable. Direct and indirect effect coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. I → BO = individualistic political culture effect on bonding social capital; BO → DV = bonding social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BR = individualistic political culture effect on bridging social capital; BR → DV = bridging social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BO → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bonding social capital; I → BR → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bridging social capital. *p <.05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Moralistic v. Individualistic. These findings show that bridging social capital significantly increases the likelihood of African Americans' participation in civic activities regardless of state political culture. Nevertheless, bridging social capital was not found to be a significant indirect (mediating) effect on African Americans' civic participation when comparing the differences between those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture relative to those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture and between those who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture relative to those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture. However, although not hypothesized, it was found that for African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture, their likelihood of participating in civic activities was significantly increased indirectly through bridging social capital.

More specifically, African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture have a significantly higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those residing in a state with an individualistic political culture ($a = 0.49$, $p = 0.012$; see Table 12), and African Americans who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture are significantly more likely to participate in civic activities ($b = 1.46$, $p = 0.000$). A confidence interval for the indirect effect ($ab = 0.71$) based on the Sobel test was found to be entirely below zero (-1.31, -0.11), therefore, we can claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture civic participation in comparison to those who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture.

The confidence intervals based on the Sobel test for the relative indirect effects of residing in states with either a traditionalistic or individualistic political culture relative to living in a state with a moralistic political culture are -0.28 to 0.87 (see Table 10), and -0.11 to 1.31

(see Table 12), respectively. Given that at least one of the confidence intervals is entirely below zero, we can conclude that the effect of state political culture on African American's civic participation is mediated by bridging social capital. Given that at least one of the relative indirect effects is different than zero, we can conclude that the effect of moralistic state political culture on civic participation is mediated by bridging social capital (Hayes, 2022).

Table 12

Indirect Mediation Effects of Individualistic State Political Culture on Civic Participation (Dependent Variable) in Comparison to Moralistic State Political Culture

	Civic participation		
Direct Effects	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI
I → BO (a_1)	0.80 (0.51)	0.112 [-0.19, 1.80]	[-0.43, 2.03]
BO → DV (b_1)	2.48* (1.02)	0.016 [0.47, 4.48]	[-10.26, 15.21]
I → BR (a_2)	-0.49* (0.19)	0.012 [-0.86, -0.11]	[-0.89, -0.09]
BR → DV (b_2)	1.46*** (0.14)	0.000 [1.19, 1.73]	[1.17, 1.74]
Indirect Effects			
I → BO → DV ($a_1 b_1$)	1.99 (1.59)	0.210 [-1.12, 5.10]	[-11.34, 15.32]
I → BR → DV ($a_2 b_2$)	-0.71* (0.29)	0.014 [-1.28, -0.14]	[-1.31, -0.11]

Note. Moralistic state culture as reference variable. Direct and indirect effect coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. I → BO = individualistic political culture effect on bonding social capital; BO → DV = bonding social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BR = individualistic political culture effect on bridging social capital; BR → DV = bridging social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BO → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bonding social capital; I → BR → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bridging social capital. *p <.05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Findings Not Hypothesized

The following findings were not hypothesized but evidence was found that bonding social capital has a positive direct effect on civic participation (a = 2.48, p = 0.016; see Tables 10, 11, and 12) among African Americans regardless of where they reside. It was also found that African Americans living in states with a moralistic political culture experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital which is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional activities**.** Specifically, African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture have a significantly higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those residing in a state with an individualistic political culture (a = 0.56, p = 0.006; see Table 13), and African Americans who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture are significantly more likely to participate in non-traditional political activities (b = 0.76, p = 0.000; see Table 13). A confidence interval for the indirect effect (ab = 0.42) based on the Sobel test was found to be entirely below zero (-0.77, -0.07), therefore, we can claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in states with a moralistic political culture participation in non-traditional political activities in comparison to those who reside in states with an individualistic political culture. These findings are discussed in more detail below.

Table 13

Indirect Mediation Effects of Individualistic State Political Culture on Non-Traditional Political Participation and Traditional Political Participation (Dependent Variables) in Comparison to Moralistic State Political Culture

	Non-traditional political participation			Traditional political participation		
Direct Effects	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI	*B (SE)*	*P>|z|*	Bias-corrected 95% CI
I → BO (a_1)	0.81 (0.51)	0.111 [-0.19, 1.81]	[-0.53, 2.15]	0.85 (0.51)	0.094 [-0.15, 1.85]	[-0.47, 2.17]
BO → DV (b_1)	0.66 (0.37)	0.074 [-0.06, 1.37]	[-0.12, 1.43]	-1.12 (0.77)	0.142 [-2.62, 0.38]	[-9.84, 7.59]
I → BR (a_2)	-0.56** (0.20)	0.006** [-0.95, -0.16]	[-0.96, -0.15]	-0.56** (0.20)	0.006 [-0.96, -0.16]	[-0.97, -0.15]
BR → DV (b_2)	0.76*** (0.14)	0.000*** [0.47, 1.04]	[0.47, 1.04]	0.52 (0.40)	0.202 [-0.28, 1.31]	[-0.51, 1.54]
Indirect Effects						
I → BO → DV ($a_1 b_1$)	0.53 (0.48)	0.272 [-0.42, 1.48]	[-0.67, 1.73]	-0.96 (0.95)	0.314 [-2.82, 0.91]	[-10.52, 8.60]
I → BR → DV ($a_2 b_2$)	-0.42* (0.18)	0.017 [-0.76, -0.08]	[-0.77, -0.07]	-0.29 (0.26)	0.272 [-0.80, 0.23]	[-0.94, 0.36]

Note. Moralistic state culture as reference variable. Direct and indirect effect coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. I → BO = individualistic political culture effect on bonding social capital; BO → DV = bonding social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BR = individualistic political culture effect on bridging social capital; BR → DV = bridging social capital effect on dependent variable; I → BO → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bonding social capital; I → BR → DV = individualistic political culture effect on dependent variable via bridging social capital.

*p <.05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the research results in greater depth. The preceding analysis suggests that state political culture may not be a sufficient, primary predictor of civic and political participation. In this chapter, I will summarize the key findings, discuss their relevance to the current literature, and present suggestions for possible directions of future research. The chapter concludes with a discussion on study limitations and implications for social work practice and policy.

Discussion of the Results

Using cross-sectional data from the CMPS, Elazar's state political culture typologies, and Putnam's social capital theory, multiple descriptive, logistic regression, and mediation analyses were conducted to assess the relationship between Elazar's three state political culture typologies (e.g., moralistic, individualistic, and traditionalistic), two types of social capital (e.g., bonding and bridging), and three types of participation (e.g., non-traditional political activities, traditional political activities, and civic activities). First, I will discuss the logistic regression findings related to H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5, then the mediation model findings associated with H6, H7, and H8, concluding with a finding from one of the mediation models that was not previously hypothesized but was revealed during the analyses.

Previous research has established that Elazar's state political culture typologies and social capital are strongly related to one another (Hawes & Rocha, 2011; Hero, 2007; Putnam, 2000; Rice & Sumberg, 1997). Moralistic states have been linked to high aggregate levels of social capital supposedly reflecting the "egalitarian communalism" of the moralistic state culture; while

lower levels of social capital are associated with traditionalistic states that foster a paternalistic and elitist attitude toward politics (Hawes & Rocha, 2011; Hero, 2007). However, theorists have traditionally not incorporated race in the examining of social capital and state political culture (Hero, 2007). For instance, Putnam's (2000) theory does not further investigate how social capital is distinguished across race and ethnicity (Hero, 2007). Although, Putnam (2000) does posit that African Americans cultivate and use bonding social capital more than bridging social capital due to the history of racism in the U.S., he does not adequately incorporate race and ethnicity into his theoretical and statistical examination (Hero, 2007). Similar, and quite more severely, with Elazar; race is scarcely mentioned in Elazar's theoretical explanation. Elazar's (1994) theory is primarily focuses on the migration patterns of various European ethnic and religious groups in the U.S. and their impact on states' political culture; he rarely mentions the "presence or the beliefs" of non-White groups (Hero, 2007; Johnson, 1976). Hero (2007) argues that because of the history of race in the U.S., social capital, state political culture, and race/ethnicity are interrelated and should be examined together.

However, most studies examining social capital do not distinguish "bonding" from "bridging" social capital and they typically study social capital on an aggregate level (Hero, 2007). Nevertheless, there are scholars who have attempted to identify how social capital varies in composition, structure, and use across social and cultural identities. Orr (1999) found that Black people developed high levels of social capital in effort to strengthen solidarity to combat discrimination while Whites developed social capital as a form of political power and authority to inhibit Black people's from using their social capital to propel their civic and political participation. This study aimed to fill the research gap to examine if: 1) state political culture influences African American civic and political participation, 2) if state political culture

influences how African American cultivate bonding and bridging social capital, and 3) if bonding and bridging social capital act as mediators between state political culture and civic and political participation. Answers to these questions will contribute to the knowledge of social capital and the underlying structure of social capital among African Americans while using state political culture as a predictor.

State Political Culture and Bonding Social Capital

I hypothesized that African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital than African Americans residing in states with moralistic and individualistic political cultures (H1). The results show that African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture cultivate more bonding social capital than those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture; however, these effects were not found to be statistically significant. This portion of the logistic regression findings related to H1 align with previous literature.

African Americans' building of social capital has been restricted to bonding activities due to the history of chattel slavery and racial discrimination in the U.S. (Hero, 2007; Putnam, 2000). Therefore, African Americans across the U.S. have relied on cultivating bonding social capital to navigate society (Tolnay, 2003). African Americans use their bonding social capital to combat the adverse effects of racial discrimination and to sustain their overall wellbeing (Roberts & Matos, 2022). After emancipation, those of African descent who were no longer enslaved in the South created safe enclaves and close-knitted communities (sometimes referred to as Black Meccas) to grapple with Jim Crow and land displacement and dispossession (Roberts & Matos, 2022). Southern African Americans relied on family, fictive kinship, churches, and other predominately Black social institutions to help alleviate some of the many adverse effects of

racism (Blocker, 2008; Ellison & Sherkat, 1995; Parks-Yancy et al., 2009). These social networks played a pertinent role in African Americans' building of reciprocal and trusting relationships, racial group consciousness and solidarity, and allowed them to exert their limited political power through social movements (Berman & Wittig, 2004; Dawson, 1994; Obinna, 2024).

The church was an important institution in these communities (Liu et al., 2009). During Reconstruction, newly emancipated African and African American slaves "organized predominately Black Baptist churches and joined African Methodist Episcopal denominations (primarily located in Northeastern slave states such as Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland) because of their exclusion from predominately White churches" (Liu et al., 2009, p. 578; Ncurrie, 2021). Black churches were and continue to be major facilitators of bonding social capital among African Americans (Brown & Brown, 2003; Liu et al., 2009); especially in the Southern states, which are all traditionalistic, where Black church attendance is higher (Tolnay, 2003).

Furthermore, while discriminatory practices against racial and ethnic minorities have been implemented throughout the U.S., Jim Crow laws, de jure segregation, and presence of the Ku Klux Klan and other anti-Black hate groups, severely disenfranchised Southern African Americans' voter and civil rights. The prejudicial attitudes of racial and ethnic minorities stemming from past racist legislation and racially motivated violence are deeply engrained in Southern social and political institutions (Biggs & Andrews, 2015; Obinna, 2024) reflective of a traditionalistic political culture (Elazar, 1994). African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture may more regularly participate in bonding activities to combat

the lasting, adverse effects of racism in comparison to those residing in states with a moralistic political culture.

However, the logistic regression findings from the H1 model also found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture cultivate more bonding social capital than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture; however, these effects were not found to be statistically significant. These findings may have failed to reject the null hypothesis due to African Americans experiencing some form of discrimination or racism in the U.S., regardless of where they live. Like in the South, the church and predominately Black organizations had similar purpose in Northeastern and Midwestern states (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Ellison & Sherkat, 1995), many of which are either characterized as moralistic or individualistic.

From 1890 to 1970, in various waves, many African Americans migrated to the Northeast and Midwest to escape white hate fueled mob violence, the discriminatory Jim Crow laws of the South, and for increased economic opportunity; this period is called the Great Migration (Price-Spratlen, 1999; Tolnay, 2003; Tolnay et al., 2002). Successes of Black media and organizations such as high levels of NAACP activism, increased numbers of black-owned local papers, and the success of the National Urban League (NUL) also motivated African Americans to migrate to the North and Midwest in the early 20th century (Price-Spratlen, 1999). These Black institutions helped African Americans residing in the Northeast and Midwest mitigate the negative effects of racial discrimination and affirm their racial identity (Pendergrass, 2013). Nonetheless, African Americans who migrated were met with discrimination, redlining, restrictive social mobility, and segregated neighborhoods in Northeastern and Midwestern cities (Obinna, 2024). Many African Americans who migrated left behind family in the South and, therefore, had to create new

communities and connections (Obinna, 2024). During this period, African Americans "honed in" on their social capital strategies from the South and implemented them in the Northeast and Midwest by developing urban enclaves that promoted economic opportunity and racial group solidarity (Roberts & Matos, 2022).

In these Northeastern and Midwestern states, African Americans created Black Greek letter organizations at predominately white institutions (PWIs), the first Black woman activist organization (e.g., National Association of Colored Women; National Women's History Museum, 2016), the first Black civil rights organization (e.g., NAACP; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2024), the first Black public schools (Mitchell, 2012; NPR, 2013), and the first predominately Black college (HBCU First, 2024; Thurgood Marshall College Fund, 2019). Black churches helped establish and progress early HBCUs and civic organizations that educated African Americans and help strengthen communities (Robinson, 2019). Therefore, African Americans residing in the Northeast and Midwest also relied on bonding social capital to combat discriminative practices. African Americans residing in states with a moralistic and an individualistic political culture, experienced greater political, social, and economic freedoms in comparison to African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture (Ellison & Sherkat, 1995) where the establishment of such institutions were discouraged (HBCU First, 2024).

The analysis for H1 may have not yielded statistically significant results because African Americans, no matter where they reside, continue to prefer cultivating and utilizing bonding social capital to combat the adverse effects of modern anti-Black practices. African Americans may be passing down knowledge and practices of bonding social capital to their offspring as methods of protection against racism. Although, older African Americans are more likely than

younger ones to acknowledge that social conditions have improved for African Americans (Mangum, 2012), both younger and older African Americans report experiences with discrimination (Greenwood, 2022). Nevertheless, there is still reason to believe that geographic location may influence social capital cultivation among African Americans.

Using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) dataset with a sample of 7,114 families, Hofferth & Iceland (1998) employed three multinomial logistic regression models and found that a greater percentage of individuals residing in rural areas limit their social interactions to family members than those who reside in urban areas. Also, those residing in rural areas are more likely to receive monetary support from family members and receive time support from parents (e.g., response to emergencies, help with errands and housework, childcare; Hofferth & Iceland, 1998). As aforementioned, African Americans residing in the South are more likely to attend church, participate in church activities, and engage in organized religious activities than those who do not reside in the South (Ellison & Sherkat, 1995; Hunt & Hunt, 1999). Furthermore, rural Southerners are more likely to engage in organized religious activities than urban Southerners (Ellison & Sherkat, 1995; Hunt & Hunt, 1999). Also, the frequency of interaction with friends via visiting, writing, and phone calls is a stronger positive predictor of church participation for rural Southerners than urban Southerners and those that do not reside in the South (Ellison & Sherkat, 1995). It may be worthwhile to further examine regional differences to gain a greater understanding of social capital cultivation among African Americans.

State Political Culture and Bridging Social Capital

Like H1, the logistic regression failed to yield statistically significant results that support H2 and found a relationship opposite to the one proposed. As proposed in H2, the logistic

regression found that African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture are more likely to cultivate bridging social capital than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture; however, this relationship is not statistically significant. These results complement the findings from H1 that show that African Americans who reside in states with a moralistic political culture have a lower likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital in comparison to those who reside in states with a traditionalistic political culture. Although, statistical significance was not found, these findings complement the current literature in that states with a moralistic political culture promote more racial solidarity and neighborly trust in comparison to states with a traditionalistic political culture (Hero, 2007; Obinna, 2024; Vansuch, 2017) which may compel African Americans to build more bridging social capital in addition to there being a smaller percentage of African Americans in these states.

In opposition of H2, this study found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture are less likely to cultivate bridging social capital than those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture. Although the analysis did not yield statistically significant results it was approaching statistical significance, therefore, it may be important to further examine this finding. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that African Americans who reside in states with an individualistic political culture are more likely to cultivate bonding social capital then bridging social capital than those residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.

As previously stated, the regional distribution of African Americans in the U.S. may help explain the context in which African Americans participate in bonding and bridging activities. For instance, the U.S South has the largest percentage of Black Americans who self-identify as single race (59%), followed by the Midwest (17%), and then the Northeast (15%; Obinna, 2024).

This may help explain why African Americans that reside in states with a traditionalistic political culture cultivate more bonding social capital than those that reside in states with a moralistic political culture. However, regarding the finding that African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture are more likely to cultivate bridging social capital than those residing in states with an individualistic political culture, the growing diversity of the Black population may provide some explanation.

The racial identity "Black" can refer to individuals from various backgrounds such as those who are single-race Black, African American, multiracial Black, and Black Latinx (Obinna, 2024). The Northeast (38%) and South (35%) have considerably larger Black Latinx populations than the Midwest (10%) and West (17%); therefore, African Americans residing in traditionalistic states, and some moralistic states, have a greater likelihood of cultivating diverse Black social networks in comparison to those residing in states with an individualistic political culture. This may provide a partial explanation for why this study found that African Americans residing in states with an individualistic political culture cultivate more bonding social capital and less bridging social capital in comparison to those residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture. Furthermore, the improved social and economic conditions of U.S. Southern states (Obinna, 2024; Pendergrass, 2013) may have motivated African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture to no longer feel a need to solely or primarily rely on bonding social capital, possibly explaining the higher likelihood of them cultivating bridging social capital in comparison to African Americans residing in states with an individualistic political culture.

Interestingly, it was found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture are less likely to cultivate bridging social capital compared to

African Americans that reside in a state with a moralistic political culture (β = -0.57, p = 0.005; see Table 3) by 11 percentage points (β = -0.111, p = 0.009; see Table 5). Again, this could be because African Americans residing in states with an individualistic political culture may rely more on bonding social capital than bridging social capital because of they have less diverse Black populations than states with traditionalistic and moralistic political cultures. African Americans residing in states with a moralistic political culture have larger enclaves of Blacks of different ethnic identities (Obinna, 2024) encouraging these African Americans to build more ethnically diverse social networks. Additionally, the decline of industry and redlining in the Midwest has restricted African Americans' access to more socially diverse environments resulting in African Americans' reliance on familial and friend networks (Gowan, 2011). Also, during the Great Migration, metropolis cities in states with an individualistic political culture such as Chicago (IL), New York (NY), and Philadelphia (PA) were more popular to Black and White migrants than cities in states with a moralistic state culture such as Wichita (KS), Los Angles (CA), and San Francisco (CA; Tolnay, 2003; Tolnay et al., 2002). African Americans were less likely than Whites to make the long journey from the South to the West (Tolnay, 2003) which mostly consists of states with a moralistic political culture. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the moralistic state political culture is structured around a civic and communitarian orientation while states with an individualistic political culture have "interest-based features of an 'individualistic' orientation" (Hero, 2007, p. 33). Social capital theorists associate this "individualistic" attitude to the dissolution of social capital (Hero, 2007).

This difference in bridging social capital behavior among African Americans who reside in states with moralistic and individualistic political cultures was the only significant finding related to H2, therefore, scholars' future examination of state political culture should consider

assessing Elazar's typologies as individual components and not as the South versus the non-South. The improved conditions of Southern states and reverse migration may be making them less distinguishable from other states.

Since the 1970s, a reverse trend of African Americans returning to the South has taken place (Falk et al., 2004; Pendergrass, 2013; Tolnay, 2003). The reverse migration of African Americans to the South is attributed to a decline in economic and social conditions in the Northeast and the Midwest as well as a growing economy and improved racial conditions in the South (Falk et al., 2004; Pendergrass, 2013; Tolnay, 2003). African Americans residing in Northeastern and Midwestern states are significantly less likely than those residing in Southern states to believe that Black people have experienced significant social progression which may be attributed to "extreme cases of economic restructuring and disinvestment" in the Northeast and Midwest (Stewart, 2014, p. 157). The disillusionment with social progression among African Americans in the Northeast and Midwest may be another explanation of the current reverse migration trend among African Americans (Stewart, 2014). Reverse migration may make it increasingly challenging to distinguish social capital behavior among African Americans.

Additionally, social media may impact the relationship between regional culture and demographics and cultivation of social capital. Individuals often utilize social networking sites (SNS) to connect with others and broaden their networks of social support (Koc-Michalska et al., 2016; Miller et al., 2021; Wade, 2019). SNS use (e.g., to keep informed of political news, public issues, and information about local community) is positively related to social capital (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012). Approximately 60% of U.S. adults report some type of SNS use (Rainie et al., 2012). Significant differences in SNS use are not observed across race, nonetheless, levels of use across platforms do vary across racial and ethnic groups; for instance, Latino American

adults are more likely to use Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp in comparison to Asian American, African American, and White American adults (Gottfried, 2024).

Across racial and ethnic groups, SNS are used by individuals to affirm their racial identity, to express their racial or heritage identity, to establish racial safe spaces, and to strengthen racial solidarity (Tynes et al., 2011). Among African Americans, SNS have promoted racial group solidarity and consciousness (Ellington, 2015; Lee-Won et al., 2018; Tynes et al., 2011; Wade, 2019). Ellington (2015) interviewed 17 African American women to document the type of support African American women with natural hair (e.g., hair of a person of African descent that is not chemically processed to change its original form) access to learn about natural hair care and combat negative responses to their hair (e.g., labeling as bad hair, legal prohibiting at jobs and schools, etc.). Participants reported that when they could not obtain natural hair care knowledge, support, and comfort from their physical, immediate communities, they could do so on SNS (Ellington, 2015). African Americans also use SNS to extend their kinship ties (Wade, 2019) and to positively impact the Black community (Lee-Won et al., 2018). African Americans' strong presence on Twitter (now called "X"), has attracted considerable attention from scholars and general Twitter users because of its effectiveness in engaging African Americans in community building, racial identity expression, and amplifying Black voices (Lee-Won et al., 2018). This phenomenon observed on Twitter is commonly referred to as "Black Twitter."

SNS provide African Americans with opportunities to cultivate both bonding and bridging social capital, therefore, it should be considered in studies examining social capital. A limitation of this study was the exclusion of SNS use measures which is later discussed in the limitations section.

State Political Culture and Political Participation

H3 findings show that African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a significantly lower probability of participating in non-traditional political activities in comparison to African Americans that reside in states with either a moralistic (β = -0.58, p = 0.002; see Table 6) or an individualistic (β = -0.66, p = 0.000; see Table 7) political culture. The results are opposite of what was proposed in H3 but reflect some of the current trends of African American behavior.

Race scholars have suggested that African Americans in the Northeast, Midwest, and West may be displeased with traditional and mainstream institutions due to their history of enforcing institutional racism (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Obinna, 2024; Somashekhar, 2019). African Americans fleeing to the Northeast, Midwest, and West to escape the oppressive South for economic opportunities were met with "persistent economic, legal, and social discrimination" that continues to be an ongoing struggle (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012, p. 151; Mcelderry, 2001; Taylor, 1995; Tolnay, 2003). White society in 19th century Northeastern, Midwestern, and Western cities erected barriers and restrictions on the economic and educational attainment of Blacks in an attempt to enforce racial hierarchies and impede social mobility (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Mcelderry, 2001; Obinna, 2024; Taylor, 1995; Tolnay, 2003). African Americans were excluded from mainstream institutions and predominantly White neighborhoods through the creation and enforcement of discriminatory legislation (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Obinna, 2024; Swain, 2010). In response, African and White American activists created private and public schools, media, orphanages, seminaries, communities, and other institutions that catered to the advancement of African Americans (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012). However, these institutions were "fragile" since they were limited financially and were susceptible to

discriminatory legislation that hindered accessibility to education and property ownership. Additionally, activists and Black serving organizations were targets of violent acts such as anti-black riots that drove many activists from these areas and lead to some organizations being closed (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Obinna, 2024). These forms of racism have had lingering effects that have persisted into modern times which continue to negatively impact African Americans in Northeastern and Midwestern states (Obinna, 2024).

African Americans who reside in the South in comparison to those with residence outside of the South have more trust in the government, have a higher perceived effectiveness that the government can make society better, and are more aware and knowledgeable of the improved conditions for African Americans (Mangum, 2012). African Americans residing in the South have a more positive assessment of the improvement of Blacks social position in the U.S. compared to African Americans who reside in the Northeast and Midwest (Stewart, 2014). Also, African Americans residing in the South are less likely to sign a petition (Spence & McClerking, 2010) or participate in a protest (Swain, 2010); explaining their lower likelihood to participate in non-traditional political activities. This may be an effect of the paternalistic nature of the traditionalistic political culture since African Americans residing in Southern states are also more likely to reject the idea of utilizing government assistance as a strategy to incite racial progress (Stewart, 2014).The history of institutional discrimination in Northeastern, Midwestern, and Western states may have motivated African Americans residing in these states, which tend to have moralistic and individualistic state political cultures, to limit their civic and political interaction with traditional or more mainstream institutions.

African Americans and their White allies, have a history of using methods outside of the exclusively White mainstream institutions to advocate for the rights and against the

discriminatory practices of Blacks that migrated to the Northeast, Midwest, and West (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Taylor, 1995). For instance, Black media sources such as *The Philadelphia Negro*, the *Observer* in Portland, Oregon, and the abolitionist weekly newsletter, *The Philanthropist*, based in Cincinnati, Ohio, spoke about the injustices against African Americans in an effort to combat the racism and prejudice that plagued the Northeast, Midwest, and West (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Mcelderry, 2001). Furthermore, the egalitarianism of moralistic states and individualistic states' emphasis on regarding citizen's interests and demands in politics, may make politicians representing these states more receptive to their constituents' use of non-traditional political participation (e.g., protests) to voice their needs and concerns. In 2020, the majority of political protests during took place in the Northeast and Midwest (Jones, 2020; McCarthy, 2020). In 2017, states with a traditionalistic political culture consisted of the majority of the states that introduced anti-protest bills (Rowland & Eidelman, 2017). The introduction of this type of legislation and other implicit messages possibly dissuades constituents residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture from engaging in protest activities.

Additionally, the successes of the modern Civil Rights Movement like the Voting Rights Act of 1965 may have shifted African Americans', who reside in states with a traditionalistic political culture, political action preference from non-traditional political activities to traditional political activities (Beyerlein & Andrews, 2008). This change in attitude not only coincides with the statistical findings for H3 but also part of the findings for H4. Non-traditional forms of political participation such as protests, marches, and sit-ins were pivotal in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voter Rights Act of 1965 which in turn increased African American voter turnout rates (Beyerlein & Andrews, 2008; Button, 1989; Dawson, 1994).

African Americans in the South who were once oppressed by political violence and legal restrictions now enthusiastically turned to more traditional forms of political participation after a long-anticipated gain of voting and civil rights. The improved conditions of the U.S. South made more mainstream forms of political participation more accessible possibly explaining why this study found that African Americans who reside in a state with traditionalistic political culture have a higher probability of participating in traditional political activities than African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture which is opposite of what was proposed in H4. However, this effect and change in predicted probability is very small and not significant.

Yet, in agreement with H4, the findings show that African Americans who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture do have a higher probability of participating in traditional political activities than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture; however, the change in predicted probability is very small and not significant. These findings may not have meet statistical significance due to approximately 95% of the study's respondents' reporting that they engage in traditional political activities. Brown and Brown (2003) found no significant difference in voter behavior between African Americans that regularly attend church and those who do not attend. Additionally, African Americans exhibit a higher regard for voting than White Americans and other race and ethnic groups because of what it symbolizes (Anoll, 2018). For African Americans, voting symbolizes freedom from a social oppression (e.g., Jim Crow and discriminatory voting laws) and is a reminder of those who suffered and died for equal rights. African Americans residing in the three political subcultures may not exhibit major differences in their traditional political participation because of policies such as the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act which had a long lasting, positive impact on African American

traditional political participation across the nation (Liu et al., 2009). Additionally, the exclusion of a pertinent factor may explain why this model did not meet statistical significance: racial diversity.

Hero (2007) argues that a central feature missing from the study of politics and social capital is racial and ethnic diversity. Hero (2007) examines the relationship between racial diversity and its effect on voter turnout rates over a 22-year period (1980–2002) using pooled 50-state data. Hero (2007) found that states with higher ethnic diversity have lower voter turnout rates in both midterm and presidential elections, while states with lower ethnic diversity have higher turnout rates. States with a moralistic political culture tend to have more homogenous White populations which is associated with increased voter turnout rates (Hero, 2007). However, Hero (2007) did not examine the differences in voter behavior across race and ethnicity, so it is not clear if racial and ethnic minorities and Whites experience the same effect.

Hero's (2007) findings help explain why African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in traditional political activities than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic or individualistic political culture. However, they do not explain why African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a lower probability of participating in traditional political activities than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture since individualistic states have more homogenous White populations in comparison to traditionalistic states (Hero, 2007). Also, Hero only assesses voter registration rates, voter turnout rates in state and federal elections, and number of ballot initiatives and no other forms of political (e.g., non-traditional), or civic participation. Utilizing the 1993-1994 National Black Politics Study (NBPS), Spence and McClerking (2010) found that as the percentage of the Black population

increases, so does Black participation in traditional political activities such as donating money to a political campaign, attending a fundraiser, handing out campaign material, and signing a political petition for a candidate. A limitation of this study is that the race and ethnic population composition of CMPS respondents' neighborhoods was not controlled for due to there being a considerable amount of missing data. Controlling for race and ethnic composition is something that may be necessary when studying African American civic and political behavior.

Also, study participants' non-traditional political behavior reflects their attitudes toward non-traditional forms of political participation. Using data from the CMPS, Sanchez (2023) found that over half of the African American respondents believe that protests and demonstrations are effective at inciting social and policy changes; significantly higher than among White Americans (33%). Using a nationally representative survey of approximately 2,000 respondents, Anoll (2018) found that Black and Latino Americans placed a greater value on non-traditional political activities than White Americans due to high levels of group cohesion and trust as a response to social segregation (e.g., social and spatial divergence from certain groups), disproportionate effects and outcomes resulting from racism such as felony disenfranchisement and excessive police presence and force, and the positive outcomes of historical and present-day use of non-traditional political methods. Also, African Americans have the highest perceived efficacy of protests advancing equal voting rights (59%) in comparison to Latinos (54%), Asian Americans (48%), and White Americans (37%; Sanchez, 2023). In comparing the volunteerism and activism among African and White American women using the 2000 Social Capital Benchmark Survey dataset, African American women are more likely to participate in demonstrations, protests, boycotts, or marches (Farmer & Piotrkowski, 2009).

Lastly, the current digital age may shape any geographical effects on political participation. SNS serve as virtual spaces for civic and political participation. There is evidence that SNS and internet use is positively associated with civic and political participation (de Zúñiga et al., 2014; Hoffman & Appiah, 2008; McLeod et al., 1999). The largest use of SNS is dedicated to advocacy and organizing around a social issue across racial and ethnic groups (Tynes et al., 2011). Nonetheless, SNS have particularly been successful in providing opportunities for marginalized populations (e.g., those with lower incomes, lower education levels, and racial minorities) to amplify their voices, raise awareness, and increase access to civic and political participation (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012, 2014; Grimes, 2017). SNS expand accessibility to both traditional and non-traditional forms of political activities that can be carried out collectively or individually (Grimes, 2017) and across geographic borders.

SNS are particularly important in facilitating political expression and participation among African Americans. African Americans are more likely to engage in political activities online than White Americans such as posting political stories or articles on their social media accounts, sharing their thoughts or comments on political or social issues on their social media accounts, encouraging other people to engage in traditional and non-traditional political activities online, reposting content that is related to political or social issues, and contacting a political official (Auxier, 2020; Wang, 2022). Also, Black SNS users are more likely than those of other racial backgrounds to use SNS to engage in various types of political activities (e.g., encourage others to take action on issues that were important to them, look for information about rallies or protests happening in their area) and believe that these activities are effective in changing people's minds about social and political issues, raise awareness of these issues, and create sustained social movements (Auxier, 2020).

African Americans use of SNS coincides with their preference of engaging in communal and non-traditional political activities that affirm Black identity, increase racial group consciousness, and sustain racial group solidarity. African Americans' experience with racism and discrimination may help explain their SNS use. Utilizing data from the 2015 Texas Diversity Survey with a sample of 279 African Americans residing in Texas, Miller et al. (2021) found that those with higher levels of self-reported discrimination have a significantly higher likelihood of using SNS such as Facebook and Twitter those with lower levels of self-reported discrimination.

Because social media bridges social networks globally and allows for the creation of innovative civic and political activities, it may dampen the effect state political culture has on civic and political participation. Further examination into regional differences of African American civic and political participation will enhance our understanding of why African Americans living in certain areas prefer certain civic and political activities.

State Political Culture and Civic Participation

In regard to H5, an opposite relationship other than the one proposed was found: African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher probability of participating in civic activities compared to those residing in a state with either a moralistic (β = 0.23, p = 0.242; see Table 6) or an individualistic (β = 0.05, p = 0.726; see Table 7) political culture. Unfortunately, this relationship was not found to be statistically significant, and the predicted probabilities were small and not statistically significant, therefore, this study did not produce evidence supporting H5. This finding is contrary to previous literature that indicates that states with either a moralistic or an individualistic political culture foster higher levels of civic engagement among their residents (Vansuch, 2017). This may be explained by traditional civic engagement measures, as the ones used in this study, not adequately representing the civic

behavior of African Americans. Additionally, as with their non-traditional and traditional political activities, the civic behavior of African Americans may be a response to historical events.

Like other U.S. mainstream institutions and structures such as voting, organizations that facilitate civic activity have been exclusively for Whites; therefore, African Americans have had to create their own civic organizations that focused on improving the quality of life for African Americans (Swain, 2010). As previously mentioned, African Americans who migrated to the North and West, left behind close social networks during the Great Migration between 1890 and 1970, and were met with white hostility and institutional discriminatory practices (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Frey, 2022; The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, 2021). African Americans in the North and West responded to exclusionary practices by creating formal institutions (e.g., social, professional, and community organizations) and informal social networks that helped with educational and employment attainment, cultivated racial group consciousness, encouraged activism and civic engagement (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012; Rich, 2015).

As with political participation, Black churches have been integral to inciting civic engagement among African Americans (Robinson, 2019). Nevertheless, in the South, de jure segregation and Jim Crow, restricted the social mobility and political expression of African Americans (Tolnay, 2003). Therefore, in the South, the church was primarily responsible for "advancing the individual and collective welfare of African Americans" (Ellison & Sherkat, 1995, p. 1417). Furthermore, African Americans in the North and West had more access to a "richer array" of secular civic opportunities that promoted social and economic mobility than those in the South, both the rural and urban South, such as voluntary associations and social

clubs (Ellison & Sherkat, 1995; Hunt & Hunt, 1999). However, post-Civil Rights Movement, these organizations have been made more accessible to Southern African Americans (Stoll, 2001). This may partially explain why this study found that African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture are more likely to participate in civic activities compared to those residing in states with a moralistic or individualistic political culture. Nevertheless, church attendance is positively related to African American civic engagement while it is not associated with White civic engagement (Hoffman & Appiah, 2008). Also, much of African American civic participation continues to be limited to Black organizations and efforts that promote Black social mobility and advancement (Pendergrass, 2013; Rich, 2015). Black civic organizations produce different outcomes than predominately White, traditional organizations such as promoting more homogenous networks (e.g., bonding social capital) rather more diverse networks (e.g., bridging social capital; Rich, 2015). Therefore, the civic engagement measure used in this study may not appropriately capture the civic activity of African Americans.

Due to moralistic and individualistic states having smaller African American populations in comparison to traditionalistic states, African Americans may be participating in more civic activities to help sustain Black solidarity. Also, the end of the Civil Rights Movement and the improved conditions of the South may have also decreased the importance of and participation in civic associations among African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (Stoll, 2001). Also, the Black church may not be encouraging civic engagement as they did during the Civil Rights Movement (Mattis et al., 2004; Stoll, 2001). Just as with traditional political participation, these findings may not have reached statistical significance due to African American respondents' participation in civic activities being low and not normally distributed.

African Americans participate in less civic engagement, such as volunteering, than Whites (Driskell et al., 2008; Tang et al., 2012) which may make this association not significant.

Also, SNS use promotes civic engagement. Increase use of SNS for news consumption and social networking is positively associated with participation in civic activities that address community issues. (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012; Hoffman & Appiah, 2008). Use of social networking sites for news consumption (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012) and political expression (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014) are also positively associated with both online and offline political participation (and social capital). As aforementioned, the SNS use were not assessed in this study which may have contributed to this study's findings.

Bonding and Bridging Social Capital as Mediators

In order to fill these gaps in the research, this study investigated if the relationship between state political culture and civic and political participation is a result of the mediating effects of bonding social capital and bridging social capital. The results of the mediation models are presented below. Only one part of the proposed mediation models is partially supported.

This study did not provide enough evidence that the relationship between state political cultural and political and civic participation may be affected by bonding and bridging social capital. This may be due to this study's small sample size and limitations of the statistical software used STATA. These limitations are discussed in further detail under the limitations section. In this section, I will discuss how the findings of the mediation models reflect those from the logistic regression models and the literature.

The Mediating Effect of Bonding Social Capital Between Traditionalistic Political Culture and Non-Traditional Political Participation

The first mediating effect hypothesized (H6) was that African Americans living in states with a traditionalistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital which is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional modes of political activities. This study found no evidence of African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture that their participation in non-traditional political activity is indirectly through bonding social capital. These findings somewhat coincide with those from the logistic regression models. It was found that African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher probability of cultivating bonding social capital than those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture (β = 0.54, p = 0.239; see Table 3) but lower probability of cultivating bonding social than those who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture (β = -0.39, p = 0.338; see Table 4). Also, it was found that African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a significantly lower likelihood of participating in non-traditional forms of political participation than African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture.

As previously discussed, historically, African Americans, despite where they live in the U.S., have primarily engaged in bonding activities in comparison to bridging activities due to racially discriminatory practices (Putnam, 2000). Nevertheless, African Americans in different regions may have utilized their bonding social capital for different reasons. For example, African Americans who left the South and migrated to the North and West, had to establish new bonding social networks in the areas which they relocated. African Americans who migrated created new "Black meccas" that produced economic opportunities, nurtured African American culture (e.g., history, arts, music, food, etc.), harnessed political power, and exhibited harmonious Black-White race relations (Roberts & Matos, 2022). While African Americans in the South, in

comparison to those in other regions, experienced harsher social conditions (e.g., Jim Crow, Ku Klux Klan, etc.) and that inhibited them from establishing their own institutions and accessing predominately White ones that would broaden their social networks and help them establish institutions that promoted their social mobility (Roberts & Matos, 2022).

African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture are in closer proximity to churches and predominately Black organizations such as HBCUs, in comparison to states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture, which promote bonding social capital (Pendergrass, 2013). In the past, these organizations have influenced African Americans participation in non-traditional modes of political participation such as protest and marches; however, as previously discussed, the passage of the Civil Right Act and Voting Rights Act and the improved social, economic, and educational conditions in the South have made traditional modes of political participation more accessible and popular among African Americans (Beyerlein & Andrews, 2008; Button, 1989; Dawson, 1994) which may explain why there was not any evidence found from the logistic regression analysis that African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bonding social capital in comparison to those residing a state with a moralistic or individualistic political culture (H1).

Furthermore, the current literature has established that bonding social networks consisting of familial, friends, and religious ties are important to the formation of racial group consciousness among African Americans which in turn motivate their participation in civic and political activities (Dawson, 1994). The exclusion of African Americans from traditional forms of political participation and de jure segregation influenced African Americans to focus on cultivating and sustaining bonding social capital (Putnam, 2000). Although, African Americans

and other racial and ethnic minorities have opportunities to diversify their social networks, the residual effects of racism, discrimination, and prejudices from the past continue to appear and adversely impact African Americans. These residual effects of slavery and Jim Crow may be more heightened in states with a traditionalistic political culture. So, it was also hypothesized that African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional forms of political participation than African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture (H3). However, it was found that African Americans residing in a state with either a moralistic or an individualistic political culture have a significantly higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional forms of political participation than African Americans residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture.

The findings from the logistical regression analyses help explain why bonding social capital was not found to act as a mediator that increased the likelihood of African Americans' residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture non-traditional political participation (H6). According to the findings, African Americans residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture are not cultivating significantly more bonding social capital than those residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture which is increasing their likelihood of participating in non-traditional political activities. Additionally, bonding social capital was not found to mediate the relationship between residing in states with either a moralistic or individualistic political culture and non-traditional political participation among African Americans. However, it was found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture did have a significantly lower likelihood of participating in non-traditional activities because of their tendency to cultivate significantly less bridging social

capital in comparison to those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture. This relationship was not hypothesized and will be discussed in further detail at the end of the discussion section.

The Mediating Effect of Bridging Social Capital Between Moralistic and Individualistic Political Culture and Traditional Political Participation

The second mediating effect hypothesized (H7) was that African Americans living in states with moralistic and individualistic political cultures will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital which is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in traditional modes of political activities. Congruent to H7, African Americans that reside in a state with a moralistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in traditional political activities than those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture ($ab = 0.15$; see Table 8) as a result of their tendency to cultivate more bridging social capital than those in traditionalistic states ($a = 0.28$, $p = 0.148$; see Table 8), which in turn increases their participation in traditional political activities ($b = 0.52$, $p = 0.202$; see Table 8). However, this specific indirect effect was not found to be statistically significant.

Moralistic v. Traditionalistic. As with the findings associated with H6, the findings from the logistic regression analyses help explain why bridging social capital was not found to act as a mediator that increased the likelihood of African Americans' residing in a state with either a moralistic or an individualistic political culture traditional political participation (H7). First of all, the logistic regression model related to H2 found that African Americans residing in a state with a moralistic political culture have a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture; however, this relationship was not found to be statistically significant. It was found that African Americans

who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture have a higher probability of participating in traditional political activities than those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture ($\beta = 0.10$, $p = 0.827$; see Table 6) but this analysis also did not meet statistical significance likely because most of the study respondents reported that they engaged in traditional political participation (94.81%).

Nevertheless, the logistic regression findings parallel with the findings of H7 that bridging social capital has a positive indirect effect on the traditional political participation of African Americans' residing in a state with a moralistic political culture in comparison to those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture. Furthermore, the H7 findings reflect the literature: moralistic states foster activities that encourage bridging social capital and traditional political participation (Hero, 2007; Vansuch, 2017). However, because a confidence interval for the indirect effect ($ab = 0.15$) based on the Sobel test was not entirely above zero (-0.56 to 0.27; see Table 8), we cannot claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture participation in traditional political activity in comparison to those who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture.

Other than the non-normal distribution of African American's traditional political participation, there may be other reasons that the tests may have failed to reject the null hypothesis. Firstly, voting is considered more accessible, more popular, and easier to partake in in comparison to other forms of political participation, even among racial and ethnic minorities (Beyerlein & Andrews, 2008; Button, 1989; Dawson, 1994). Secondly, the ability to communicate with legislators and contribute money to campaigns has been made readily accessible due to advances in technology while protesting, marching, and boycotting may require

more time and resources (e.g., traveling to protest locations, searching for alternative businesses). Therefore, the use of bridging social capital to engage in traditional political activities may no longer be necessary. Lastly, controlling for racial diversity may help better explain the relationship between state political culture and social capital and political participation among African Americans.

In addition to finding evidence of a relationship between racial diversity and voter turnout rates, Hero (2007) found that social capital has a strong and positive effect on voter turnout rates over time. States with high levels of social capital, on average, have a 56% turnout rate while states with low levels of social capital have on average 44% turnout rate in presidential elections. High levels of social capital are associated with moralistic and individualistic states while lower levels of social capital are linked to traditionalistic states (Hawes & Rocha, 2011). This parallels with the relationship Hero (2007) found between racial diversity and voter turnout: states with higher ethnic diversity have lower voter turnout rate while states with lower ethnic diversity have higher turnout rates. As previously mentioned, traditionalistic states are more racially and ethnically diverse while moralistic and individualistic states have more homogenous White populations (Hero, 2007), this is supported by other studies.

Similar to Hero (2007), Lieske (2005) found that moralistic states have higher voter turnout than individualistic and traditionalistic states; however, moralistic states with a larger racial minority population had lower turnout rates in comparison to moralistic states with a smaller racial minority population. There were no significant differences in turnout between traditionalistic states with smaller or larger racial minority populations. Also, higher minority concentration in traditionalistic states had no significant effect on turnout (Lieske, 2005). Lieske's (2005) findings suggest that even though moralistic and individualistic states experience

higher voter turnout rates than traditionalistic states, racial and ethnic diversity negatively impacts turnout in these states, but not in traditionalistic states.

Following the analysis of the direct effects of racial diversity and social capital on states' turnout rates, Hero (2007) conducted an analysis of the relationship between racial diversity and turnout rates affected by levels of social capital (e.g., mediation analysis) and found evidence of racial diversity indirectly impacting voter turnout through social capital. Specifically, Hero (2007) found that states with lower racial and ethnic diversity were associated with higher levels of social capital and, in turn, increased voter turnout rates. Nevertheless, neither Hero (2007) nor Lieske (2005) examined these effects across race and ethnicity nor did they differentiate between bonding and social capital. So, it would be worthwhile to examine the hypotheses proposed in this study while controlling for racial diversity.

Individualistic v. Traditionalistic. Contrary to H7, bridging social capital has a negative indirect effect (*ab* = -0.14; see Table 9) on the traditional political participation of African Americans residing in state with an individualistic political culture in comparison to those living in state with a traditionalistic political culture. As found in the H2 and H4 models, African Americans residing in state with an individualistic political culture have a lower likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital and participating in traditional political activities than those in a state with a traditionalistic political culture. This helps explain why bridging social capital did not increase the likelihood of African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture to participate in traditional forms of political participation.

As previously explained, individualistic states have a lower percentage of African Americans and are less racially diverse than traditionalistic states; but instead of being motivated to make more racially diverse social networks, African Americans residing in a state with an

individualistic political culture appear to prefer cultivating bonding social capital. This may be a result of economic, legal, and social discrimination that persists today in individualistic states (Anderson & Bertaux, 2012). One of the widely used forms of segregation in Midwestern states, which most have an individualistic political culture, was redlining. Even today, Midwestern states have perversely racially segregated neighborhoods (Gowan, 2011). So, African Americans in these states have a lower likelihood of diversifying their social networks and, therefore, cultivating bridging social capital.

In a qualitative fieldwork study, drawing from the experiences of unemployed African American men in St. Louis, Missouri (an individualistic state), segregation and institutional racism prevented these men from having the "right" connections that lead to high-paying, secure jobs and from being able to relocate to more appropriate housing (Gowan, 2011). Institutional racism and exclusionary practices carried out by White employers and other relationships was also a reoccurring theme. One man expressed how he witnessed a White man be given a job position for which he was not qualified instead of a more qualified Black woman (Gowan, 2011). These experiences with mainstream institutions and White Americans in individualistic states may make them less trusting and create feelings of discontentment among African Americans, resulting in their limited engagement in traditional civic and political activities and diversification of social networks.

The Mediating Effect of Bridging Social Capital Between Moralistic and Individualistic Political Culture and Civic Participation

As previously discussed, this study found that African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a higher probability of participating in civic activities compared to those residing in a state with either a moralistic ($\beta = 0.23$, $p = 0.242$; see Table 6) or

an individualistic (β = 0.05, p = 0.726; see Table 7) political culture. These effects were opposite of what was proposed in H5 and not found to be statistically significant. Therefore, we also did not find evidence supporting H8 which proposes that African Americans living in states with a moralistic and an individualistic political culture will experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital which is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities. Additionally, the logistic regression model and the mediation model did find that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities than those residing in a state with a moralistic political culture (β = 0.18, p = 0.377; see Table 6). The results of the mediation analysis for H8 indicate that the relationship between individualistic state political culture and civic participation can be explained by the negative mediating role of bridging social capital.

African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood to participate in civic activities than those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture; however, this likelihood is greater due to African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture cultivating less bridging social capital. So, relative to residing in a state with a moralistic political culture, residing in a state with an individualistic political culture lowers the likelihood of bridging social capital by 0.71 units on average (with a confidence interval from -1.31 to -0.11; see Table 12), because African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture cultivate less bridging social capital than those residing in a state with a moralistic political culture, they are more likely to be civically engaged.

As previously discussed, this study found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a statistically significant lower probability of

cultivating bridging social capital than those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture (β = -0.57, p = 0.005; see Table 3). When African Americans reside in a state with an individualistic political culture, the likelihood of them cultivating bridging social capital significantly decreases by 11 percentage points in comparison to those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture (β = -0.111, p = 0.009; see Table 5).

In this study, civic participation was operationalized as whether respondents report that they have: 1) worked or cooperated with others to try to solve a problem affecting their city or neighborhood and/or 2) attended a meeting to discuss issues facing the community over the span of a year. These measures are related to one's civic commitment to make a positive difference in their local community. It appears that African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture do not feel the need to be civically engaged in their communities either due to lack of motivation, lack of connection, and/or lack of resources. Additionally, they are also less likely to engage in bridging social capital activities which in this study are measured according to whether respondents have: 1) participated in more than one social, cultural, civic, political group, or union, and/or 2) have membership in any organization working to improve the status of African Americans. Even though there is no evidence of a direct effect between individualistic states and civic participation relative to moralistic states this may be because bridging social capital activities closely resemble the civic participation activities in that they involve interactions with others in their community, even those that may come from a different cultural and social background (Munn, 2018; Robinson, 2019). They are also activities that have been linked to more formal, mainstream structures (Gilbert et al., 2022; Robinson, 2019).

Even if predominately Black, these activities have more formality to them then non-traditional political activities, and sometimes involve the collaborative efforts of multiracial

groups (Bell, 2014; Munn, 2018; Robinson, 2019). Controlling for racial and ethnic diversity in states may help us with greater understanding of these relationships and effects. Since previous literature has found that when African Americans live in more Black homogenous areas this leads to greater voter turnout, collective action, and descriptive representation (Dawson, 1994). As previously noted, individualistic states have a lesser Black ethnic diversity in comparison to moralistic and traditionalistic states. Individualistic states may be more rural than moralistic states and moralistic states may have greater concentrated cities partially explaining this indirect effect. Furthermore, Individualistic states may have more racially segregated neighborhoods and cities (Ellison & Sherkat, 1995; Gowan, 2011).

This indirect effect suggests that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture are motivated to be engaged civically when they do not participate in more than one social, cultural, civic, political group, or union, or have membership in an organization working to improve the status of African Americans. This suggest that African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture do not trust the organizations that facilitate bridging social capital because they do not see participation in these organizations positively contributing to their local communities. This may because the organizations may be more active on a state or national level and/or be more symbolic than inciting actual change in their local community or city; therefore, African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture may view civic engagement in their local communities as more fruitful.

According to Putnam's (2000) social capital theory, trust is required in building social capital. African Americans generalized trust in societal institutions and people is strongly linked to African Americans' civic and political participation (Uslaner, 2004). Moreover, The

likelihood of African Americans participating in civic and political activities increases when they live in a more inclusive environment (Uslaner, 2004). Uslaner (2004) found that Black Americans' and White Americans' strong level of trust in one another, positively influences African Americans' civic and political engagement. However, African Americans' civic engagement is reduced when African Americans view their social status lower relative to Whites (Uslaner, 2004). In a study examining the civic engagement of 1,055 African American males, involvement with local community groups and organizations and friendship diversity were each found to be the most significant predictors of civic engagement (Farmer, 2006).

It may be that states with an individualistic political culture may be more inclusive than states with a moralistic political culture and because of this, African Americans may put less emphasis on engaging in bridging social capital activities and more on civic activities. However, some scholars have brought attention to how racial segregation, socially and spatially, continue to be issues in individualistic states (Gilbert et al., 2022; Gowan, 2011; Robinson, 2019; Schneider, 2007). In an ethnography of African American and Latino communities in Washington D.C., participants' civic engagement within local organizations was fueled by feelings of marginalization and exclusion by Whites and an overall lack of generalized trust in the city (Schneider, 2007). The experiences with marginalization, exclusion, lack of generalized trust incited active participation in activism and advocacy efforts (Schneider, 2007).

Also, the civic engagement of African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture is not influenced by their bonding social capital. Although not found to be a statistically significant effect, it was found from the H5 model that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of civic participation than those who reside in a state with a moralistic political culture, however,

this relationship is not indirectly influenced by their increased likelihood to cultivate bonding social capital. This suggest that African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture are more driven to be engaged civically as a result of their less diverse social networks than by their more homogenous, bonding social networks. This suggests that either something is restricting or discouraging African Americans who reside in states with an individualistic political culture from bridging social capital or that they do not see a need to cultivate bridging social capital due to the inclusivity of their region which is resulting in them becoming more civically engaged. This could be explained by the effectiveness of organizations that promote bridging social capital in individualistic states and the social and economic conditions of individualistic states.

Moralistic v. Traditionalistic. In support of H8, bridging social capital positively influences African Americans residing in states with a moralistic political culture to have a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities than those residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture ($ab = 0.30$; see Table 10) as a result of their tendency to cultivate more bridging social capital than those residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture ($a = 0.20$, $p = 0.271$), which in turn significantly increases their participation in civic activities ($b = 1.46$, $p = 0.000$). Based on the confidence intervals, we cannot claim that there is evidence that the higher likelihood of African Americans' residing in states with a moralistic political culture participation in civic activities relative to those residing in states with a traditionalistic political culture is an indirect effect of bridging social capital.

Contrary to H8, bridging social capital had a negative indirect effect on the civic participation of African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture compared to those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture. However, the

confidence intervals show that we cannot claim that there is evidence that bridging social capital indirectly influences the civic participation of African Americans residing in a state with an individualistic political culture compared to those residing in a state with a traditionalistic political culture, however, the confidence intervals are close to being entirely below zero (see Table 11). This suggests we should further investigate bridging social capital as a mediator between state political culture and civic participation especially since evidence was found that bridging social capital indirectly increases the civic participation of African Americans residing in states with an individualistic political culture relative to those residing in states with a moralistic political culture.

Also, it is worth mentioning that the direct effect of bridging social capital on civic participation is significantly positive among African Americans residing in states with a moralistic, traditionalistic, or individualistic political culture ($b = 1.46$, $p = 0.000$; see Tables 10, 11, and 12). Previous literature has found that social capital is positively associated with civic engagement (Farmer, 2006; Gilbert et al., 2022; Hoffman & Appiah, 2008; Kim, 2018). Farmer (2006) found that having a more diverse friendship network and great involvement in both faith and non-faith based social organizations was significantly related to civic participation among African American men. These findings suggest that while bridging social capital has a positive direct effect on African American civic participation, African Americans residing in states with either a moralistic or traditionalistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in civic activities because they cultivate more bridging social capital than those residing in states with an individualistic political culture.

Based on the findings it is worth looking into why African Americans who live in states with an individualistic political culture participate in less traditional forms of political activities

and are less likely to bridge social capital. While racial diversity is considered to be an acceptable predictor of social capital, moralistic and individualistic states are similar in racial diversity which suggests that something pertaining to the differences of the political cultures of these states are influencing social capital and participation.

Additional Findings Not Hypothesized

The following findings were not hypothesized but evidence was found that bonding social capital has a positive direct effect on civic participation (a = 2.48, p = 0.016; see Tables 10, 11, and 12) among African Americans regardless of where they reside. This suggests that African Americans' relationships with those close and similar to them motivate them to engage in activities that will help advance the wellbeing of these individuals within their bonding social network. Also, while African Americans are cultivating these relationships, they may become more increasingly aware of issues confronting their racial group and homogenous communities.

Another finding revealed that African Americans living in states with a moralistic political culture experience a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital which is associated with a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional activities. Specifically, African Americans residing in states with a moralistic political culture have a significantly higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than those residing in states with an individualistic political culture (a = 0.56, p = 0.006; see Table 13), and African Americans who reside in states with a moralistic political culture are significantly more likely to participate in non-traditional political activities (b = 0.76, p = 0.000). A confidence interval for the indirect effect (ab = 0.42) based on the Sobel test was found to be entirely below zero (-0.77, -0.07), therefore, we can claim that bridging social capital indirectly influences African Americans' who

reside in states with a moralistic political culture participation in non-traditional political activities in comparison to those who reside in states with an individualistic political culture.

This suggest that African Americans residing in states with a moralistic political culture are cultivating bridging social capital that is motivating them to engage in non-traditional political activities. This finding is contradictory to Vansuch's (2017) finding that residents in states with a moralistic and individualistic political culture are more likely than residents in states with a traditionalistic political culture to volunteer at cultural organizations that promote diversity and racial solidarity. However, Vansuch (2017) did not examine this across race and ethnicity and moralistic states exhibit higher levels of volunteerism than both traditionalistic and individualistic states.

Study Limitations

This study has several limitations: not controlling for racial diversity; not controlling for SNS use; small sample size; the use of cross-sectional data; and restrictions with the statistical software used. This section will discuss each of these limitations and how they impact this dissertation study's findings and implications for future research.

Racial Diversity

A limitation of this study was not controlling for key factors that have been shown to influence social capital, civic participation, and political participation. First, this study did not control for racial diversity because of the small sample size. As discussed before, racial diversity has a direct effect on social capital and voter turnout (Hero, 2007). Additionally, there is evidence that racial diversity has as indirect effect on voter turnout and has a conditional relationship with social capital (Hero, 2007). Hero (2007) found that when you interact racial diversity with social capital, "the positive effects of social capital on voter turnout vary by levels

of racial diversity" (p. 116). Therefore, when examining social capital, civic participation, and political participation in the U.S., it would be best to control for racial diversity.

The 2016 CMPS does ask respondents about the racial/ethnic composition of their current neighborhood, however, many respondents did not respond to this question resulting in a large amount of missing data. Therefore, racial diversity was not controlled for in this current study. To improve this study, it would be best to merge the 2016 CMPS with another dataset to add observations to the sample and use imputation strategies to account for missing data. This would also address issues with the limitations that will be discussed next: social networking sites and small sample size.

Social Networking Sites

Secondly, another limitation of this study is that it did not control for SNS use. There is a considerable amount of evidence that SNS use is linked to civic (Hong & Kim, 2021; Kwon et al., 2021) and political participation (Bond et al., 2012; Boulianne, 2020; Boulianne & Theocharis, 2020; Ferrucci et al., 2020; Fujiwara et al., 2023; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014; Guo & Chen, 2022; Jones et al., 2017; Kim, 2018; Murschetz, 2020; Theocharis et al., 2023; Zhuravskaya et al., 2020). Using data from a two-wave U.S. national panel study, Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2014) found that when individuals engaged with SNS at some point in time (Wave 1) the likelihood of them engaging in political activities at a later time (Wave 2) increased. Also, SNS use is linked to social capital (Guo & Chen, 2022). Guo and Chen (2022) found that both bonding and bridging social capital are positively associated with online political participation via SNS (e.g., sharing news, posting personal opinions related to politics, talking about public affairs or elections, encouraging others to act, etc.). Online political engagement via SNS is an

agent that strengthens bonding social capital networks and expands social networks (e.g., bridging social capital; Guo & Chen, 2022).

The study of SNS use on civic and political participation is burgeoning, however, the effects of SNS use is still not clear. The current literature shows that certain features of SNS use have varying effects on different types of civic and political participation (Zhuravskaya et al., 2020). For example, certain types of messaging posted on SNS encourages different types of civic and political participation. Individuals report higher levels of online political participation when they observe others expressing themselves politically on SNS (Ferrucci et al., 2020). Kim and Ellison (2022) found that when SNS users observe others engaging in politics on SNS (e.g., post a link to news about politics; post a photo, video, or meme about politics; post their own opinion or experiences about politics; comment on someone else's post about politics; follow or like a political candidate or group; and RSVP for a political event) it increased their likelihood of participating in political activities on SNS, but only when their social networks on the SNS they used most frequently supported the same presidential candidate as them (e.g., political homogeneity).

Gil de Zúñiga et al. (2014) found that political expression on SNS is a stronger predictor of both online and offline political participation than informational use of SNS. Nevertheless, informational use of SNS predicts both online and offline political participation (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014). Additionally, Kim and Ellison (2022) conducted a moderation analysis and found that online political engagement via SNS has positive effects on offline political participation (e.g., attended a political meeting; signed a petition for a candidate; contacted a public official; posted a political sign, banner, button or bumper sticker; volunteered for a political campaign; and donated money to a political party or candidate) but only among those who have medium and

high levels of engaged citizenship norms (e.g., belief that good citizens should be informed about and participate in politics), even when controlling for network similarity (e.g., how similar one is to their social networks on the SNS they use most frequently) and political homogeneity.

It appears that the quality of one's relationship with others on SNS influences their civic and political participation. Having a greater number of networks on SNS is positively associated with online and offline political participation (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014). Furthermore, political mobilization messages posted by close friends on SNS, has a greater effect on voter turnout and civic participation than messages posted by friends of friends (Bond et al., 2012; Jones et al., 2017) and political actors (Miller et al., 2021). Bond et al. (2012) found that social messages posted on Facebook that encouraged individuals to vote and provided local polling place information had a greater effect on voter turnout than informational messages posted on Facebook that just provided poll information. Furthermore, these social messages had an even greater effect when they were posted by individuals' close friends in comparison to those who were just friends of friends. Bond et al. (2012) operationalized close friends as those whom one interacts with often on Facebook and lives in close proximity. Individuals are more likely to have face-to-face interactions with close friends than with friends of friends, so, face-to-face interactions may have a greater effect than online interactions.

Future research should continue to examine online and offline social interactions and their relationship to civic and political participation. This would help determine if geographic proximity to certain social networks and institutions has a greater influence on civic and political participation than social interactions on SNS. Physical proximity to certain political actors and entities may have a greater effect than SNS use. Controlling for SNS use would provide a clearer

picture of not only state political culture's effect on social capital, civic participation, traditional political, and non-traditional political participation.

Small Sample Size

The 2016 CMPS includes 3,102 respondents who indicated that there racial and ethnic background was Black or African American, not Hispanic. This study included 1,311respondents with completed responses. Removing observations lowered the power of the study's analyses; therefore, this study may not have been sufficiently powered to identify differences between African Americans who reside in the three state political subcultures (Nayak, 2010). As shown in Table 2, in this study, most African American respondents participated in traditional political activities (94.81%), identified as being a Democrat (89.70%), cultivated bonding social capital (96.80%), and almost half resided in a state with a traditionalistic political culture (50.30%). Therefore, the binomial distribution of these responses was not symmetric. Having a larger sample size would help address this issue and increase the statistical power of the logistic regression and mediation models (BYJUS, 2024; Nayak, 2010).

Cross-Sectional Data

This study utilized cross-sectional data that measured this study's observed variables at a single point in time, the year of 2016. Therefore, we cannot make causal inferences (Wang & Cheng, 2020). Additionally, the use of cross-sectional data does not capture incidences that may impact African American behavior as it relates to social capital, civic participation, and political participation. For example, the effects of the VRA of 1965 resulted in a 67% increase in African American voter turnout between the 1964 and 1968 presidential elections (Ang, 2019). In 1984 and 1988, the candidacy of Rev. Jesse Jackson energized African American political participation (Berman & Wittig, 2004). The presidential candidacy of Barack Obama increased

African American turnout from approximately 60% in 2004 to 63.6% in 2008 and his reelection (Krogstad & Lopez, 2017). The 2016 presidential election, with Obama on the ballot, resulted in a record-high 66.6% in African American turnout (Krogstad & Lopez, 2017). However, for the first time in 20 years, the African American voter turnout rate experiences a 7-percentage point decline (59.6%) in 2016 (Krogstad & Lopez, 2017). Additionally, social capital is susceptible to change as it is influenced by age, education level, job occupation, and income.

Statistical Software and Normal Approach Theory

A fourth limitation of this study is related to the statistical software package used, STATA. As previously stated, you can run SEM in STATA using two commands, "sem" and "gsem." The sem command cannot fit a binomial, logit mode and by default runs a linear model. Contrarily, the gsem command can fit a binomial, logit model. However, the gsem command cannot assess the SEM model fit, therefore, it does not provide goodness of fit indices, maximum likelihood ratio chi-square statistics ($\chi 2$), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). Nevertheless, the gsem command was used to examine this study's hypotheses because it's dependent and mediator variables are dichotomous.

Another limitation of the STATA's gsem command is that it does not provide the specific indirect effects of a multicategorical independent variable. STATA's gsem command will estimate the relative direct effects of each group relative to the reference group (path *a* and *b*) and the total effect (*c'*) but it will not estimate the relative indirect effects. Therefore, for this study, the Sobel test or normal theory approach, was applied to estimate the relative indirect effects; although, researchers suggest that you do not use this method (Hayes & Preacher, 2014).

Computing bootstrap confidence intervals using the percentile method or generating 5,000 bootstrap samples is considered the better approach to inference about specific (relative) indirect effects in a parallel mediator model (Hayes & Preacher, 2014; Hayes, 2022). Bootstrap confidence intervals do not make "the unwarranted assumption of normality of the sampling distribution of the relative indirect effect" (Hayes & Preacher, 2014, p. 462) and are usually more powerful than alternative methods such as the normal theory approach (Hayes, 2022).

Using a statistical software package like Mplus would have been more appropriate. Mplus can handle a combination of categorical and continuous variables, often permits data with missing values and imputed values (UCLA Statistical Consulting Group, 2021), can estimate the relative indirect effects of multicategorical independent variables, can compute asymmetric bootstrap confidence intervals (Hayes & Preacher, 2014), and can assess the model fit of SEM (Gaur, 2023).

Implications

Implications for Future Research

Research Methods

This study used structural equation modeling to test if social capital mediated three relationships: 1) the relationship between state political culture and civic participation; 2) the relationship between state political culture and non-traditional political participation; and 3) the relationship between state political culture and traditional political participation. To the author's knowledge this is the first study to examine if these relationships are mediated by social capital among African Americans. The current literature has primarily focused on examining the direct effect state political culture may have on social capital and certain political outcomes but not factors that may be mediating these associations. Furthermore, studies have primarily considered

social capital as a predictor of civic and political participation (Saegert et al., 2001) and not as an outcome or mediator of civic and political behavior (Hero, 2007; Walker, 2008; Wongsiri, 2021). Even though there are expectations that social capital serves as both a predictor and outcome of civic and political participation (Hero, 2007; Walker, 2008; Wongsiri, 2021).

An advantage of SEM is that "it allows for the specification of multiple dependent (endogenous) variables" (Walker, 2008, p. 130). Another advantage of SEM is that it allows for the estimation of the direct, indirect, and total effects of each variable on a particular dependent variable which provides understanding of the pathways from independent variables to dependent variables (Walker, 2008). Future social work research should continue using advanced statistical tests such as SEM to get a clearer understanding of the structure of social capital and to identify promoters and barriers to civic and political participation. Some scholars view social capital, civic participation, and political participation as having an interchangeable relationship (Hero, 2007; Walker, 2008; Wongsiri, 2021) this could be clarified with future research using SEM.

Social Capital Measure

It is impossible to obtain a single, accurate measure of social capital due to various reasons (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). First, the nature, form, and use of social capital varies across groups and regions. Future research should pursue development of different types of social capital measures used for specific groups that is informed by these populations.

In conjunction with previous studies, this study confirms that there is a distinction between bonding and bridging social capital and that they have different effects across regions. For instance, this study found that bridging social capital drives African Americans who live in moralistic states to engage in non-traditional political activities and civic activities. This is inferred to be an effect of the historical and current experience of African Americans not only

living in the U.S. but those residing in states with a moralistic political culture. Like African Americans, other racial and ethnic minorities have a longstanding, unique history with the U.S. These groups are often overlooked, and therefore, there is not much information on them. Additionally, it is difficult to obtain information from marginalized groups due to mistrust, language barriers, and cultural barriers. Recent events in the U.S. may also have influence these groups civic and political engagement. Their social capital most certainly cannot be appropriately examined by using traditional theories.

Next, "the nature and forms of social capital change over time" (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 239) due to economic and social shifts, growing diversity, cultural changes, and technological advances. The African American middle class continues to grow, and although institutional racism persists, African Americans have increased to more mainstream and diverse economic and social opportunities not once available to them. Furthermore, the reverse migration of African Americans back to the U.S. South and the growing diversity of Black people also produces variation in the social capital of African Americans.

One instrument cannot accurately capture social capital in the U.S., or any other country. For example, employing SEM using data collected from rural communities located in 7 sub-districts in Nong Khai District, Nong Khai Province, Thailand, Wongsiri (2021) found that social capital does not have a direct effect on civic engagement, but with our study population, we found evidence of this relationship. Putnam's (2000) social capital indicators were initially developed to measure factors related to the electoral system in Italy which differs from other countries, including the U.S. For instance, Serra (2001) used Putnam's (2000) indicators to measure social capital in India but encountered two problems associated with data availability and interpretation. First, it was difficult to locate data that matched Putnam's indicators used for

measuring civic behavior and what data was available could not be interpreted directly as measures of civic action. Second, features of Indian society and culture that reflect structures of collective cooperation cannot be captured through measurement and are meaningless when framed within Indian states as unit of analyses. Indian states are complex and are internally different, therefore, there is no way to measure these states' civic or political performance in a consistent manner (Serra, 2001). Similar issues could be found when trying to measure social capital in other countries and across different racial and ethnic groups.

Multiple social capital instruments must be used to capture the various experiences and dimensions of social capital. Researchers must also collaborate with people with lived experiences when developing these instruments. Many efforts have been made to collect data on social capital from various sources to capture its various dimensions (Serra, 2001). Future research should expand on these efforts by not seeking a uniform measurement but multiple that capture the complexity of various societies and cultures.

Elazar's State Political Culture Typology

Elazar's (1994) state political culture theory has been used to guide numerous studies on U.S. state politics (Fisher, 2016; Lieske, 1993, 2010). Nevertheless, there are critics of Elazar's typology that suggest it not be used (Lowery & Sigelman, 1982). The primary criticism with Elazar's theory is that rigorous statistical testing was not used in the formulation of his state political culture typologies (Lieske, 2010; Lowery & Sigelman, 1982). Another criticism of Elazar's state political culture theory is that it does not translate to modern times (Lieske, 1993). Some contend that past cultural and demographic patterns should not be used explain current or future political behavior because their relevancy diminishes overtime (Lieske, 2010). A third criticism is that Elazar does not account for the experiences of racial and ethnic minorities

(Lieske, 2010). Lastly, there is criticism with Elazar's (1994) characterization of the traditionalistic political culture because it does not account for the cultural variation among Southern states (Fisher, 2010).

Nonetheless, Elazar's typology of state political culture continues to be prominently used in the study of U.S. state politics (Erikson et al., 1993; Fisher, 2010; Johnson, 1976; Lieske, 2010). Considering the limitations of this study, I did not find evidence of a relationship between state political culture and three of the examined dependent variables (i.e., bonding social capital, traditional political participation, and civic participation). Nevertheless, this study did find that state political culture has a direct effect on non-traditional political participation and bridging social capital. Despite new trends in state-to-state migration and immigration, this study, and others (e.g., Carman & Barker, 2005; Coffey, 2009; Darmofal, 2006; Erikson et al., 1993; Fisher, 2016; Heck et al., 2014; Jaeger et al., 2017; King, 1994; Mondak & Canache, 2014; Wirt et al., 1985), show that Elazar's typology remains relevant. Furthermore, this study found that states with a moralistic and individualistic political culture have contrasting effects on African American political participation and social capital; therefore, there should be future consideration of discontinuing the practice of examining the U.S. South as an outlier in empirical studies. Also, recent studies have demonstrated that state political culture, and social capital, are greatly influenced by racial and ethnic diversity (Hawes & Rocha, 2011; Hero, 2007); therefore, racial and ethnic diversity should be accounted for in the study of state political culture and social capital (Lieske, 2010).

To my knowledge, a small number of studies have examined the effects of state political culture on racial and ethnic minorities' civic participation, political participation, and cultivation of social capital. Future research should consider examining racial and ethnic minorities' civic participation, political participation, and cultivation of social capital using Elazar's typology,

since there is evidence of its applicability to current times. However, when doing so, researchers need to account for race and ethnic diversity (Lieske, 2010, 2012).

Implications for Social Work Practice and Policy

This study highlights two things: First, there are regional differences in African Americans' civic and political participation as well as the social capital they possess; Second, African Americans who reside in certain states utilize their social capital for certain types of activities to yield their political power and serve their communities. This is significant to social work given that two of the ethical principles of the field are recognition of the central importance of human relationships and social justice (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2021). In addition, social workers have an ethical responsibility to their clients to respect and promote their self-determination (NASW, 2021). In order for social workers to uphold these principles and ethics that they have committed themselves to, social workers need to be civically and politically engaged, knowledgeable of social policies and policy processes, competent and respectful of cultural differences, and have heightened awareness of structural impediments to social and economic mobility such as institutional racism. Yet, there is concern that social workers may be lacking in these areas.

Social work is deeply rooted in civic and political participation. Recognized (and some unrecognized) social work pioneers such as Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Jane Addams, Jeanette Rankin, Mary Richmond, and Eugene Kinckle Jones laid the foundation for the social work profession through policy work, community practice, politics, and activism (Carlton-LaNey, 1999; Shepherd & Pritzker, 2021; Specht & Courtney, 1994; Wilson et al., 2024). They connected marginalized populations (e.g., immigrants, African Americans, women, children, those with low SES) to community resources, advocated for child labor laws and women's voting rights, and

brought awareness to various social injustices such as racism and economic inequality (Carlton-LaNey, 1999; Shepherd & Pritzker, 2021; Specht & Courtney, 1994; Wilson et al., 2024). Civic and political participation were the driving force behind early social work practice which involved advocacy, policy work, grassroot mobilization, and community organizing (Carlton-LaNey, 1999; Shepherd & Pritzker, 2021; Wilson et al., 2024). Even more so, African American social workers are credited for being at the forefront of modern political social work during the Great Migration, Jim Crow Era, and Civil Rights Movements, driven by their own lived experiences to support Black communities and challenge injustice (Carlton-LaNey, 1999; Shepherd & Pritzker, 2021). During the late 19th and early 20th century, social work pioneers were visible in state and federal political arenas and were heavily involved in community organizing (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Wilson et al., 2024). However, little is known about the civic and political action and outcomes of social workers due to insufficient data collection and reporting (Apgar, 2021; Mattocks, 2018; Rome & Hoechstetter, 2010).

The literature on social workers' civic and political participation is scant and dated; nevertheless, it provides some depiction of social workers' civic and political participation. There is evidence that social workers exhibit higher levels of civic and political participation than the general public (Ezell, 1993; Ritter, 2007, 2008; Rome & Hoechstetter, 2010; Wolk, 1981). Also, social workers primarily engage in traditional political activities (e.g., voting, keeping up with the news, contacting legislators, attending political meetings, membership with a political organization, political campaigning, etc.) and are less likely to engage in non-traditional political activities (e.g., community organizing, protest, online political expression, etc.), policy research, legislative work (e.g., attending or testifying at a legislative committee hearing; policy development), and volunteering for a non-political organization (Ezell, 1993;

Ritter, 2007, 2008; Rome & Hoechstetter, 2010; Wolk, 1981). More than 40% of social workers report that they have never attended a rally, march, or demonstration (Rome & Hoechstetter, 2010). This is surprising given the history of social workers' engagement in non-traditional political activity (e.g., grassroots mobilization, protest, activism) to facilitate social change (Mizrahi & Dodd, 2013; Shepherd & Pritzker, 2021). Nevertheless, there may be two reasons for this: 1) limited training and education in non-traditional political participation; and 2) lack of diversity in the social work profession.

First, social workers' civic and political behavior is linked to their education background and area of social work they practice. Social workers with a Ph.D. exhibit greater levels of civic participation, traditional political participation, and non-traditional political participation (Ezell, 1993; Ritter, 2007, 2008; Rome & Hoechstetter, 2010; Wolk, 1981). Also, social workers who are NASW members are more politically active than those who are not (Ritter, 2008). Ritter (2007, 2008) found that NASW membership was the strongest predictor of civic and political participation among social workers. Social workers who work in the public sector and for nonprofit agencies are also more civically and political engaged than those who work in private clinical practice and for-profit settings (Rome & Hoechstetter, 2010).

Social workers with these backgrounds are more likely to practice macro-level social work, have diverse social networks, and have access to a range of resources that support and encourage civic and political participation. Graduate education, professional experience, membership and involvement in professional organizations (e.g., NASW, Council of Social Work Education [CSWE], Society of Social Work Research [SSWR]), and having a job involving civic and political work, not only provides social workers with opportunities to be civically and politically engaged but helps them gain and improve their civic and political skills.

Furthermore, political social work promotes empathy for and increases awareness of the experiences of underserved populations (Mmatli, 2008).

Despite their area of practice, it is the ethical responsibility of all social workers to be civically and politically active (NASW, 2021). Unfortunately, the social work profession has been criticized for deviating from its early mission of facilitating change through macro-practice to focusing on clinical work and research similar to that of psychologists and licensed practitioner counselors (Morley, 2016; Reisch & Wenocur, 1986). The social work profession has embraced elements of Eurocentrism and neoliberalism, and as result, has prioritized depoliticized social work practices (e.g., casework and clinical interventions) that maximize profit over challenging social inequities (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Morley, 2016). The value that the social work profession has placed on clinical practice diminishes social workers' commitment to and competency in challenging social injustices and empowering underserved populations (Morley, 2016; Pawar, 2019).

There are claims that social work pedagogy has sustained the most damaging effects of Eurocentrism and neoliberalism (Morley, 2016). The CSWE, which is the accrediting body for Bachelor and Master's social work programs, requires that students be competent in engaging in practice that protects individuals' social and political rights (Council of Social Work Education, 2022). Therefore, social work educators are responsible for preparing students to engage in civic and political activity. However, schools of social work may not be adequately preparing social work students for activism, advocacy, and policy work. Seventy-eight percent of social workers agree that social work practice is linked to social action, however, only 36.2% felt they'd had adequate training on integrating political action into their professional roles and 41.7% wish they were more knowledgeable about how to influence the political process (Rome & Hoechstetter,

2010). There is concern that Bachelor and Master social work courses are not effective in increasing competency in activism, advocacy, and policy work as intended (Mizrahi & Dodd, 2013; Pawar, 2019). Generalist social work and clinical practice are often ineffective and inappropriate in addressing macro-level issues (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Morley, 2016; Pawar, 2019). To ensure that social workers are knowledgeable and equipped to participate in civic and political activities, social work educators need to be intentional about developing social work curriculum that encourages and sustains these behaviors.

Another explanation for social workers' limited engagement civic and non-traditional political activities is that the majority of social work professionals in the U.S. are White (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Ezell, 1993; Ritter, 2007, 2008; Rome & Hoechstetter, 2010; Wolk, 1981). As aforementioned, White Americans are more likely to participate in traditional political activities than non-Whites (Littenberg-Tobias et al., 2016). Due to cultural differences and limited experience with non-traditional political activities, White social workers may not know how or equipped to effectively advocate for their clients social and political rights. Social workers are required to demonstrate cultural competence so that they are able to provide culturally informed services (NASW, 2021). However, as with macro-level practice, social work pedagogy is accused of not appropriately approaching or teaching cultural competency (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Einbinder, 2020; Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022).

There is a growing number of social workers calling out past and present-day racist and colonial practices within the profession (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022). Modern social work service delivery is based on the early practices conducted in settlement houses and charity work in the late 1800s developed and facilitated by White, middle-class women (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Wilson et al., 2024). Unfortunately, past and present-day models of

social work service delivery and practice are embedded with racism and coloniality (i.e., white Western or Eurocentric forms of knowledge regarded as universal and objective in service delivery and practice) such as the "removal of Indigenous children from their homes, overrepresentation of Black children in child welfare, and the foster care to prison pipeline" (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022, p. 630). There has been emphasis on educating and training social workers to be cultural competent in order to reflect the profession's commitment to social justice, however, some assert that this is a blanketed response to racism that does not lead to the dismantling of structural racism within social work education and practice (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022).

Some social workers suggest that the issue of structural racism within the profession should be approach using a critical lens to gain critical consciousness (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Morley, 2016; Pawar, 2019). Having a critical consciousness involves having a greater understanding of society that allows one to recognize social and structural inequality (Elkassem & Murray-Lichtman, 2022; Morley, 2016). Just being aware of cultural differences should not only entail the type of cultural competency referred to in the NASW Code of Ethics; critical consciousness should also be practiced. A form of practicing critical consciousness is being aware of one's biases and not viewing specificities in another culture different from one's own, as weaknesses but strengths that promote that population's overall wellbeing. African Americans and other racial/ethnic minorities with "distinct histories and ongoing experiences" with political exclusion "see purpose, value, and meaning of political participation" specifically non-traditional political participation (Anoll, 2018, p. 497). Blacks and Latinos have a better perception of non-traditional political methods of participation and are more likely to believe that political rallies improve their lives, communities, and those in need

(Anoll, 2018). Furthermore, racial minorities that attend political rallies are more likely to feel good about their connection with their community (Anoll, 2018).

Therefore, social workers should not only advocate for voter rights but also protest rights and seek ways to educate communities, students, other social workers on non-traditional activities. Social work curriculum tends to include guidance on writing/contacting legislators and commits a day to visit legislators, nevertheless, training in non-traditional activities should be considered given that social work students prefer traditional political activities to non-traditional ones because of the low costs (e.g., time, resources, risks; Witt et al., 2020). Non-traditional political activities lead to significant policy changes, raise awareness of non-popular issues, generate dialogue, and amplify marginalized voices (Graboys, 2023); therefore, they should be protected by policies so that individuals are encouraged to engage in them.

To protect the political rights of others, especially those from marginalized populations, it is important to know and understand the social and cultural meanings of their civic and political behavior. Also, cultural competence helps social workers develop trusting relationships with individuals and communities that are underserved. Cultivating social networks with the people they serve allow social workers and the people they serve to engage in collective civic and political action. Collaboration with those with lived experience, recognition of social and structural racism, and embracing diversity will support efforts that promote civic and political participation among marginalized communities.

Cultural competency that is facilitated by critical consciousness can also heighten awareness of how place influences individuals' behavior, social outcomes, and policy. This study found that the political culture of a state influences the political and social behavior of African Americans. This is particularly important given the polarized political climate today that has led

to the passage of oppressive and discriminatory policies (e.g., banning of certain books, criminalization of abortion, etc.) and acts of political violence in certain areas of the U.S. “Social work education and practice are deeply embedded in social and political contexts.” (McClendon et al., 2020); therefore, it is important that social workers are aware of regional contexts. This study supports the notion that the characteristics of regions has a profound influence on social work practice and social welfare policy.

Conclusion

This study is an attempt to understand the effects of state political culture on African American civic, traditional, and non-traditional political participation. The current literature establishes that social capital motivates civic and political participation; therefore, this study also examined the relationship between state political culture and social capital. The results showed that the political culture of a state influences certain forms of political participation, specifically non-traditional political participation. African Americans who reside in a state with a traditionalistic political culture have a lower likelihood of participating in non-traditional political activity in comparison to African Americans that reside in states with either a moralistic or an individualistic political culture. Given the history of African American political participation during the modern Civil Rights Movement, it is surprising that African Americans in traditionalistic states have abandon the use of non-traditional political activities. Nevertheless, the social and economic progression of African Americans after the passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act may have motivated this change in political behavior. Furthermore, this finding aligns with observations of protests mainly taking place in states with either a moralistic or individualistic political cultures.

Secondly, this study found that African Americans who reside in a state with an individualistic political culture have a lower likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital compared to African Americans that reside in a state with a moralistic political culture. It was hypothesized that African Americans residing in states with either a moralistic or an individualistic political culture would have a higher likelihood of cultivating bridging social capital than African Americans residing in traditionalistic states. This was because states with a moralistic and individualistic political culture are less diverse and have larger composition of White people in comparison to states with a traditionalistic political culture. Therefore, it was expected that African Americans residing in states with a moralistic or an individualistic political culture would be more inclined to cultivate relationships with those of a different race and ethnicity. However, it appears that, although moralistic and individualistic states have similarities in White population composition, their political cultures have differing effects. Also, the findings suggest that the diversity of the Black population within a state may also impact the types of social relationships African Americans cultivate.

Also, this study produced results that were not hypothesized but interesting. It was found that bonding social capital has a positive effect on civic participation among African Americans regardless of where they reside. This result appeared after running the parallel mediation models. This finding was surprising given that civic participation involves working with others in one's local city or neighborhood which could diversify one's social networks (e.g., bridging social capital). However, it appears that when African Americans cultivate bonding social capital it sustains their racial group consciousness and solidarity and motivates them to become civically involved in their community. This study did not control for racial and ethnic composition of the

states or one's community but future research may want to control for racial and ethnic diversity given that it does influence social capital.

Another finding not hypothesized was that bridging social capital mediated the relationship between residing in a state with a moralistic political culture and non-traditional political participation among African Americans, relative to African Americans residing in states with an individualistic political culture. This finding is somewhat puzzling given that African American residing in a state with either moralistic or individualistic political culture have a higher likelihood of participating in non-traditional political activities than states with a traditionalistic political culture. These findings suggest that bridging social capital motivate African Americans' residing in states with a moralistic political culture non-traditional political participation. This is surprising given that, in the past and present-day, African Americans participated in non-traditional political activities with those of shared experiences. However, there were non-Black people involved in protests and demonstrations with African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement and Black Lives Matter. Even recently, some who are not Palestinian have participated in protests with those who are Palestinian in support of Gaza. Future research should examine the solidarity that is formed between people of different races and ethnicities.

Despite the limitations of this study, it presents findings that further describe African American civic and political behavior. The logistic regression and mediation models produced unique results that were not hypothesized. These findings suggest that African American civic and political behavior is susceptible to societal and economic trends that may supersede the political culture of a state. Also, the findings indicate that Southern African Americans' political behavior has shifted according to social changes. This signifies the impact of Jim Crow, and the

importance of the Civil Rights Movement and the Voting Rights Act. Yet, it calls into question Southern African Americans limited participation in non-traditional political activities. It would be worthwhile to replicate this study applying the recommendations suggested to address the study's limitations.

Additionally, this study highlights that there is more to uncover about how African Americans cultivate social capital. Also, because of historical, cultural, and demographic factors it would be meaningful to conduct a qualitative study to identify features specific to African American social capital. Inferences about African Americans relying more on bridging social capital than bonding social capital are not supported by empirical evidence. A qualitative study may help in formulating a more appropriate theoretical framework and measure of African American social capital. Future research should also study social capital, civic participation, and political participation among other populations (e.g., Asian people, Latino people, people living in rural areas, etc.).

This study sought to understand what drives African American civic and political participation. Therefore, social capital was examined as a possible mediator between state political culture and African American civic and political participation using parallel mediation analysis. Additionally, this study wanted to examine differences across two types of political participation: traditional and non-traditional, given the observation of recent protests being more pronounced in certain states than others. This study has several limitations, nevertheless, this study, using recent data, describes the civic and political participation of African Americans in present-day. This study also provides insight in how region can impact civic and political behavior.

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VITA

Austin M. Conner, M.S.W.

EDUCATION

The University of Mississippi 2019
Master of Social Work

The University of Mississippi 2015
B.A. in Psychology
Minor in Sociology

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Assistant August 2022 – December 2023
Center for Research Evaluation
The University of Mississippi
University, MS

- Drafted literature review and performed quantitative and qualitative data analysis on the psychological and wellbeing outcomes associated with hotel quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Conducted qualitative data collection and analysis for projects within the Children, Families, and Communities portfolio.
- Created a qualitative data collection instrument (e.g., interview guide).
- Reviewed, edited, and drafted project reports within the Children, Families, and Communities portfolio.
- Performed administrative duties such as scheduling meetings, creating social media posts, recording meeting minutes, and developing a project timeline.

Graduate Research Assistant Fall 2019 – Spring 2022

Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
Advisor: Dr. Na Youn Lee

- Performed literature review search on the areas of community and civic engagement, rural populations and communities, and Photovoice.
- Served as a Voter Empowerment Project member; helped develop and facilitate activities that promote voter engagement.
- Conducted preliminary data analysis of Photovoice data.
- Served as a teaching assistant for SW 216: Social Welfare Policy I.

Graduate Research Assistant Spring 2021

Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
Advisor: Dr. Younghee Lim

- Performed literature review search on the areas of repeat payday loan use and social welfare policy.
- Wrote literature review section of *Predictors of repeat-use of payday loans* manuscript.

Graduate Research Assistant Fall 2019 – Summer 2020

Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
Advisor: Dr. Saijun Zhang

- Performed literature review search on the areas of child welfare, trauma-informed care, and tobacco use among youth.
- Conducted quantitative data collection and data entry for a meta-analysis.
- Wrote literature review section of *Trauma-Informed Care for Children Involved in Child Welfare - A Meta-Analysis* manuscript.
- Conducted preliminary data analysis of NSDUH data set using SPSS.
- Participated in qualitative data collection by conducting interviews via Zoom and phone calls with study participants.

Graduate Research Assistant Fall 2019 – Spring 2020

Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
Advisor: Dr. Yi Jin Kim

- Performed literature review search on the areas of suicide, religion, and Three-Step Theory.
- Edited and revised drafts of written work.

Graduate Research Assistant Fall 2018 – Spring 2019

Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
Advisor: Dr. Na Youn Lee

- Participated in quantitative and qualitative data collection and data entry.
- Served as an advisor to Bachelor of Social Work students participating in the Voter Empowerment Project.
- Performed literature review search on the areas of Photovoice and political efficacy.

Graduate Research Assistant Fall 2018 – Spring 2019

Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
Advisor: Dr. Younghee Lim

- Performed literature review search on the areas of subjective financial well-being, self-rated health, social capital in African Americans, and repeat payday loan use.
- Wrote literature review section of *Social capital and health among African Americans* manuscript and *Predictors of repeat-use of payday loans* manuscript.

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED MANUSCRIPTS

Boyas, J. F., Lim., Y., & **Conner, A.** (2021). Health status among African Americans: Do social capital and financial satisfaction make a difference? *Journal of Poverty*, https://doi.org/10.1080/10875549.2020.1744790

Lim, Y., Kim, Y. K., Maleku, A., **Conner, A.,** Lee, N. Y., & Yang, M. Y. (2021). The phenomenon of repeat payday loan borrowing in the United States: Assessing risk and protective factors among the financially vulnerable. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 1-21. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcab182

Zhang, S., **Conner, A.**, Lim, Y., & Lefmann, T. A. (2021). Trauma-informed care for children involved in child welfare - A meta-analysis. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 112*, 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105296

Hao, Y., Zhang, S., **Conner, A**., & Lee, N. Y. (2021). The evolution of telepractice use during the COVID-19 pandemic: Perspectives of pediatric speech-language pathologists. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18*(22), 12197. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182212197

PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Evans, K., Appline, C., **Conner, A.**, Hyde, M., & Rousson, A.* (2022)**.** *Building connections and breaking isolation: Contemporary challenges of doctoral student women who are parenting* [Roundtable]. Accepted to facilitate at the Society for Social Work Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington D.C.; withdrawn due to COVID. (*Authors following first author contributed equally and are listed in alphabetical order.)

Cooper, D. & Smith, J.* (Advisors: **Conner, A.** & Lee, N. Y.). (2019). *External and internal political efficacy in Mississippi: An exploratory descriptive study* [Poster presentation]. Student poster presentation accepted to present at the NASW Mississippi Chapter Annual Social Work Conference, Natchez, MS. (*Authors contributed equally and are listed in alphabetical order.)

PRESENTATIONS

Smith, E., Thornton, I., Mason, S., Young Sweeny, E., **Conner, A**. (2023, November). *Meeting the reproductive and sexual health needs of Mississippians: Evaluation of the Title X family planning program* [Poster presentation]. American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA.

Conner, A., Munn, A., & Turner, M.* (Advisor: Lee, N. Y.). (2019, April). *The voter empowerment project: A comparative community needs assessment of rural vs. urban barriers to voting* [Poster presentation]. Student poster presentation at the University of Mississippi Research Day, Oxford, MS. (*Authors contributed equally and are listed in alphabetical order.)

Conner, A., Munn, A., & Turner, M.* (Advisor: Lee, N. Y.). (2019, March). *The voter empowerment project: A comparative community needs assessment of rural vs. urban barriers to voting* [Poster presentation]. Student poster presentation at the Graduate Student Council 9th Annual Research Symposium, University, MS. (*Authors contributed equally and are listed in alphabetical order.)

Lee, N. Y., Fisher, A., Digby, P., & **Conner, A**. (2019, March). *Engaging social work students in empowering communities during the 2018 midterm elections: Lessons learned* [Conference session]. Workshop presentation at the NASW Mississippi Chapter Annual Social Work Conference, Natchez, MS.

Conner, A., Munn, A., & Turner, M.* (Advisor: Lee, N. Y.). (2019, March). *The voter empowerment project: A comparative community needs assessment of rural vs. urban barriers to voting* [Poster presentation]. Student poster presentation at the NASW Mississippi Chapter Annual Social Work Conference, Natchez, MS. (*Authors contributed equally and are listed in alphabetical order.)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Lecturer Fall 2023
Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
SW 604: Social Welfare Policies and Programs
Instructor: Dr. Younghee Lim
Lecture Topic: The Social Security Act and Healthcare

Guest Lecturer Fall 2022
Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
SW 604: Social Welfare Policies and Programs
Instructor: Dr. Younghee Lim
Lecture Topic: The Social Security Act

Graduate Instructor of Record Fall 2020, Fall 2021
Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
SW 417: Social Welfare Policy II
Advisor: Dr. Na Youn Lee

Guest Lecturer Spring 2021
Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi
SW 603: Social Work Research Methods
Instructor: Dr. Younghee Lim
Lecture Topic: Quantitative Data Analysis

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Intern Summer 2019
Healing Hearts Child Advocacy Center
Southaven, MS

- Observed mental health therapists implement Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing in therapy sessions.
- Drafted S.O.A.P. notes of mental health therapists' sessions with clients.
- Completed initial assessments of referred clients.

Intern Summer 2018

Legacy Hospice
Batesville, MS

- Completed patient visits at homes and nursing facilities to provide emotional support.
- Observed and helped staffed social worker in completion of initial and routine assessments of admitted and current patients.
- Applied knowledge of coursework, practice and theory frameworks, and NASW Code of Ethics during field instruction.

Graduate Assistant Spring 2018 – Summer 2018

Graduate School
The University of Mississippi
University, MS

- Scanned, validated, and filed transcripts of Graduate School applicants.
- Performed office duties such as, answering and directing calls to appropriate individuals, greeting visitors, and opening and sorting mail.
- Completed other assigned tasks for Graduate School staff.

School Attendance Officer Summer 2015 – Fall 2017

Office of Compulsory School Attendance
The Mississippi Department of Education
Panola County, MS

- Enforced the Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law, MS Code 37-13-91.
- Cooperated with public agencies to locate and identify compulsory school age children not attending school.
- Investigated cases of compulsory school age children not enrolled in or attending school.
- Helped families secure social or welfare services available for families of compulsory school age children.

AWARDS, HONORS, & FELLOWSHIPS

Dissertation Fellowship Award Spring 2024

Graduate School
The University of Mississippi

Prof. Dev. Training on Poverty and Economic Mobility Research Participant 2023 – 2024

Institute for Research on Poverty
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Summer Thesis/Dissertation Scholarship Summer 2023

Graduate School
The University of Mississippi

Excellence in Inclusivity Fellowship, 2018 – 2023
Graduate School
The University of Mississippi

Excellence in Community Engagement Overall Award Recipient 2020
Voter Empowerment Project
The University of Mississippi

Liz Triplett Walker Scholarship for MSW Field Placement 2019
Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi

TRAVEL GRANTS

Society for Social Work and Research Doctoral Student Travel Award 2022
[awarded; withdrawn due to COVID]

The University of Mississippi Graduate Student Travel Award 2019

SERVICE

Committee Member, Project Coordinator Search Committee Spring 2023
Center for Research Evaluation
The University of Mississippi

Assistant Chairman, F.R.E.E.D.* 2020 – 2022
Student-led subcommittee of the NASW-MS Chapter
(*Fighting for Racial Equality through Engagement and Dialogue)

Graduate Student Member, Empowerment Committee 2020 – 2022
Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi

Team Member, Voter Engagement Roundtable 2020 – 2022
Office of Community Engagement
The University of Mississippi

Community Workshop Presentation
Conner, A. (2020, January 28). *Effective parenting and co-parenting* [PowerPoint slides]. Community workshop presentation at the Parent Center in Batesville, Mississippi.

Grad. Student Committee Member, Associate Prof. Search Committee 2018 – 2019
Department of Social Work
The University of Mississippi

Mentor, South Panola High School Mentor Program Summer 2015 – Spring 2018
South Panola High School
Batesville, MS

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS/MEMBERSHIPS

Phi Alpha
Society of Social Work and Research