

THE HOMELESS AS A SOCIAL MOVEMENT GROUP:
GROUP IDENTITY, GROUP COHESION, AND GOAL ORIENTATION AMONG THE
HOMELESS IN GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

By

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To my sisters.

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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By

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This study was an attempt to explore the precursors to social movement action by examining the presence of those precursors within the homeless population in Gainesville, Florida. New social movements focus on the influence of identity, culture, and emotion in movement dynamics. Group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation are all factors that contribute to collective action in the form of social movements. A model for new social movements based on the literature is proposed and tested. A two-phase, cross-sectional and case study design was used to determine the presence of the above precursors to social movement within the Gainesville homeless population. Results indicate that group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation are present within the study sample. Group cohesion and group identity are closely related but distinctly different concepts leading to the formation of goals and eventually collective action within a social group. Multiple regression analysis indicates that group cohesion is predictive of goal orientation, but group identity is not, suggesting that a model for new social movements would move from group identity, to group cohesion, and finally to goal orientation, then collective action. In-depth analysis of qualitative interviews indicates strong mutual respect within the population as well as self-leadership and a variety of circumstances leading to first

homeless episode. Therefore, the models used for delivery of homeless services should be adjusted to account for the role of homeless persons in their own recovery.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Homelessness in the United States

Homelessness is a condition in which a person is without permanent and/or stable shelter for any period. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, a homeless person is defined as “an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence,” and “a person whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private shelter, an institution, a public or private place not designed for a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings” (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development[HUD], 2007). However, current social research about homelessness suggests that this definition is problematic contingent with the actual nature of homelessness in the U.S. According to the research, a large proportion of homeless people are part of a group known as the “hidden homeless,” or those who live in the homes of friends or family members and often do not seek public assistance for their condition (Rollinson, 2007). These people often include many of the rural homeless, which constitute nearly half of the homeless population, and many times women with children (HUD, 2007). Current definitions vary in specificity and orientation; some include those who choose to be homeless, some include children, and some include “social isolates,” while others do not. It is clear that the classic conception of the homeless person as an older white male white veteran with mental illness actually constitutes a small proportion of the homeless population nationwide.

Two major historical events, the Great Depression of the 1920s and 30s (Miller, 1991) and the deinstitutionalization of mental health care in the 1970s (Marvasti, 1999) are key points in history. Both significantly changed the face of homelessness in the U.S. The Great Depression put many previously employed, middle and lower-class persons on the street, contributing to the

belief that anyone could end up homeless. The deinstitutionalization of mental health care put many persons with severe mental health disorders, such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorders, bipolar disorder, and major depression, on the streets. This created a problem that still exists today. A significant number of homeless persons deal with untreated, debilitating mental illness.

The most current survey of homelessness in the U.S. puts the number of homeless around 754,000 nationwide (National Alliance to End Homelessness[NAEH], 2005, The Associated Press, 2007). The number of homeless people with severe mental health disorders has been consistent over the years, but current research points to a greater prevalence of these conditions in the chronically homeless (Caton et al. 2005; Weinreb, 2006). However, it is clear that poverty and market forces are significant contributors to homelessness today just as they were in the post-depression era (Dale, 2004; Rollinson, 2007).

Work opportunities are declining consistently despite increases in real wages. Many jobs offer fewer benefits and pay less compared to the cost of living than they did in the past. The real value of the U.S. minimum wage was 26% lower in 2004 than it was in 1979 (The Economic Policy Institute, 2005). Falling real wages reduce an individual's ability to secure housing.

In addition to the ballooning problem of low wages, public assistance has declined since the mid 1990s (National Coalition for the Homeless[NCH], 2007). The current level of assistance from several major sources, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), is below the poverty level in every state by an average of 29% (Nickelson, 2004). In addition, fewer people are enrolled in and/or qualify for welfare benefits as a result of current welfare reform laws. These families struggle to obtain medical care and even to meet basic needs like housing.

Current economic and real estate trends are causing a drastic decrease in affordable and low-cost housing units throughout the U.S. Between 1973 and 1993, the availability of low-rent housing units decreased by over two million units, despite the fact that the number of people in need of these units has soared (Daskal, 1998). In addition, the amount of federal support for low-income housing decreased by 49% between 1980 and 2003 (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2005). These trends have created waiting lists for affordable housing units supported by government subsidy or private agencies like Habitat for Humanity.

Other factors that contribute to the prevalence of homelessness are inability to secure healthcare or healthcare benefits, domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness. Homelessness is a complex issue that forces people to choose between basic needs (NCH, 2006).

Homelessness in Gainesville

The Gainesville Office on Homelessness conducts a yearly point-in-time survey in conjunction with the Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry. According to the most recent release on April 12, 2007, there are 952 identified homeless men, women and children in Alachua County, 317 of them under the age of 18. This represents a 20% decrease in the number of homeless persons from the 2006 survey (Gainesville/Alachua County Office on Homelessness & Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry, 2007). Some key findings of the survey are listed below.

- 70.5% are male and 29.5% percent are female
- 87.6% are individuals and 12.4% families with children
- 34.7% are U.S. military veterans
- The mean age of homeless adults is 44.1 years
- About 2/3 are between the ages of 18-59
- Nearly 60% have been homeless for less than a year.

- 28% are considered long-term or “chronically” homeless
- 43.7% are unsheltered on any given night
- More than half lived and worked in Alachua County prior to becoming homeless.
- The largest cause of homelessness among women in Alachua County is male violence against women.
- 60% self-reported having some physical, medical, or mental health problem
- Almost 2/3 of homeless adults have at least some high school education, 44.6% completed high school, 28.3% have some college education, and 10% hold a college degree.
- 19% report having been arrested for not having a place to stay within the last year.

These findings help to identify several homeless “subgroups” which exist based on common needs, experiences, and length of homelessness. The two most distinct groups are the short-term homeless, those who have been homeless less than three years and the chronically homeless, those who have been homeless three or more years. The longer a person is homeless, the more difficult it becomes to become housed. Given this difficulty, it can be implied that services, needs, and characteristics of short-term versus chronically homeless persons differ.

Homeless Programs and Policies

In 1987, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance act was passed as the first federal policy aimed at reducing homelessness (HUD, 2007). Programming supported through McKinney-Vento grants is heavily focused on creating housing opportunities for homeless persons through housing vouchers and program grants to state and local agencies (HUD, 2007). Currently, over \$1.5 billion are allocated to McKinney-Vento programming with increased funding over the past several years (NAEH, 2006).

Housing First

Housing first is quickly becoming one of the most popular models for homeless assistance service delivery and has been empirically supported by research (Fitzpatrick, 2004; Jensen, 2005;

Padgett, Gulcure, & Tsemberis, 2006). The sequence of services in a housing first program is usually as follows: housing, case management, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, employment training, then any other services deemed necessary to “help sustain stability and self-sufficiency” (Legander, 2006). New York and Seattle have both implemented successful programs using the housing first model. Homelessness in New York has been on a steady decline since 2002 because of the widespread implementation of the model in public and private agencies (New York City Department of Homeless Services, 2007). Pathways to Housing, Inc., was the first agency in New York to try the housing first model in 2002; since 2004, 85% of the program’s participants have remained in their permanent housing placements (Fitzpatrick, 2004; Tsemberis, Gulcur, & Nakae 2004). In 2005, Kings County, Washington, which includes Seattle, moved towards using a housing first approach by developing a 10-year plan to end homelessness focused on creating housing opportunities (Committee to End Homelessness in King’s County, 2005). As of June 2006, over 900 homeless people were moved into permanent housing and 1,300 new housing units were created in Kings County (Chan, 2006).

Categorical Programs

Categorical programs attempt to tackle a single aspect of homelessness that is usually identified as the major contributor to an individual’s situation. Most categorical programs are focused on mental health and substance abuse recovery (Caton et al., 2005; Fisk, Rakfeldt, & McCormack, 2006). Programs associated with other risk factors such as lack of affordable housing and domestic violence usually attempt to tackle these specific problems in conjunction with other intervening contributing factors. These problem-specific programs are the most researched and validated, because they follow a medical approach to recovery where quantitative data are used almost exclusively to support the effectiveness of programs. While these programs are validated by extensive evaluation, taking a one-sided approach to eliminating drug abuse and

therefore, homelessness, tends not to work (Caton et al., 2005; Fisk et al., 2006). The reason these programs may not be as effective as indicated by statistics is because they ignore the larger social forces that contribute to homelessness; while these programs are successful, the number of homelessness in the U.S. has not significantly decreased since the 1980's (Mowbray, Cohen, & Bybee, 1993).

Comprehensive Care Centers

Comprehensive care centers are “one-stop” assistance centers where all homeless services are consolidated in one area, usually one building. This is also a popular method of dealing with homelessness because, ideally, it moves homeless people to one place and keeps them there until they can return to the community in permanent housing. However, many communities that implement comprehensive care centers do not have the resources, infrastructure, or political influence to make the centers truly comprehensive. These kinds of centers have become popular in Florida, after the success of several centers in Broward County (Broward Outreach Centers, 2007). Gainesville, Florida is currently in the process of approving and constructing its own one-stop center, the GRACE Marketplace. However, because these programs are so large in scope, setting up evaluation often becomes a daunting task and is not planned for from the beginning. Little to no research exists on evaluation practices of comprehensive programs such as these (Crook, Mullis, Cornell, & Mullis, 2005); an overview of the comprehensive plans for the programs in Broward County and Gainesville indicate evaluation as part of the plan, but, it is unclear what these evaluations consist of. In Gainesville, a comprehensive evaluation plan has not been developed as the proposal for the center has been delayed and edited in several battles at city commission (Gainesville Office on Homelessness, 2005; Tinker, 2007).

Policy and Programming in Gainesville

The city of Gainesville and Alachua County have undergone rapid changes in homeless policies over the past five years. The city and county commissions in 2005 approved the 10-Year plan to end homelessness (Gainesville Office on Homelessness, 2005). The passing of this bill allowed for the creation of the Office on Homelessness, a department jointly funded by the city and county governments. This office works closely with the Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry.

On October 30, 2006, the construction and funding of the GRACE Marketplace, a comprehensive one-stop care center for the homeless, was approved in a joint session of the city and county commissions (Gainesville City Commission, 2006). The GRACE Marketplace is intended to bring all homeless services currently provided throughout the county to one place. All of the major homeless agencies, providers of meals, case management, and behavioral healthcare, in the county have agreed to relocate all or some of their services to the center once it is opened (DeCarmin, 2007).

After the center was approved, numerous additional policies, including a ban on panhandling, evacuation of tent city, and restrictions on use of the downtown plaza, were passed through the commissions. Many of the policies were considered negative action against homeless persons, and created significant controversy between local activists and policymakers (Adelson, 2007a, 2007b; Tinker, 2007). As of May 2008, construction has not begun on the GRACE Marketplace due to problems with site selection.

Contribution of Research

Although programs addressing the needs of homeless Americans are widespread and well supported locally and federally, it seems there are still major gaps in service provision that are not successfully being addressed by current practices. As previously stated, the categorical

approach, tackling one issue as the significant contributing factor, is not effective in eliminating homelessness and associated issues in the long-term. Comprehensive approaches are newer, but tend to have more positive long-lasting results and many have fewer problems with follow-up as clients develop deeper connections with service providers.

In recent years, groups of homeless persons throughout the U.S. have acted as empowered groups able to work towards their own progress (Cononie, 2003; Swithinbank, 1997; Williams, 2005). Studies on these groups have found that although homeless groups lack some of the characteristics of social movements, particularly organized protest, other factors such as clear organization, goals, and access to resources classify these groups as social movement organizations. This approach to homeless services also serves to minimize the top-down perception of outsiders providing services that can hinder effectiveness of service (Thompson, McManus, Lantry, Windsor, & Flynn, 2006).

Perhaps the most necessary change in homeless services is a shift from “needs-assessment” based programming to “asset-based” programming, which would work with the homeless to determine what they can do for themselves before creating services which may or may not be effective. If the homeless can be viewed as a special interest community, then surely the principles of asset-based community development can be applied to work towards improvement (Bergdall, 2003; Future generations, n.d.). In this research, I aim to find out if homeless persons have the ability to behave as a group, and therefore organize, by exploring homeless persons’ perceptions of the homeless as a community and of themselves as homeless persons.

Research Question and Objectives

This study will attempt to propose and explore a model for new social movements based on the presence of absence of three key precursors to social action within the homeless population in Gainesville. These precursors are group identity, group cohesion, and goal

orientation. The role of these concepts will be explained in further detail in the literature review.

The three research questions that will guide this study are listed below.

- Are group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation appropriate precursors to collective action and thus social movements?
- Are the precursors described above present within the homeless population in Gainesville?
- Does a difference in the presence of group characteristics exist between short-term and chronically homeless persons?

At the end of the study, I hope to be able to determine the presence of group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation within the homeless population in Gainesville, Florida. If the precursors are present, I will use the results of the quantitative and qualitative data to determine if the model proposed at the end of the literature review for new social movements is appropriate. The directionality and relationship between each concept will be determined during the data analysis. A difference between short-term and chronically homeless persons will indicate that each of the characteristics is influenced by length of group membership despite membership in this case being involuntary.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Movements and Social Change

Social movements are a significant part of human social life because they influence norms and policies from the local level to the global level. In recent years, studies of social movements have focused on events such as the Civil Rights and Women's movement in the U.S., labor union strikes, migrant workers rights, the socialist revolution in Eastern Europe and, more recently, in Latin America, and more societal changes such as globalization and environmental advocacy (Russell, 2005). With a wide range of social change under the social movement umbrella, generalizing the dynamics of social movements has challenged scholars. Social movements have been described as "collective events in which institutions and groups are loosely bound by the same ideology (or more accurately, frames) and symbols and connected by overlapping, primarily social, networks" (Clark, 2004, p. 942), and "one of the principal social forms through which collectivities give voice to their grievances and concerns about the rights, welfare, and well-being of themselves and others by engaging in various types of collective action" (Snow, Soule, & Kriesi, 2006, p. 3).

Scholars have differed on the defining traits of social movements, but most of the differences can be attributed to semantics. Popenoe, Merton, Jasper, and Heywood's perspectives all differ in the number and specificity of characteristics. Popenoe's four characteristics of social movements are (1) a new perspective to see things differently; (2) an ideology maintaining group loyalty; (3) a commitment to action; and (4) a dispersed or decentralized leadership" (Simsek, 2004, p. 113; Touraine, 1988, p. 532).

The definitions provided by other scholars include the above characteristics, in some cases, adding or modifying traits of social movements. Merton, for example, emphasizes goal seeking,

cohesive organizational structures, and unifying ideology shared among movement members (Merton, 1983); Jasper suggests that social movements are also long-lasting and non-institutionalized (Jasper, 1997); Heywood suggests that social movements are connected to the New Left, based in new middle classes, and innovative (Heywood, 1997; Simsek, 2004). Despite all of the different terms used, it can be gathered from these various characteristics that social movements are movements of groups of people committed to an ideology and goals, whether explicitly stated or not, who are committed to action to correct perceived social injustices.

Even in the earliest incarnations, explorations of social movements bore disagreement among scholars as evidenced by the previously mentioned definitions. There are currently two dominant perspectives on social movements, the resource mobilization perspective, including the political process model and political opportunity structure as a theoretical offshoot, and the new social movement perspective. The resource mobilization and political process perspectives are most easily described as variations on a structural, goal-oriented model of social movements. The new social movement perspective addresses movements from a less structural perspective, focusing on the role of emotion, identity, and culture in movement success.

Classical Social Movement Perspectives

The earliest research on social movements is rooted in a Marxian view of class-based conflict leading to change in the distribution of power by a radical and forceful transfer in ownership of the means of industrial production. This perspective grew from the belief that social movements are a particular type of social conflict and, ultimately, a method of resolving social conflict and the driving force behind protest and collective action (Touraine, 1985; Simsek, 2004).

These movements were seen as largely focused on bringing about change in policies and the social order. Issues present in movements that fall into this category include economic

growth, income distribution, military and social security, and social control (Simsek, 2004). The perspective grew out of research on the working class protest movements of the late 1960's (Simsek, 2004; Wieworka, 2005). Two or more clearly defined, opposing actors are identified and battling over competing interests. Conflict is resolved by collective action, primarily in the form of protest. Additionally, social movements differ from institutionalized behavior in that they are relatively spontaneous and unstructured reactions to societal strain (Morris, 1981).

Resource Mobilization Model

The resource mobilization model was the most prominent social movement theory in the United States during the 1970's, when scholars began to move away from the socioeconomically based classical perspectives on social movements that dominated research in the 1960's (Simsek, 2004). This perspective posits that access to resources and well-defined, well-organized protest groups are the necessary components to a successful movement. The resource mobilization model is heavily structural in its basis, underlining the importance of organizational and institutional structures as well as networks in development of a successful movement (McAdam & Snow, 1997; Morris, 1981; Walsh & Warland, 1983). The central focus of the resource mobilization perspective is the social movement organization, or the protest organization, which functions in a highly institutionalized manner; this is contrary to the classical perspective in which movements start out disorganized and irrational (Morris, 1981). Without the presence of a well-organized group of activists, the mobilization and unrest necessary to create change cannot be developed (Useem, 1980).

The idea that access to resources and organizational capacity determines movement success has been evidenced in studies focusing on the urban riots of the 1960's (Useem, 1980). Rioters, in comparison to non-rioting counterparts, were more racially conscious, had knowledge and access to the political structure, and more likely to have been victims of racial

discrimination. On factors such as education, income, and occupation, the rioters were comparable to non-rioters. This evidence, in addition to the fact that most riots occurred in cities where political opportunities had been blocked for African Americans, established resource mobilization as the most prominent social movement model of the 1970's, displacing classical perspectives and the theoretically weak breakdown model (Useem, 1980).

Another study on the sit-in protest phenomenon of the 1960's found that pre-existing organizational structures contributed to the success of the movement (Morris, 1981). This is contrary to the classical social movement perspective, which posits that protest actions such as sit-ins would have emerged later in the movement as a product of the action. In fact, the sit-ins were found to be the catalysts to later, more highly organized forms of protest during the civil rights movement.

The resource mobilization model is effective as a modern interpretation of the classical social movement perspective. The incorporation and necessity of organizational structure and clearly defined goals lends itself to logical explanations of movement success. It seems obvious that organizations with effective structures and clearly defined, specific goals would succeed in achieving those goals. Thus, social movements that incorporate these facets of organizational success will effectively enact change at the social level.

The major caveat with this perspective lies in the absence of identity, culture, and emotion in movement dynamics. As governmental structures become less relevant and movements focus less on enacting policy change, the rigidity of structural approaches fails to accommodate these more sublime elements.

A second fault of this perspective is the assumption that persons with little or no access to resources and lack of clear organization will not succeed. However, in the instances where

disenfranchised persons with little access to resources do engage in protest, resource mobilization falls short. This is especially evident in the case of the 1980 prison riots in New Mexico, where prison inmates managed to take over a prison resulting in the most brutal and costly U.S. prison riot (Useem, 1980). However, the no social structure or leadership that would hint at organization was found by Useem in a 1980 case study on the riots. This challenges the dominance of resource mobilization, and suggests that factors other than structure and influence can drive protest.

Political Process Model

The political process model, including the political opportunity structure, emerged as a social movement theory shortly after the resource mobilization model. In many schools of thought, it is considered to be a more politically centered variation on the resource mobilization model. While both share a structural approach to social movement processes, the political process model focuses more on the availability and exploitation of political opportunities. Within this perspective institutions that usually take the form of governments and political bodies hold the majority of power. The four main variables of political opportunities, as defined by Tarrow (1988) are outlined below (McAdam& Snow, 1997, p. 253; Noonan, 1995, p. 83):

- Degree of openness in the polity
- Stability and instability of political alignments
- Presence or absence of allies and support groups
- Divisions within the elite or its tolerance for protest
- Policymaking capacity of the government

Many movements originally considered to be of the organizational-type promoted by the resource mobilization model are now seen as more political in nature. On further examination, movement goals and actions are influenced and shaped by political structures, movements seek political support and political influence, and changes in policy are considered successes. One

example of this is the case of protests by labor unions; originally seen as an expression of sociopolitical inequity, these movements are better explained by viewing unions as political actors attempting to exert influence over the political structure (Touraine, 1985).

Recent scholarship has taken note of several theoretical weaknesses of the political process model when used to examine modern movements. A major weakness is the fact that this theory was built almost entirely on an understanding of the processes inherent in western democracies. Scholars have shown that large-scale social unrest is closely linked to shifts in political power in Western Europe (Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, & Guigni, 1992). This western orientation makes it difficult to apply the model to areas of the world with different political structures such as autocracies, monarchies, etc. It has been empirically proven that civil unrest in western industrialized nations is strongly linked to changes in the political structure. It would be useful to apply this model to the political and social turmoil in newly democratized nations in Asia and Africa, as well those countries striving for political change. Unfortunately, in the current incarnation, it is not adaptable.

This perspective also widely excludes persons with little or no influence over the polity, namely disenfranchised persons such as the homeless, prisoners, illegal immigrants, or the mentally ill. Despite the seeming incompatibility with influencing political change, these individuals are often the most likely to feel the effects of changing political structures. Disenfranchised persons are often the most closely tied to the political structure in terms of being controlled by it. Homeless persons and the mentally ill, as a group rely on the government to provide services that allow them to have their basic human needs met. When political structures change, allocation of resources to aid these groups of people changes, and thus their lives are

affected. It seems illogical that disenfranchised persons would not be able to participate in protest just because they have the least influence over the polity.

Finally, the lack of accommodation for processes of emotion, culture, and identity in social movements limits the scope of the political process model, particularly with the more recent, apolitical movements to be discussed below.

Theoretical Perspectives on New Social Movements

The new social movement perspective emerged in the 1980's as a contrasting approach to the previously mentioned approaches to collective action and protest. Where social conflict attempted to explain mobilization as based on between group economic discrepancies, new social movement theory used cultural and moral perspectives as well as group identity (Williams, 2006).

Manuel Castells

Castells' approach to new social movements is the most compatible with the early neo-Marxist explanations of social movements. This perspective focuses on capitalist structures and dynamics in urban movements, but acknowledges, unlike classical social movement perspectives, that the roles of movement actors are based in socioeconomic factors in addition to factors such as culture and identity. Three major themes of protest movements were identified by Castells (Buechler, 1995):

- Modes of collective consumption supported by the state.
- Community culture, defined as maintenance of cultural identity and territoriality, preserving genuine forms of community.
- Political self-management, defined as autonomy and decentralization of decision-making processes.

For Castells, the locality is the action point for protest movements. Much of this theoretical framework is based on an attempt to bring power back to the community level and preserve a

local culture in urban settings. Cities are the centers of mass consumption and the form of community most closely tied to political structures. The state attempts to exert influence over the community by diluting and nationalizing local culture, identity, political processes, and economic processes. Urban social movements, according to Castells, are not exclusively fueled by emotion, culture, and identity as many new social movements theorists propose. Rather, the socioeconomic struggle and the social-political struggle are intertwined but distinct arenas of social unrest.

Alaine Touraine

Touraine's perspective on new social movements is heavily focused on culture and the battle over control of society in a post-industrial world. In this perspective, protest has shifted from the economic to the cultural realm. Because the cultural realm is not concrete like the economic realm, and contention in the cultural realm is more nuanced, collective action is often more difficult to organize and thus takes newer forms such as struggles for identity (Touraine, 1985). In addition, Touraine suggests that society as a concrete sociological concept should no longer be a part of the examination of human social life, rather, social movements should be used to understand human social behavior (Simsek, 2004; Touraine, 1988).

Touraine's body of research focuses primarily on the workers movement in France and later, the Polish solidarity movement. His work with these social movement groups led him to propose that the role of new social movements in postmodern society is to create spaces for two new classes, consumers and clients vs. managers and technocrats, to "construct both a system of knowledge and the technical tools that allow them to intervene in their own functioning" (Buechler, 1995, p. 444). Touraine uses the term historicity to refer to this process of knowledge and tool development. Conflicts in modern society are based in the opposing interests between these groups. A major theme in Touraine's work is what he terms the privatization of social

problems: making social issues relevant at the individual level, therefore creating an emotional relationship to the issue and perhaps developing culture and identity based on this emotional connection (Buechler, 1995).

The struggle for individuality within Touraine's perspective is typical of the new social movement theories. Rather than viewing protest groups as inherently cohesive, groups are seen as composed of individuals struggling to maintain and develop identities in an increasingly monotonous social field. This perspective is echoed in the work of other new social movement theorists, most notably the work of Alberto Melucci, to be discussed in further detail below.

Jurgen Habermas

The influence, or colonization, of the individual and personal environment by the media, money, and social power is the focus in Habermas' perspective on new social movements. He posits that these actors are regulating the lifeworld to such an extent that it goes beyond the economy and government, infringing upon culture, identity formation, and other forms of "symbolic reproduction." This perspective focuses the most on post-industrial elements of consumers versus producers. With the expanding number of roles an individual can take on, the producers and governments take more control over individuals because they create and alter these new identities (Buechler, 1995).

Habermas identifies two characteristics of new social movements. First, he asserts that social movements are defensive in nature, and do not generally bring about broad social change. This goes against most early theoretical perspectives, as classical perspectives, resource mobilization, and political process models all propose the purpose of social movements is some broad-based social change, socioeconomic or otherwise. Second, the conflicts on new social movements are rooted in changes in the quality of life and self-realization, with goals primarily focused on movement participation and identity formation. The foci of new social movements

according to Habermas' framework are based on "cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization" (Buechler, 1995, p. 446). That is, individuals struggle to find meaning by forming identities, finding means of participation, and improving the individual lifeworld.

Alberto Melucci

Alberto Melucci is the most widely recognized of new social movement scholars. Most often, references to new social movement theories in research are heavily or exclusively based in Melucci's framework. Of all four perspectives explored here, Melucci's is the most explicitly related to emotion, culture, and identity formation. Where other theorists focus heavily on the struggle between the individual and the system in a postmodern society, Melucci takes the examination a step further to explain that the role of new social movements in society is to convey messages about the rigid nature of institutional power practices to propose alternative methods of social functioning through identity and culture (Buechler, 1995).

The conflicts of daily life and the importance of submerged networks are the main foci of Melucci's perspective. He posits that the major fault with earlier theories of social movements is the false belief, stemming from the Marxian roots of social movements, that movement actors are a unified force with a single, solid collective identity. Instead, he explains, movement actors are drawn together by personal, individual-level interactions based on the everyday misfortunes and injustices of modern life (Melucci, 1988, 1989; Mueller, 1994). Submerged networks play a role in the creation of collective identities, assessing social grievances, and determining the effectiveness and usefulness of collective action (Mueller, 1994). According to Melucci, new social movements rely heavily on symbolic means and actions, with action itself a value and possibly a goal of social movements (Simsek, 2004). Mueller (1994, p. 342) succinctly outlines the three major characteristics of Melucci's framework:

- The content or outcome of the process of social construction, the collective identity of the movement that comes to exist as a part of the movement culture
- The social processes by which the collective identity is created in submerged networks of small groups concerned with the ongoing routines of everyday life
- The emotional investments that enable individuals to recognize themselves as the “we” in a collective identity.

Melucci’s framework most neatly explains the ultimate role of new social movements in postmodern society. By placing value on movement participation processes such as identity formation and symbolic action, new social movements create a space where individuals can both assert their rights to individuality and in some cases, political and social equity, as well create social spaces and alternative means of social action within those social spaces.

Culture, Identity, and Emotion in New Social Movements

New social movements have three key components that were ignored by previous formulations of social movement theory. Culture, emotion, and identity are closely tied components of and often influence each other’s presence in within new social movements.

The study of culture and identity in social movements is based heavily on the perspectives on new social movements of Alain Touraine and Alberto Melucci. As explained above, Touraine and Melucci both emphasized the shift in social movements since the 1970s to movements based in the cultural sphere, where individuals attempt to develop identities through common grievances against the perception of imposed autonomy from those in power. The role of identity development in new social movements has been the most researched aspect of new social movements over the past ten years. New concepts such as identity movements and identity politics have emerged in an attempt to explain how movement actors develop group identities, and how these are used to strengthen movements. However, the role of identity in social movements has been recognized since the inception of social movement research. Theorists now

agree that participating in social movements through activism, mobilization, and protest can significantly and permanently alter a movement participant's sense of identity.

Mueller (1994) explores the role of collective identities in the U.S women's movement using Melucci's perspective that part of the purpose of social movements is in creating collective identities for movement actors. She explores the creation of new feminist identities following the split in the American women's movement after the Women's Equality Day Strike in 1970. The study found that creative tensions within the group led women to forge new identities based on grievances both within and outside the movement. Identity was central in the women's movement as a whole because women sensed a discrepancy between their high levels of education and the low social status granted to them by society.

Simsek (2004) explores the women's movement in Turkey from Melucci's perspective. The women's movement in Turkey did not pick up until the 1980's, a decade or more after women's movements in western nations. Simsek asserts that feminism in Turkey, despite the varied types of feminist movements, maintains a post-industrial, identity-based focus, thus qualifying as a new social movement; "all of their demands are basically of a post-material nature, and call for identity politics" (Simsek, 2004, p. 127).

More recently, a study by Cherry (2006) challenges the assumption that identification with a social movement group is essential to activism and engagement in movement goals. This study on vegans found that those vegans who were not members of vegan groups were stricter in their lifestyle than those participants who were members. The findings of this study support the idea that group identity itself can be the strongest motivator towards personal change as a member of a cultural group. This challenges the resource mobilization proposition that movements must be highly organized to succeed. Additionally, Cherry found that the pervasive

identity need not be the dominant identity in the individual's perspective; most of the strict vegans in his study identified primarily as punks, while the less strict vegans who were members of vegan organizations, identified primarily as vegans.

In a study of Jewish resistance fighters in Nazi occupied Warsaw, Einwohner (2006) explores the role of high-risk identities in social movements. High-risk identities are forged in environments where identifying as a group member can create personal danger for the movement participant. Despite the danger inherent in identifying as a group member, high-risk identities can often forge stronger connections, particularly emotional connections between group members due to the perception of a struggle to eliminate the danger and make the identity acceptable.

The role of emotion in social movements is inherent in the new social movement theories, but never was considered a catalyst for social movement action until recently. The new emotional movements emerged as scholars noticed the seemingly spontaneous organization of people following tragic events. Trigger events for emotional movements involve the victimization of an innocent person as a result of senseless violence by another individual or group of persons.

Walgrave & Verhulst (2006) conducted a study to compare four movements involving mobilization of common people following tragic events. The movements compared were the White Movement in Belgium, the Million Mom March in the U.S., the Snowdrop Campaign in the U.K., and the Movement Against Senseless Violence in the Netherlands. It can be concluded that while emotional movements may not be a new movement type, they can certainly be considered new social movements based on the above characteristics. The researchers found that four characteristics were present among the four movements:

- A basis in victim's activism and identification mechanisms
- Low levels of organization capacity

- Support from the mass media
- Endorsement by elite groups, including politicians.

Critical Components of New Social Movement Theories

Group Identity

The inclusion of group identity as a necessary component of social movements is one of the major differences between the new social movement perspective and older social movement theories. Because culture and emotion play so heavily into the advent of new social movements, group level change often times seems more passionate and value-driven. Despite the importance of identity development in new social movements, research remains highly descriptive and insulated within the social movement scholarship.

Definitions of group identity vary between disciplines, but they share a common thread of “a personal cognitive connection between the individual and the work group” (Riordan & Weatherly, 1999). Social identity theory defines social identity as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1978). While these definitions are similar, the second includes the emotional aspect of group membership that is central to new social movements.

The literature on group identity has been dominated by studies of small group action and beliefs. However, the idea of collective identity has been used by sociologists since the 1980’s to fill the gaps in dominant resource mobilization and political process models, (Polletta & Jasper, 2001) both of which were dominant social movement models at the time. Those models explain in great detail the “how” of social movements, but do not explain the “why,” (Polletta & Jasper, 2001) which is the reason values and culture under the umbrella of identity surfaced as a way to bridge this gap.

It is clear that collective identity is central to social movements (Bernstein, 2005; Einwohner, 2006), but New Social Movements formally incorporate identity into its theoretical base rather than using it to paste together the structures and processes described by previous models. The term identity politics has recently entered the lexicon of social movement studies; while debate exists over exact definition, it is an expansion of the concept of class politics. Instead of one's central identity being based in social class and the Marxist class structure, identity politics focuses on the salient identities that were present in the social movements of the 1960's and 1970's, which "seemed to be more concerned with culture and identity than with challenging the class structure" (Bernstein, 2005, p. 49). In this sense, identity politics has been defined as "the belief that identity itself- its elaboration, expression, or affirmation- is and should be a fundamental focus of political work" (Bernstein, 2005, p. 49; Kauffman, 1990, p. 67).

Many models and instruments have been developed to measure group identity, but few of them have been proven empirically sound by factor analysis techniques (Cameron, 2001). It is widely acknowledged that group identity is multi-dimensional, but the dimensions used have varied between models (Cameron, 2001; Deaux, 1996; Ellemers, 1999). The dimensions that were derived from Tajfel's Social Identity Theory were: awareness of group membership, group evaluation, and emotional aspects of belonging (Brown et al., 1986; Hinkle et al., 1989). However, these dimensions proved difficult to define, and even more difficult to measure because they represent broad and overlapping concepts of group identity. In response to the lack of empirical data concerning the specificity the dimensions of group identity, Cameron and his colleagues developed a 3-factor model of social identity that includes the dimensions: cognitive centrality, ingroup affect, and ingroup ties (Cameron & Lalonde, 2001). This model has been

tested among various social groups, and thus has been determined empirically sound (Boatswain & Lalonde, 2000; Cameron et al., 1997; Obst, Zinkiewicz, & Smith, 2002).

Group Cohesion

While sociology has embraced the importance of collective/group identities, the concept of group cohesion has not been addressed for large-scale social change processes. Within the community studies realm, studies of community and neighborhood cohesion have surfaced to examine perceptions of cohesion (Brown & Brooks, 2006; Riordan & Weatherly, 1999).

However, the concept of group cohesion has widely been left to social psychology and has been used most often to evaluate the effectiveness of workgroups (Kipnes & Joyce, 1999).

Group cohesion can be defined as “the degree to which an individual believes that the members of his or her work group are attracted to each other, willing to work together, and committed to the completion of the tasks and goals of the work group” (Bass, 1960; Riordan & Weatherly, 1999, p. 312; Stogdill, 1972).

Social cohesion, including group cohesion, has recently been identified as an integral part of the empowerment process (Speer, Jackson, & Peterson, 2001). New Social Movements foster empowerment through the creation of strong cultural identities, but a sense of perceived cohesion is necessary among group members for the group to feel they have the degree of efficacy necessary to enact change.

The most recent studies on cohesion as a construct have highlighted the need to redefine cohesion as a more complex and multidimensional variable than it has been in the past. As a result, researchers have concluded that measures of cohesion should be developed congruently with the theoretical construct. In other words, the context of cohesion must be considered for appropriate measures to be used (Kipnes & Joyce, 1999). In a study by Kipnes (1998), it was found that levels of cohesion varied dependent upon the usage of individual or group-level

instruments. This is likely due to the lack of conceptualization concerning the affect of other group dynamics including identity, leadership, and power in the context of cohesion.

While many of the current models are similar, disagreement on the dimensionality of cohesion has rendered researchers unable to develop universally accepted models (Kipnes & Joyce, 1999). It is likely due to this fact that the plethora of frameworks and instruments available have not been replicated or empirically tested enough to create a dominant paradigm in cohesion research.

Goal Setting and Achievement

The effect of goals in various situations, including depression, achievement (in both educational and work settings), and personality, has been examined in current research. There are various frameworks that have been adapted to suit particular fields of study, but in each area the basic idea is the same: setting goals motivates people. Achievement goal theory examines the way people function when placed in an “achievement setting,” (Baranik, Barron, & Finney, 2007) whether this is a work-group, academic environment, or social movement organization. It suggests that goals, and therefore the outcomes of those goals, vary among individuals placed in achievement settings.

There are currently four types of goals identified by the Achievement goal framework: performance avoidance (PAV), performance-approach (PAP), mastery-avoidance (MAV), and mastery-approach (MAP). These four domains, from Baranik et al. (2007), are outlined below:

- **Performance approach:** “striving to demonstrate competence relative to others”
- **Performance avoidance:** “striving to avoid incompetence relative to others” (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996)
- **Mastery approach:** focus on “developing his or her competence or mastering a task” (Ames, 1992; Elliot, 2005)

- **Mastery avoidance:** “focus on avoiding self-referential or task-referential incompetence” (Elliot, 2005)

This model has evolved from an early 2-factor model that recognized general mastery and performance goals. Individuals formulated mastery goals to develop competence and skills, whereas performance goals were formulated to demonstrate competence in comparison to others (Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001).

Research using the original two-factor framework indicated that individuals tend to react differently to achievement situations relative to the type of goals they set in the situation (Ames & Archer, 1988; Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001; Dweck & Legget, 1988; Nicholls, 1984). It was originally believed that mastery type goals resulted in higher achievement; research had shown that individuals pursuing mastery goals were more productive when faced with difficult tasks and were more positive about the achievement situation than those pursuing performance goals (Ames, 1992; Ames & Archer, 1988; Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001; Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Nolen, 1988). However, a second perspective, combining performance and mastery goals were used, was advocated by researchers and known as the multiple goal perspective. Currently, it is unclear which perspective is the most beneficial as several outside factors seem to affect achievement outcomes in addition to goal orientation (Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001).

Elliot and colleagues (Elliot & Church, 1997; Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996) introduced the distinction between avoidance and performance approaches as a way to differentiate between performance-avoidance goals and performance-approach goals. The model was empirically supported until the introduction of the 2 x 2 Goal achievement framework, which split the mastery category into two categories (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Research supporting the validity of this model has been strong (Baranik et al., 2007), and provides a balanced framework for understanding goals and their effects on achievement.

Recently there has been a shift from examination of individual goals to examination of group goals. This is likely a response to the accumulation of research in work-settings, and the fact that most organizational goals are formed by groups, not individuals (Austin & Bobko, 1985; O’Leary-Kelly, Martocchio, & Fink, 1994). Goals influence group processes by encouraging division of labor, stimulating coordination of effort, aiding in appraisal of group processes, and helping groups decide what tasks must be accomplished (Ansoff, 1965; Klein & Mulvey, 1995). However, it has been noted that the models used to examine individual goal setting may not be accurate for groups, because elements of group dynamics such as cohesion, acceptance of norms, and social loafing have significant influence on both goal-setting and achievement (Austin & Bobko, 1985; Ilgen, Shapiro, Salas, & Weiss, 1987; Klein & Mulvey, 1995; Weldon & Weingart, 1993). The research about group goals has demonstrated a complex relationship between cohesion, group goal difficulty, group goal acceptance/commitment, and group performance (Ronan, Latham, & Kinne, 1973; Zander, Forward, & Albert, 1969). However, it is evident that highly cohesive groups tend to be more committed to goal achievement and tend to devise relatively difficult goals, which in turn lends itself to high levels of goal achievement (Klein & Mulvey, 1995).

Purpose of Research

Despite the wide range of current social movement research, there seems to be a discrepancy in research concerning the social viability of fringe groups, specifically the homeless. While considerable research is available about more visible movements, the “vagabond” populations have not been considered a viable social force.

In recent years, several studies have surfaced which examine groups of homeless throughout the U.S. (Swithinbank, 1997; Williams, 2005), from both a broad social movement perspective and as a new social movement. These studies have found that although homeless

groups lack some of the characteristics of social movements, particularly organized protest, other factors such as clear organization, goals, and access to resources classify these groups as social movement organizations from a resource mobilization perspective. Because homeless persons are a group who traditionally has little access to resources and ability to mobilize, this finding contradicts the traditional views of social movement groups.

The purpose of this research is twofold. First, I would like to determine if the homeless population in Gainesville, Florida can be considered a social movement group, drawing heavily from the culture and identity based new social movement frameworks proposed by Touraine and Melucci as well as many of the structural elements of the resource mobilization model. I will determine this by measuring the presence of the following precursory characteristics of social movements: group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation. The second purpose of this research is to explore how well the proposed model explain the observed relationships among these constructs

Model for New Social Movements

Below is a proposed model for new social movements that is outlined in Figure 2-1. I have chosen to name this model a new social movement model because it focuses heavily on the presence of individual characteristics such as group identity and goal orientation rather than the group level, organizational characteristics inherent in the resource mobilization and political process frameworks of social movements. The element of group cohesion has been included because a group level measure of connectedness should be included for a movement to be one entity engaging individuals for action,. The outcome of the model is action capacity in terms of the creation of a new social movement group. Action in this case is defined not as collective action or protest, but as the creation of culture and identity spheres where movement participants

can improve their quality of life through interaction, identity formation, preservation of culture, legitimization of emotion, and eventually broad-based social change.

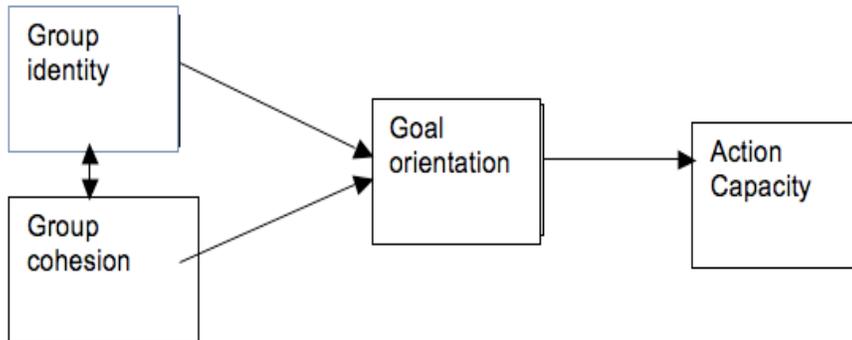


Figure 2-1. Proposed new social movement model.

CHAPTER 3 METHODS

Research Design

A cross sectional design was used for the first stage of this study. Cross-sectional designs are appropriate when the data to be collected requires no time dimension and the data rely on existing differences between groups (DeVaus, 2001). Cross sectional designs are used to determine if variation between two or more variables exists for two or more comparison groups (Bryman, 2004). In this study, the presence of group cohesion, group identity, and goal orientation among short-term and chronically homeless individuals in Gainesville at one point in time were compared.

In the second stage of data collection, a qualitative interview was conducted to further investigate the presence of the research variables among the homeless population. A case study design was used as no comparisons between groups were made and the overall purpose of the interview was to gain more descriptive and complex explanations on the presence of group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation among the homeless population as a whole (DeVaus, 2001).

Sample Selection

The theoretical population for this study included all homeless persons residing in Alachua County, Florida. The sampling frame was the 952 identified homeless persons in Alachua County, Florida as of January 2007. The anticipated sample size for this study was approximately 80 homeless persons total, with 40 per comparison group. The two comparison groups were chronically homeless persons, those who have been homeless three or more years, and short-term homeless persons, those who have been homeless less than three years (HUD, 2007). Placement in either group was determined by a demographic questionnaire distributed

prior to the other research instruments. The size of 40 per comparison group was chosen to ensure that regression analysis could be conducted on the variables. Because the homeless population in Alachua County fluctuates significantly from year to year and seasonally, it is difficult to determine a sample size based on the estimated sampling frame.

A referral sampling method was used to recruit participants. After completing the quantitative portion of the study, participants were asked to list five other homeless persons who may be interested in participating and indicating where these people could be found. The first contacts were made at the downtown plaza. The target number of 80 total participants was not achieved, due mostly to the fact that many participants refused to refer others. There were 63 total respondents. Forty-five responses of one index and two scales were complete enough for quantitative analysis. The other 18 responses were not adequate because they were incomplete or improperly completed.

Participants were sampled at St. Francis House soup kitchen and shelter during lunch on different days of the week and at the downtown plaza in Gainesville during different days and times. These sites were chosen for safety purposes, as they are well-supervised and public locations. Other locations where homeless people spend time, such as the tent-city and women's shelters, as well as other soup kitchens, were excluded because of safety and privacy. Despite excluding these sites, St. Francis House and the downtown plaza provide an excellent sampling frame because homeless persons as well as homeless experts assert that most homeless people in Gainesville spend time at St. Francis House for lunch or at the downtown plaza.

Data were collected at St. Francis house during the general public lunch, which is attended by 150-200 persons each day. Attendees change daily. In the evening, St. Francis House provides shelter for 30 homeless men, women, and children. This group was sampled during one after-

hours visit. At the downtown plaza, data were collected during mid-morning on the weekend, during the weekly farmer's market Wednesday afternoons between 3pm and 7pm, and during a weekly dinner provided by a local organization called The HomeVan. Approximately 200-300 persons attend the HomeVan dinner each week, and, as with St. Francis House, the group attending often changes. Many homeless persons who live in tent cities come to HomeVan handouts because clothing and other supplies are often provided.

Instrumentation

Group Identity

Cameron's three factor model of social identity was used to measure group identity among the homeless community. The three factors used by Cameron to develop this instrument are ingroup ties, centrality, and ingroup affect. These are defined below (Cameron, 2004, p. 241):

- **Ingroup ties:** “perceptions of similarity, bonds, and belongingness with other group members”
- **Cognitive centrality:** “the amount of time spent thinking about being a group member” (Gurin & Markus, 1989)
- **Ingroup affect:** “the positivity of feelings associated with being a group member”

Three different indices were used to test the validity of the model, including the goodness-of-fit index, the incremental fit index, and the comparative fit index. Five trials were performed, and each trial produced values of .90 or higher, which is the standard acceptable cut-off for a good model (Cameron, 2004).

A reliability test was performed on the group identity scale at the end of data analysis. The data from this test are shown in Figure 3-1. The first test on the full 12 item scale produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.562. Items six and eight were removed for a second analysis, which slightly improved the alpha to 0.625. The scale was shortened twice more, but neither test

produced significant changes in the alpha score. The original 12-item scale was used for data analysis.

Group Cohesion

Group cohesion is a latent characteristic of groups that is widely ignored in research on social movements and even group identity. Despite this, it is a major component of group dynamics and ability to mobilize, as established in the literature review. For this reason, I chose to use an index to measure cohesion in conjunction with a set of interview questions to probe the more complex dimensions of cohesion.

An index is an appropriate measure for group cohesion because this construct includes several dimensions that must be measured to get a complete picture the level of cohesion present (Bryman, 2004). According to Kipnes & Joyce (1999), the debate over whether cohesion is to be treated as unidimensional or multidimensional is prevalent in cohesion research because of the problem that cohesion can be measured at both the individual and group level. Indices also allow a researcher to get true measures of characteristics which people cannot readily or accurately communicate in a questionnaire or interview.

Further, much of the research on group cohesion thus far has been done with scales and indices, (Kipnes & Joyce, 1999). This lends itself to high congruent validity because I can borrow dimensions from previous research to enhance my own instrument. This is important because the debate over whether cohesion is unidimensional or multidimensional raises questions about instrument validity (Kipnes & Joyce, 1999).

There are limitations to the scope of data collected with indices. For this reason, I developed qualitative interview questions that expounded upon certain aspects of group identity that are difficult to identify in an index. These aspects include:

- Differentiating between the two (or three) comparison groups and which groups the participants are answering the questions for
- Judgments about homeless people in general or about specific types of homeless people
- Finding out how homeless people define a homeless person, and whether they are using this definition to base their responses on the index or if they are using a different definition

Qualitative interviewing allows data to emerge from interaction with the interviewee, with each interview giving new depth and meaning to the data (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The interviews allowed me to derive more distinct meanings from respondents concerning group cohesion. Qualitative interviews emphasize the social context of constructs (Warren, 2001), and as cohesion is both an individual and a social characteristic, an interview is an ideal method for gaining that contextual information which is missing from an index.

Development of group cohesion index

A number of scales and indices exist to measure group cohesion under different circumstances, but the research is focused mostly on the areas of work-group cohesion and neighborhood/community cohesion (Kipnes & Joyce, 1999). These scales and indices are not easily adaptable for work with marginalized groups. Most of these measures fail to discriminate between group cohesion and group identity. Upon close examination, many of these instruments prove to measure a combination of both constructs. Because I chose to measure both independently, it was important for both of the instruments to carefully discriminate between these two variables to get an accurate measure of the presence of either or both variables among homeless persons in Gainesville.

In developing this index, I used dimensions of group cohesion as indicators for the presence of group cohesion and developed statements based on these dimensions. The statements were rated by participants according to agreement and disagreement with the statement on a scale from strongly disagree to agree, with corresponding levels of one through five. After

completion, scores were given to each participant based on their ratings. This is known as the group cohesion score.

When developing an index it is important to consider construct validity, content validity, and concurrent validity (DeVellis, 2003). Construct validity ensures that a measure is valid across several methodologies, (Carmines & Zeller, 1979; Weber, 1985) which in turn eliminates the limitation of having only one method to use for data collection. While scales and indices are primary indicators of group cohesion in the literature, these scores are often used in conjunction with qualitative data to create a more complete understanding of the information gathered. Content validity ensures that the elements of an instrument are relevant and representative of the construct being tested (Carmines & Zeller, 1979; Haynes, Richard, & Cubany, 1995). For indices, content validity must be considered from the very beginning. A complete understanding of the construct being tested is necessary, or the instrument will surely be low on content validity (Carmines & Zeller, 1979; DeVellis, 2003; Sommer & Sommer, 2002). For this reason, I consulted the literature on group cohesion to ensure that I had a complete understanding of how this concept has been used. As is to be expected, the dimensions identified as relevant for my exploration of group cohesion are different from those identified by previous researchers. This difference is based largely on the differences between the groups researched in each study and whether the authors took the unidimensional or multidimensional approach. However, the reason that so many scales and indices exist for group cohesion is because they are used in different settings and address cohesion at different dimensional levels. For my instrument, I found it important to include both the group and individual perspective for cohesion to ensure construct validity. New social movements, by theoretical definition, are based on individual feelings of

connection to the group as well as a group dynamic that are an aggregate of the group members' commitment to the group.

I achieved concurrent validity by adapting and restructuring existing scales and indices for my particular group, the homeless population in Alachua County. The three measures I borrowed from the most were Buckner's neighborhood cohesion index (Brown & Brooks, 2006; Buckner, 1988), Seashore's group cohesiveness index (Miller & Salkind, 2002; Seashore, 1954), and the perceived cohesion scale (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990; Chin, Salisbury, Pearson, & Stollak, 1999). Table 3-2 lists the major dimensions of cohesion explored by these three instruments. Several dimensions identified by these indices and scales overlap or are too closely related to group identity. To ensure the greatest degree of content validity without significantly compromising concurrent validity, I had to combine some dimensions and eliminate others. Based on the current literature on group cohesion research, I have identified several key dimensions to group cohesion, which are listed below.

- Attraction to other group members
- Willingness to work together
- Commitment to completion of or development of tasks and goals
- Shared values and norms
- Presence of social support networks
- Sense of belonging and attachment
- Feelings of trust and solidarity among members
- Respect and tolerance among group members
- Collective action
- Sense of morale

Several measures must be taken to pre-test an index before it is used to collect research data. Outlined below are the testing steps which were taken to ensure validity, reliability, and precision of the index (Weems, 2001).

- Informal test using an expert panel. For this, I indentified about ten people who have worked with the homeless in Gainesville, asked them to look over the index, and make suggestions as to the relevance of the statements or any statements which they feel should be included.
- A pretest with a group of people to make sure that the instructions and statements are clear and straightforward.
- A pretest with a representative group to make sure it works as intended as well as to determine any midpoint bias and steps to be taken to ensure maximum validity of findings.

During Step 1, I eliminated the dimension “commitment to completion of tasks and goals” because it seemed to overlap with some of the other dimensions. I also added several statments to create a more inclusive instrument.

Pretesting of group cohesion index

A reliability test was performed on this index after 12 surveys were completed. The results of the test are shown in Table 3-3. The test produced a Cronbach's alpha score of .918. Items 3, 8, 15, 17, and 22 had the lowest item total correlations; all were below .43 and item 17 actually had a negative score. A second test was performed after removing the five low scoring items. This raised the Cronbach's alpha score to .934 and item total correlations for all items were above .46. After this test it was determined that the full 22-item index should be used for the duration of the study because the alpha change was not significant enough to warrant removal of any items.

A final reliability test was performed once the data collection was completed. The results of this test are shown in Table 3-4. The full index produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.900. A second reliability test was run after removing items 1, 15, and 22, which had the three lowest reliability scores. The Cronbach's alpha produced by this test was 0.907. Because the difference was not significant, the full 22-item index was used during data analysis.

Goal Orientation

An adaptation of the 2 x 2 framework of achievement goals for a work domain was used as the measure for goal orientation (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). The four factors accounted for within this framework are mastery-approach (MAP), performance approach (PAP), performance-avoidance (PAV), and mastery-avoidance (MAV). Definitions of each of these factors from Baranik et al. (2007, p.298-99) are below:

- **Performance approach:** “striving to demonstrate competence relative to others;”
- **Performance avoidance:** “striving to avoid incompetence relative to others” (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996);
- **Mastery approach:** focus on “developing his or her competence or mastering a task” (Ames, 1992; Elliot, 2005);
- **Mastery avoidance:** “focus on avoiding self-referential or task-referential incompetence” (Elliot, 2005)

Twelve items in this model were taken from Vandewalle's 2 x 2 framework that covered the first three factors (MAP, PAP, & PAV). Six additional items (adjusted from 11 originally) were generated by Elliot & McGregor to account for the master-avoidance approach, making the measure an 18-item scale. Reliability scores using Cronbach's alpha have all been reported at or above .78 (Baranik et al., 2007). Correlations for each of the four factors found that they were “related, yet distinct” (Baranik et al., 2007). Several confirmatory factor analyses have supported the validity of this framework (Baranik et al, 2007; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Finney, Pieper, & Barron, 2004).

A reliability test was performed on the goal orientation scale at the end of data analysis. The results of this test are shown in Table 3-5. The full 17-item scale produced a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.907. A second test was performed after removing low scoring items one and

fifteen. This test produced a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.923. Because the alpha score was not greatly improved, the full 17-item scale was used for data analysis.

Qualitative Interview

The fourth piece of instrumentation consists of an interview that lasted no longer than 30 minutes. There are limitations to the scope of data collected with indices. For this reason, I developed qualitative interview questions that expounded upon certain aspects of group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation that are difficult to identify in an index. Qualitative interviewing allows data to emerge from interaction with the interviewee, with each interview giving new depth and meaning to the data (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Through the interviews, I was able to derive more distinct meanings from respondents concerning group cohesion. Qualitative interviews emphasize the social context of constructs (Warren, 2001), and as the research variables are both individual and social characteristics, an interview is an ideal method for gaining the contextual information that is missing from an index.

The questions included in the interview addressed group cohesion, group identity, leadership, and goal orientation. The interview questions built on information garnered from the group cohesion index, and were therefore open-response format and in an attempt to get participants to be more explicit about their feelings concerning each of the dimensions of group cohesion. Several considerations must be made when developing appropriate interview questions, particularly when working with marginalized groups, including:

- Sensitivity of topics, particularly when it comes to reasons for homelessness and history as a homeless person (Lee, 1993; Tortu, Goldsamdt, & Hamid, 2002). Only one of the questions concerning group cohesion addressed this aspect, but it is still an important consideration, especially if I want to achieve precision and validity in responses.

- Silence and the need for probing questions to improve validity by making sure participants have enough time to frame their responses, and questions properly aimed at getting the right kinds of answers (Poland & Pederson, 1998). Knowing how to treat silence can greatly improve the validity of interview data by assuring that the respondent was given adequate opportunity to respond and formulate their response.
- Insider-outsider problems, especially since I clearly am not a homeless person (Ryen, 2001; Tortu et al., 2002). Informal socializing and dress are especially important for this group. Keeping a consistent rapport with participants increases both the validity and reliability of data.
- Social meaning and influence of interview location (Herzog, 2004). Interview location can greatly affect precision, reliability, and validity. If the participant is comfortable at the location, then they will be more likely to give detailed and accurate answers, increasing reliability and validity; precision is increased if each participant is comfortable in the chosen setting.

To build all of these considerations into a valid, reliable, and precise interview instrument, I used a semi-structured format, where most main questions and many probing questions are determined before the interview, but improvisation on the part of the interviewer to elicit more information from the respondent is allowed. Therefore, my interview schedule is structured with specific questions organized by broad topic, with spaces allowing for additional questions to be noted. Pretesting of interview instrumentation included the following steps:

- Cognitive testing
- Individual (myself)
- With colleagues
- Pretest with group representative of sample

During Step 1, I was advised to develop additional probing questions and to clarify some of the wording of statements. This was the only feedback received from participants in the interview pre-test. During all testing phases it is important to get feedback from participants as well as keep individual notes as to the types of answers and adequacy of answers for each stage. Each stage will result in the elimination and/or reconstruction of interview questions based on feedback and individual observations (Willis, 2005).

Data Collection

Data was collected over six weeks from February to March of 2008. The location of research conducted on fringe groups and sensitive topics plays a significant role in the quality of data and willingness to participate of prospective participants (Herzog, 2005). The sites for data collection were chosen based on the safety of the researcher and the ease of access to homeless persons. Data were collected primarily at the St. Francis house and at the downtown community plaza. The time of day of data collection varied to reach a more diverse group. Sites such as tent city and the other homeless camps were excluded from data collection because of the danger present in visiting those sites and the belief that most homeless persons in Gainesville eat at St. Francis house or spend time downtown even if they live in a camp.

Data Analysis

Two comparison groups were determined using demographic data from a brief questionnaire that included questions addressing length and tonicity of homelessness. The two groups which were expected are chronic homeless, those who have been homeless three or more years, and short-term homeless, those homeless less than three years. The emergence of two groups relied heavily on the make-up of the current homeless population in Gainesville. Recent surveys conducted in the city only differentiate between chronically homeless persons and those who are not considered chronically homeless (Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry & Gainesville Office on Homelessness, 2007).

Quantitative Data

T-tests for independent samples were run on the independent variables of group identity and group cohesion to determine the presence of statistically significant differences between the two comparison groups. I have chosen to perform a t-test on these data because the index will produce interval data that is comparable after scores are totaled. Because we will only have two

comparison groups, a t-test is ideal as it can only be used for two groups (Miller & Salkind, 2002). A Mann-Whitney u-test, a non-parametric alternative to the t-test, was performed on the outcome variable of goal orientation because the data were not normally distributed.

In addition to the means tests, a Spearman rank-order correlation and a multiple regression analysis were performed. The correlation was used to test the relationship between group identity and group cohesion. The regression analysis was used to determine the predictive relationship between group cohesion and group identity with the outcome variable of goal orientation.

Qualitative Data

An interview processing form was used outlining the key points I wish to obtain from each interview (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The processing form was not limited to keywords and phrases because silence is often an important part of the story in qualitative interviews (Poland & Pederson, 1998). Including nuances such as silence and other non-verbal commands increases the precision of the instrument by making sure that the entire message is received from the participant.

Limitations

The scales used to measure group identity and goal orientation were created and tested for use with more structured and smaller groups than the homeless population in Gainesville. Although both instruments were adapted and tested, it is possible that these measures do not fully reflect the scope and presence of group identity and goal orientation among homeless persons. Participants considered several items on the group identity scale irrelevant and bad items. One notable example is the item "I enjoy being a homeless person." The scale does not account for the negative impact of group membership on the lives of individuals, despite the fact that they may indeed display high levels of group identity otherwise. Being homeless is generally a negative experience, even for those persons who are homeless by choice. Therefore, despite the

fact that a homeless person may strongly identify as homeless and feel strong connections with other homeless persons, items related to enjoyment of group membership provide contrary data.

Intoxication, mental health, and education status may affect the quality of data collected. While I attempted to filter for extreme mental illness and intoxication, it is often difficult to determine a person's cognizance. Many participants reported mental health diagnoses and substance abuse histories, but none appeared too intoxicated or mentally unstable to accurately complete the instruments. Some participants were unable to understand the statements on the instruments without clarification. Only two participants were unable to read and required assistance from the researcher.

The smaller than expected sample size limits the generalizability of the data. The referral sampling method proved difficult to accomplish with this population. Many participants refused to provide referrals or were unable to tell me where I could find the people they were referring. Safety issues and transience among the population also limited the access to homeless persons because of the exclusion of certain sites and persons who live in Gainesville only part of the year. Because of these limitations, it is impossible to determine how deeply into the homeless population I was able to reach and how representative the study sample is, despite demographic similarities to the overall population.

The sample size for the qualitative portion was much smaller than anticipated. I would attribute respondent fatigue to many of the refusals, as many participants remarked that the quantitative portion was longer than expected. However, the 10 interviews that were conducted were thorough and candid. Participants were open to probing and were open about their backgrounds and opinions.

Table 3-1. Reliability test on group identity scale.

Index	Number of items	Deleted items	Valid cases	Mean	Cronbach's alpha	Standardized alpha
1	12	--	56	33.368	0.562	0.568
2	10	6, 8	56	25.341	0.625	0.627
3	9	6, 8, 12	57	27.151	0.598	0.599
4	8	5, 6, 8, 12	57	21.617	0.598	0.597

Table 3-2. Major dimensions of cohesion across three different cohesion measures.

Index/scale	Definition of cohesion	Dimensions identified
Buckner's neighborhood cohesion index (Buckner, 1988)	None specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If they feel they belong • If they have neighbors as friends • If they feel a “we-ness” with neighbors • If they agree with neighbors on what is important in life • If they feel loyal to neighbors • If they are willing to work collectively • If they are similar to neighbors • If they feel fellowship with neighbors • If they feel a sense of community • If they find the neighborhood attractive • If they want to move out of the neighborhood • If they plan to stay • If they visit in neighbors homes • If they seek advice from neighbors • If they borrow or exchange favors with neighbors • If they have neighbors to their home • If they regularly stop and talk to their neighbors
Seashore's group cohesiveness index (Seashore, 1954)	Attraction to the group or resistance to leaving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling part of the work group • Feelings about leaving the work group • How group members get along • How group members stick together • How group members help each other
Perceived cohesion scale (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990)	An individual's sense of belonging to a particular group and his or her feelings of morale associated with group membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of belonging • Sense of membership • Feeling “part of” the community • Enthusiasm about group • Feeling of happiness about group • Feeling that the group is “one of the best”

Table 3-3. Preliminary reliability test on group cohesion index.

Index	Number of items	Deleted items	Valid cases	Mean	Cronbach's alpha	Standardized alpha
1	22	--	10	61.960	0.919	0.914
2	17	3, 8, 15, 18, 22	10	48.660	0.934	0.935

Table 3-4. Final reliability test on group cohesion index.

Index	Number of items	Deleted items	Valid cases	Mean	Cronbach's alpha	Standardized Alpha
1	22	--	54	64.057	0.900	0.900
2	19	1, 15, 22	54	54.918	0.907	0.907

Table 3-5. Reliability test on goal orientation index.

Index	Number of items	Deleted items	Valid cases	Mean	Cronbach's alpha	Standardized alpha
1	17	--	45	59.578	0.907	0.914
2	15	1, 15	45	54.444	0.923	0.927

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

This chapter first provides demographic information and descriptive statistics on the sample. Next, the results of tests of central tendency are presented, followed by the results of multiple regression analysis. The qualitative analysis of interview data makes up the last portion of this chapter.

Sample

There were 63 respondents. Forty-five responses of one index and two scales were complete enough for quantitative analysis. The other 18 responses were not adequate because they were incomplete or improperly answered. Many of the respondents chose not to complete one or more of the three instruments because they did not see them as “relevant” or “good.” The same response pattern was present in individual items from each scale; many respondents thought items were “stupid” or did not understand them, making it impossible to calculate scores for the instrument as a whole for these respondents. The respondents were split into two comparison groups: short term homeless persons and chronically homeless persons. There were 18 chronically homeless persons and 36 short-term homeless persons.

Demographic Characteristics

Table 4-1 provides the descriptive statistics for 54 of the 63 respondents, including those who chose not to answer certain questions. Most respondents (68.5%) were between the ages of 40-59 years, while few (7.4%) were under 30 years or over 60. Males were overrepresented (66.7%) in the short-term homeless category, while the chronically homeless group was divided equally between males (50%) and females (50%). The age distribution for the two comparison groups was similar.

While the sample was not robust enough to be considered statistically generalizable, demographic characteristics closely mirror those of the entire homeless population in Gainesville as of 2007 point-in-time survey (Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry & Gainesville Office on Homelessness, 2007). About 33% of respondents were chronically homeless, while 28% of the population is chronically homeless. In my sample, 66.7% of respondents are male, while 33.3% are female; in the overall population, 70.5% are male and 29.5% are female.

Tests of Normal Distribution

Tests of normal distribution were conducted to determine if parametric or non-parametric measures should be used. A Wilkes-Shapiro test of normality was run on the outcome variable of goal orientation and found that the sample was not normally distributed. Table 4-2 shows the results of this test. A Wilkes-Shapiro test was also run on the predictor variables. The test determined that the distribution for these variables was approximately normal. The results of this test are shown in Table 4-3.

Because the goal orientation data for the sample are not normally distributed, a transformation had to be performed. To determine if a log or square root transformation should be performed, the summary statistics for the outcome variable were obtained. A log transformation is performed when the ratio between the mean and standard deviation for all treatment groups are the same. A square root transformation is performed when the ratio between the mean and the variance are the same for all treatment groups (Sheshkin, 2003). It was determined that a log transformation should be performed on the goal orientation scores because the ratios for log transformation were closest for both groups. These results are shown in Table 4-4.

Hypothesis 1

H1: There is a difference in goal orientation, group identity, and group cohesion levels between short-term and chronically homeless persons.

T-tests are used in cross-sectional studies where comparison groups are formed post-hoc to determine if differences in mean scores exist between the two groups. The outcome variable for this study was goal orientation. To use a t-test, several conditions must be met (Sheshkin, 2003). The first is an assumption of representativeness of the sample to the general population. A comparison of demographic data for respondents compared to homeless census data shows that this sample closely reflects the makeup of the general population of homeless persons. The samples are independent because none of the respondents are members of both comparison groups. Finally, the population should be normally distributed. The Wilkes-Shapiro test shown in Table 4-5 illustrates that the population was not normally distributed. Therefore, a non-parametric alternative to the t-test was run for goal orientation. A Mann-Whitney U-test was chosen. The p value was much greater than .05; therefore, the results were not significant.

Because the design of this research is cross-sectional, it is customary to run means tests on predictor variables to determine if the lack of significant difference on outcome variables between the two groups is based in a lack of difference in predictor variables. To examine this possibility, t-tests were performed on the predictor variables, group identity and group cohesion, to determine if differences existed. The conditions of representativeness of sample and independence of comparison groups were established before performing the t-test on the outcome variable, and are sufficient for these tests as well. No significant difference was seen for group cohesion, but group identity was closer to significance with a p value of .075. Results from the t-test are shown in Table 4-6.

Hypothesis 2

H2: There is a positive relationship between group identity and group cohesion.

A Spearman rank order correlation was performed to test the relationships between group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation in groups of two. The Spearman rank order test was chosen as a nonparametric alternative to a regression analysis due to the sampling method and the non-normal distribution of the goal orientation data. The test showed that the only significant relationship between variables exists between group identity and group cohesion. The outcomes of the correlation test are shown in Table 4-7.

Hypothesis 3

H3: There is a positive relationship between group cohesion, group identity and goal formation.

A multiple regression analysis was used to determine if the predictor variables of group identity and group cohesion predict the variance for the outcome variable of goal orientation. To run a multiple regression analysis, normal distribution of data and representativeness of sample are assumed (Sheshkin, 2003). Both of these conditions have been previously established. Because of the finding that goal orientation is not normally distributed, the regression was run against the log transformation of the data.

The results of the multiple regression analysis are shown in Table 4-8. The regression summary is shown in Table 4-9. The regression analysis indicated that group identity and group cohesion significantly contributed to the multiple correlation coefficient of $R^2 = .165$ at a significant level of $\alpha = .05$ ($p = .021$). The adjusted $R^2 = .126$ indicates that most of the variance among goal orientation scores was predicted by group cohesion and group identity. The analysis indicated that group cohesion was the significant predictor ($p = .006$), explaining nearly 45% of the variability with $\beta = .44$.

Qualitative Analysis

Sample

In addition to quantitative measures gathered from the index and scales, ten 30-45 minute interviews were completed. After completing the survey, participants were asked if they would be willing to participate in an interview. Many participants declined interviews for various reasons, including “being busy” and “having somewhere to go,” and general unwillingness to divulge more information. Ten total interviews were completed, with seven male participants and three female participants. The participants were from two sites, with six taking place at the downtown plaza and four at the St. Francis House shelter. Of those who chose to participate in the interview, most were forthcoming with information and no questions were refused, though some were insufficiently answered.

Coding and Grouping

Interviews were performed immediately after the participants completed the scales and index. Interviews were recorded and notes were taken using a thematic interview processing form. Qualitative data were analyzed using a thematic analysis. First, the interviews were coded with words or phrases pertaining to participants’ responses and intangibles such as demeanor, attitude, self-presentation, and eye contact. The codes were grouped into the following categories:

- Individuality
- Coping
- Survival
- Attitude toward homeless persons
- Fear and uncertainty
- Strife
- Hard work, trying
- Mutual respect (between homeless persons)
- Strong sense of self
- Outsider mistrust

- Insider mistrust
- Community leadership
- Institutional perceptions
- Traumatic personal experiences
- Substance abuse (alcohol and/or drugs)
- Guilt/shame
- Pride
- Self-motivation
- Empathy
- Acceptance of homelessness
- Homeless friends
- Family connection
- Outlook and perception of the future
- Attitude

Categories were formed by grouping the words, phrases, and expressions used by the participants during interviews. These categories were grouped into subthemes representing aspects of the research variables. Three of the themes, group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation, are directly related to variables in the proposed social movement model. The theme of leadership was explored to determine if leadership plays a role in homeless group dynamics, despite it not being part of the model. Action capacity, as presented in the theoretical model, was not examined at this study is intended to explore the presence of the precursors to action capacity.

Respondents were eager to divulge information related to their experience as a homeless person and the circumstances of their homelessness. Many of the topics addressed in these discourses did not relate well to the theoretical themes, which led to the development of the emergent theme of personal situation. The themes are shown in Table 4-10 with corresponding subthemes.

Table 4-1. Gender and age of homeless persons, Gainesville, Fl, in 2008.

	Gender		Age				
	Male	Female	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Short term homeless	18	9	2	5	13	14	2
Chronically homeless	9	9	0	7	5	5	1
Total	36	18	2	12	18	19	3

Table 4-2. Wilkes-Shapiro test of normal distribution for the outcome variable of goal orientation among homeless persons in Gainesville, Florida, in 2008.

Variable	N	W	P
Goal mean	51	0.875	0.000

Table 4-3. Wilkes-Shapiro test of normal distribution for the predictor variables group cohesion and group identity for homeless persons in Gainesville, Fl, in 2008.

Variable	N	W	P
Group identity	58	0.960	0.056
Group cohesion	55	0.961	0.072

Table 4-4. Summary statistics for goal orientation among homeless persons in Gainesville, Fl, in 2008.

Group	N	Mean	Variance	Std. dev.	$\sqrt{\text{Trans}}$	Log trans
Short term homeless	32	3.53	0.977	0.988	3.59	3.55
Chronic Homeless	16	3.40	0.875	0.936	3.90	3.60

$\sqrt{\text{Transformation (Mean/variance) = } \sqrt{x}}$. Log transformation (Mean/Standard Deviation)= $\log(x)$. x = goal orientation score.

Table 4-5. Mann Whitney U 2-sample test to compare goal orientation scores between short term and chronically homeless persons in Gainesville, Fl, in 2008.

Goal orientation score	
U	206.0
Z	0.943
p-level	0.346
Z adjusted	0.944
p-level	0.344
2*1 sided p	0.355

Table 4-6. T-tests for predictor variables group identity and group cohesion for homeless persons in Gainesville, FL, in 2008.

Variable	Length of homelessness	Mean	N	SD	F-ratio	t-value	P
Group cohesion	Short term	2.933	35	.779	1.005	1.008	.318
	Chronic	2.701	17	.781			
Group identity	Short term	2.553	36	.721	1.310	-1.814	.075
	Chronic	2.916	18	.630			

Table 4-7. Spearman rank order correlations for group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation among homeless persons in Gainesville, FL, in 2008.

Variable	Identity mean	Cohesion mean	Goal mean
Identity mean	1.00	.338*	-.154
Cohesion mean	.338*	1.00	.226
Log goal mean	-.154	.226	1.00

Pairwise deleted. *Marked correlations significant at $p < .05$.

Table 4-8. Multiple regression results. The relationship between group identity and group cohesion on goal orientation for homeless persons in Gainesville, FL, in 2008

R	R squared	Adjusted R	Standard error of estimate	P-value
.406	.165	.126	.117	.021

Predictor variables: group identity and group cohesion.

Table 4-9. Regression summary for the relationship between group identity and group cohesion on goal orientation among homeless persons in Gainesville, FL, in 2008.

Variable	Beta	Standard error of beta	B adjusted	Standard error of B adj.	T	p-value
Constant			0.399	0.079	5.072	0.000
Group cohesion	0.442	0.153	0.068	0.024	2.882	0.006
Group identity	-0.124	0.153	-0.022	0.028	-0.808	0.423

Dependent variable: goal orientation.

Table 4-10. Categories organized by themes from interviews with homeless persons in Gainesville, FL, in 2008.

Theme	Subtheme
Group identity	Individuality
	Group concept
	Acceptance of homelessness
Group cohesion	Interactions with homeless persons
	Personal beliefs
	Outsider and insider mistrust
Goal orientation	Outlook
	Goals
	Self-efficacy
Leadership	Identification of leaders
	Definitions of leadership
Personal situation	Homeless experience
	Coping
	Support systems

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Research Question and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to determine if the precursors to social movement action were present among homeless persons in Gainesville, Florida as illustrated on a proposed model for collective action based on new social movement theory. The data suggest the following: goal orientation, group identity, and group cohesion levels among homeless persons do not differ between chronically homeless and short term homeless persons; group identity and group cohesion are positive related to each other; and group cohesion is predictive of goal orientation, while group identity is not.

Hypothesis 1

H1: There is a difference in goal orientation, group identity, and group cohesion levels between short-term and chronically homeless persons.

No significant differences between comparison groups were found, suggesting that the distribution of scores on group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation among homeless persons in Gainesville are about the same regardless of how long a person has been homeless. This is contrary to my proposed hypothesis. It was believed that the longer a person has been homeless, the more time they have had to get to know other homeless persons and the system through shelters, soup kitchens, and camps. The data suggest that despite the possibility of increased exposure to other homeless persons and homeless institutions, the duration of homelessness does not negatively or positively impact the presence of group identity, group cohesion, or goal orientation.

Group identity was the closest variable to significance after statistical analysis with a p-value of .075 on the t-test. The mean was higher for chronically homeless individuals at 2.916 in

comparison to the mean for short-term homeless at 2.553. While not statistically significant, the direction of difference on group cohesion scores was the opposite of the expected pattern with short-term homeless reporting higher scores (2.993) than the chronically homeless (2.701). While contrary to the original hypothesis, this supports the theoretical belief that group cohesion and group identity are concepts that measure different attitudes.

This lack of a difference in group dynamics based on length of homelessness indicates that homeless persons do not become more immersed with other homeless persons despite their increased exposure to the group. This is probably related to the high sense of individual responsibility and self-dependence indicated in the interviews. Although those participants who had been homeless longer knew more homeless persons than those who had not been homeless longer than three years, every interviewee indicated that the people they spent the most time with were themselves. This strong individuality was echoed when participants were asked about leadership. Most responded that they were their own leaders. Self-leadership lends itself to individuality, with some participants even seeming isolative in their self-dependence. None of the participants were able to identify any persons within the homeless community as leaders to others. Isolation and self-dependence limit the development of group connections irrelevant of the length of time exposed to the group.

Despite this strong sense of individuality, participants displayed high levels of mutual respect and exchange networks within the community, indicating that group cohesion was present among participants. Those interviewees who had been homeless less than three years seemed more optimistic about the future, but were equally as respecting and understanding of homeless persons as those who had been homeless over three years. The goals expressed by the interviewees were similar despite length of homelessness. The majority of stated goals were

related to becoming housed and seeking or maintaining employment. This similarity in perceptions of homeless persons and goals supports the quantitative findings.

Hypothesis 2

H2: There is a positive relationship between group identity and group cohesion.

The Spearman rank order correlation performed during data analysis supports this hypothesis in suggesting that group identity and group cohesion are related to each other. No causative relationship can be inferred from this. It is possible that group cohesion and group identity are mutually fostered by an unknown precursor. However, this finding supports the theoretical proposition that these two concepts are related and should be examined together to acquire a complete picture of group dynamics.

The relationship between group identity and group cohesion may be related to similarity between these two concepts. There is no research to date on social movements or collective action where group identity and group cohesion have been measured in the same study. As explained in the literature review, group cohesion has been conspicuously absent from social movement literature. Because of this, it is impossible to explain the reason for the relationship between the two variables.

Because the directionality of the relationship between group cohesion and group identity cannot be determined, it is possible that strong group identity in either direction, positive or negative, can foster high group cohesion. This is likely the case with homeless persons and other groups where negative identities are forged, often from forced identities. Examples of groups with negative identity who have formed viable social movements include African-Americans and the poor (Cattell, 2001). Often the negative identity is embraced and viewed as positive among group members. Other times, the negative identity is adamantly rejected, and the common struggle for the group becomes no longer being identified as a group member (Reicher, 2004).

The latter may be more likely for homeless persons, but in either case, the negative group identity can lead to high group cohesion.

The interview questions related to group identity and group cohesion elicited different responses from participants. On questions related to group identity, participants conveyed that while they were homeless, they themselves were not like other homeless persons. When probed, participants indicated strong respect for other homeless persons and were eager to point out that very few of them are bad people; they usually just “had some bad luck.”

Hypothesis 3

H3: There is a positive relationship between group cohesion, group identity and goal formation.

The regression analysis showed that group cohesion was strongly predictive of goal orientation, but group identity was not predictive. Contrary to the original hypothesis, group identity and group cohesion are not equally predictive. This indicates that the proposed model may not be accurate in depicting the influence of group cohesion and group identity on goal orientation.

It is possible that goal orientation and goal formation are closely tied to elements of group cohesion explored in the qualitative interviews, such as mutual respect and mistrust. Group cohesion is a sense of mutual group membership, while group identity is a personal characterization of group membership. Whether or not a person identifies as part of the homeless group is irrelevant to goal formation; all interviewees articulated similar goals despite their perception of group membership. But, participants seemed to find hope in the fact that homeless persons were all suffering and all needed to have certain needs met. Therefore, it is possible that group cohesion is more closely related to goal orientation because homeless persons develop goals based on mutual needs.

Additionally, the goals expressed were based largely on mutually accepted reasons for homelessness. The most apparent of these is housing. Interviewees repeatedly expressed opinions that the best way to combat homelessness is to increase the availability of affordable housing; participants also repeatedly indicated obtaining housing as their primary goal. While obtaining housing can be perceived as having several steps, such as saving money and obtaining and maintaining employment, participants expressed entitlement to being housed. This fixation on housing fosters camaraderie among homeless persons by creating similar goals. This indicates that the relationship between group cohesion and goal orientation is complex, but based on mutual explanations and solutions for homelessness.

The above finding may be influenced by the effectiveness of the instrumentation measuring group identity and group cohesion. The scale used to measure group identity was adapted from a well-tested scale on group identity that had not been used on fringe populations; the index used to measure group cohesion was developed specifically for this study by the researcher. The group cohesion scale may have been more sensitive to the presence of group cohesion than the group identity scale was. However, as indicated in the methods section, both instruments were pre-tested and appeared to perform well with the study sample.

Interview Data

Group Identity

It was expected that homeless persons would exhibit a strong sense of group identity and personal connection to being homeless. The interview findings suggest a paradoxical and dichotomous perception of homeless persons among homeless persons. It seems that homeless people can easily characterize other homeless persons and describe them as a group, but have a hard time incorporating themselves into the group, which would lead to low group identity. Most participants were quick to assert that while they were homeless, they did not identify with other

homeless persons in terms of values and life perspectives. The three major subthemes that arose in discussions on group identity were a strong sense of individuality, an overall positive group concept and sense of mutual respect among homeless persons, and an unwillingness to accept one's own identity as homeless.

Individuality

There was a strong sense of individuality and self-reliance among respondents. Participants believed that they could help themselves, but not necessarily that homeless people could do so as a group. There was a strong sense of detachment from other homeless persons despite the fact that all participants reported having homeless friends. All participants reported spending most of their time alone, "with myself", as they must keep to themselves to protect themselves and any personal belongings.

Group concept

A positive group image emerged from initial negativity towards other homeless persons. When describing homeless persons, participants used words like "resilient," "tough," and "down on their luck." Many repeatedly assured me that "homeless people are not bad people, they just got into a bad situation."

Peter: "All of them try. I know that. A couple of them have jobs, they just don't make enough money for ends to meet, you know."

Jake: "A lot of us are good, we're just homeless. We're like everybody else. Some of us don't have work. We're trying to get work."

Joe: "[Homeless people are] Strong. They have to be strong or else they won't survive long out here."

They were quick to point out the downfalls of the system, which tend to keep homeless people where they are because of lack of resources and political priorities being with "condos" and other high-profit projects.

Feelings towards other homeless persons were mixed, with many respondents reporting both a negative perception and positive perception, dependent upon the situation. It seems that respondents tend to view most homeless people as “outsiders,” but their own close group of homeless friends as the “good ones.” Respondents maintained that many of the homeless persons they have met are good people.

Ralph: “They like, help you out a lot. So, I don’t have nothing bad to say.”

This was contradicted by the remarks of two individuals, who reported that their group was large, consisting of about 100 homeless persons who mainly spend their days in the downtown plaza. These two individuals, Ada and Dusty, expressed strong feelings of empathy and understanding towards other persons, as well as being adamant about the fact that others will help you out.

Ada: “Everybody knows Ada. In our group I’d say there are about 100.”

When probed about what members of this group were like, Ada and Dusty mentioned they were referring mainly to the homeless persons who spend most of the time at the downtown plaza.

Acceptance of homelessness

About half of respondents seemed hesitant to accept their homelessness, with only one respondent completely in denial despite being a resident at the St. Francis House. This denial took various forms for other participants, some stated they are “not like most homeless people,” or that they “don’t really hang out with other homeless people.”

The language used when talking about homeless persons was a significant indicator of identity. Most participants did not use “we” when talking about homeless persons, rather “them” when referring to homeless people (in response to questions like “How would you describe a

homeless person?") and "I" when describing their own situation. A lack identification as a group member indicates low levels of group identity within an identified group.

Group Cohesion

It was expected that homeless persons would exhibit low group cohesion based on their transient nature. While the interview findings suggest that there is consciousness among homeless persons of this transience, they still tend to believe that homeless people will help each other. Similar dichotomies were present in the group cohesion data as were present in the group identity findings discussed previously. The major subthemes that emerged in this part of the interview were overall positive interactions with other homeless persons, including mutual respect and friendships, and, the contradictory presence of mistrust among homeless persons towards other homeless persons and towards outsiders.

Interactions with homeless persons

A sense of mutual respect was observed among homeless persons in the shelter and on the downtown plaza. Homeless persons seemed to know each other by name or "alias" and know each other's vices and backgrounds. Several participants gave me more extensive background on other participants while describing what homeless people are like. The stories ranged from people who tried and succeeded to people who were given chances repeatedly but failed.

Ada: "Like Jan over there. She got a house but lost it because all she wanted to do was party."

They also know who to ask for things. With a sort of barter system in place for things they cannot get from shelters such as drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. Food trade was also present but not as prevalent because of the many shelters in Gainesville serving meals daily.

Ada: "You know some people will always have cigarettes, or some will always have some alcohol, or that some people get food stamps so they can help you get food."

But, keeping with their sense of pride, most homeless people will not accept “freebies” from each other, with reciprocity a strong norm present. Homeless people will use any resources of their own to barter with others, or simply to help others.

Ada: “If I have something, everyone else has something. We try to help each other out.”

All participants indicated that they had formed friendships with other homeless persons. For most, it was a small number “two or three,” or a significant other that they considered to be true “friends.”

Ralph: “Yeah I come out to the park with them. Yeah (I made friends).”

Jenny: “The only person I really spend any time with other than myself is Bobby right there, we’ve been together a long time.”

Max: “Its just me and her (referring to his girlfriend). We’re all we’ve got but it definitely helps. It gets hard out here.”

Joe: “I’m sure homeless people have friends...I think they bond, they have to bond, sure. I’ve seen some really great things, people together just enjoying themselves, but then they have to go right back to their camps.”

Mistrust

Despite the strong sense of mutual respect among homeless persons, a degree of mistrust was present towards homeless persons, or insiders, and outsiders. The most mistrust between homeless persons was present among those participants who were living in “tent city.” Many described violence and drug abuse, and reported it was a very frightening way to live.

Joe: “You always have to watch your back.”

Louise: “I started drinking again because I’m scared. Yeah I talk to people and I have friends, but it’s scary. A lot of people want to take advantage of you. Its especially dangerous out here for a woman.”

Outsider mistrust was present and was conveyed by most respondents as a defense mechanism.

Joe: “Homeless people don’t trust anybody, basically.”

Despite this, most homeless persons approached and asked to participate in the study were friendly even when declining to participate in the interviews. Outsider mistrust was also portrayed in a disdain for the system. Two participants stated that they had worked with homeless advocacy groups in the past. In both instances, the participants had worked with groups who were attempting to create shelter spaces for homeless persons, one exclusively for women in Gainesville, and one for all homeless persons in Orlando.

Joe: “I used to know some people in Orlando who tried to get the uh, naval base turned into a homeless center and the government just laughed at us. They said they’d research our proposals. They had medical facilities there, housing, schoolrooms, textbooks...shut it down and built new houses on it. [...] if you have a bad habit, say you smoke a cigarette, five years from now you’ll probably be smoking a pack a day. If you’re homeless, and somebody doesn’t, at first, try to put you in the right direction, or help you, you’re gonna stay homeless.”

Goal Orientation

All of the participants were able to articulate specific goals about their future, but the goals described were overwhelmingly related to ending their homelessness. This is expected because the most pervasive facets of their lives while homeless are the struggles of survival while homeless, in addition to making attempts to become housed and self-sufficient. The attitudes and beliefs expressed by participants lend themselves to goal development. These included positive outlook on the future, self-efficacy, motivation, frustration at their current life situation, and faith. The subthemes that were present in the narrative on goal orientation and development are centered on outlook, including the fear and uncertainty related to living on the streets, goal setting, and self-efficacy, which includes aspects of motivation.

Outlook

Respondents expressed mixed feelings regarding their futures. While many of them were hopeful and positive when asked directly about their goals and perspective, tones of fear and uncertainty were pervasive in the discourse. Participants repeatedly mentioned that being

homeless is “scary” and “hard.” Despite this, their outlooks quickly turned positive when discussing their goals and hopes for the future.

Goals

Respondents were asked to discuss personal short-term and long-term goals. All respondents listed goals pertaining to ending their homelessness. The most common goals were related to obtaining housing, obtaining or maintaining employment, and “staying positive.” When probed to differentiate between short-term and long-term goals, participants stated that their goals were the same, because not being homeless anymore was both a short-term hope and a long-term maintenance.

Joe: “I don’t plan on being homeless for too long. When I do something I put a full effort into it, you know. When I go to work, I put a full effort in trying to go to work. I try to put full effort in a conversation.”

Joe: “I’m more concerned about my health right now than anything else. And looking for basic housing, which I’ll find.”

Peter: “To do better. I’ve got a part time job now[...] well, I got put on child support so trying to make those payments.”

The tone of outward hopefulness was maintained in the discussions of goals. Respondents discussed their personal strengths and seemed like they were, at times, trying to convince themselves that their goals were achievable.

Self-efficacy & motivation

A strong sense of self-dependence and individuality was present among interviewees. When discussing the circumstances of their becoming homeless and when talking about other homeless persons, they were adamant that homeless people are not bad people, but are victims of circumstance and “bad luck.” Despite the setbacks and often traumatic experiences relayed by interviewees, they were all certain that they could get themselves out of the situation, with or without outside help.

Joe: “[the solution is] doing it for yourself. Everybody is different. I guess work, too, it gives you self-esteem.”

This attitude persisted when prompted to consider forces out of their control that may contribute to their homelessness, particularly lack of jobs and affordable housing. Initially, respondents expressed frustration at the apparent decline in opportunities and perceived lack of cooperation and understanding from governments and institutions, but often turned this frustration around by stating they just have to keep trying. Faith was also mentioned as a personal motivator.

Leadership

Identification of leaders

Participants were unable to identify specific leaders within the homeless community. There was an overall attitude that homeless persons did not have time to act as leaders, because they needed to fend for themselves. One participant stated he did not know of any leaders because he does not get personal with other homeless persons. When prompted further, none of the participants were able to identify leaders among the homeless population in Gainesville, but often mentioned leaders within the community and continued to discuss what are important characteristics in leaders.

When asked to identify whom they viewed as leaders, eight of the nine participants identified themselves.

Ralph: “Myself. I don’t go to nobody else. I don’t hang out with but 2 or 3 of those homeless guys, and that’s about it.”

When asked to identify leaders in the Gainesville community in relation to homeless advocacy or services, Arupa Freeman, founder and operator of the HomeVan, was repeatedly identified as a key figure. Participants also mentioned organizations and agencies as leaders because “they help you out a lot.” The agencies mentioned most often were St. Francis House,

Fire of God Ministries, and the Salvation Army, although participant also expressed dissatisfaction with the way the Salvation Army is run. Disdain towards the city government, including the housing authority, and the police were repeatedly expressed. Four participants reported having been arrested for trespassing or public intoxication within the past year. These participants were frustrated with the way the city government was dealing with homeless persons and stated that they have no choice but to loiter as they have nowhere to stay.

Louise: “I ain’t got nowhere to sleep, so I have to trespass. I ain’t got nowhere to drink, so I have to drink in public.”

Definitions of leadership

When prompted to define what makes a person a leader, participants consistently mentioned being trustworthy and reliable as essential characteristics for leadership. In addition, participants asserted that leadership is often an element of personality, and that a willingness to help, listen, and work with others is essential.

Joe: “Anybody who isn’t president...you mean a leader in the homeless community? What you need is honesty. You get somebody you can trust, that’s leader material. Especially when you’re on the street.”

Louise: “Personality is really important.”

Ada: “A leader has to know people, and has to want to work with people and help them.”

Personal Experience

Participants were eager to talk about their experiences as homeless persons. In doing so, personal characteristics and values were relayed. A strong sense of disdain and lack of belief in the political system emerged from this discourse, which may contribute to the strong sense of self and personal responsibility discussed previously in the section on group identity.

Additionally, the circumstances surrounding their homelessness, coping methods, and support systems were discussed.

Homeless experience

The first question in the interview, “How would you describe your experience as a homeless person” elicited various negative comments.

Ada: “It sucks.”

Peter: “Its scary, being homeless. Its scary living from day to day and wondering where you’re gonna lay your head at. Wondering where your next meal is gonna be coming from. That’s scary. You’re unemployed, ain’t got a job, can’t get a job.”

Joe: “Awful. Unstable. And it’s the worst thing you could be.”

Reasons mentioned by participants for becoming homeless varied from inability to find work, divorce, domestic abuse, substance abuse, poor physical and/or mental health, and having been released from prison. In most cases, more than one factor contributed to an individual’s becoming homeless.

Peter: “When I got out of prison, I wasn’t trying to be homeless. Its just something that came up.”

Coping

Interviewees persistently mentioned coping methods. Many mentioned the allure of drugs and alcohol as coping mechanisms when living on the street. The ease of access and influence of other homeless persons contributes to dependence.

Jenny: “There’s lots of drugs around. Hard drugs, and alcohol. Especially if you go to the tent cities, its everywhere.”

Peter: “Yeah they be doing drugs all over the place. Even right here [outside the St. Francis House] at night. If you come out here late at night you see all kinds of crack pipes and stuff around.”

One participant mentioned that she had been sober for 9 years prior to becoming homeless. As soon as she was on the street again, she started drinking to deal with the fear and uncertainty.

Smoking cigarettes is also pervasive in the homeless community. Four interviewees were smoking during interviews, and four others were smoking either before or after the interviews. When prompted about smoking, one interviewee mentioned it was “just a way to pass the time.”

Support systems

When asked about family, all participants stated that they had no connections with family. Two participants explicitly stated that they are considered “black sheep” in their families and are not welcome. One participant lost his wife and daughter in a car accident several years earlier, which drove him to become an alcoholic and suffer a psychiatric decompensation.

Louise: “I don’t talk to any family. I got a son, but he says I’m worthless and a failure so I don’t need anything from him. The rest of my family is the same way. I’m the black sheep.”

Ada: “We’re all black sheep here. That’s probably the reason our families don’t talk to us no more.”

Many participants stated that partners and husbands or wives who were also homeless were the only people they were close to. As previously mentioned in the discussion on friendships with homeless persons, participants did not mention any need to seek to support from other homeless persons, but did recognize that they could seek help if they wanted to. Participants reported learning about services and programs through other homeless persons, but the interactions were usually limited to sharing information about meeting personal needs and superficial chat. The most commonly reported support was faith. Many participants maintained hope that God would bring them out of their situation.

A New Model

As mentioned in the literature review, no model exists to predict the course of social movement emergence. Several concepts, most notably group identity and goal formation, have been discussed as being present in social movements, but the effect of these concepts on social movements, and their place over the course of action has not been examined. In the literature

review, I proposed a model (Figure 2-1) for new social movements based on the literature in both sociology and social psychology relating to group dynamics and collective action.

This study was limited to examining the presence of three precursors to action, group identity, group cohesion, and goal orientation in a social group that may or may not be able to act collectively. Because the group being studied has not engaged in any mode of protest to date, it is impossible to measure action, however, action capacity is defined as the ability to act based on the presence of the three related variables. Based on the findings of this study, the above model may not be accurate in predicting goal orientation. The regression analysis suggests that group cohesion is the predictor of goal orientation for the study sample. The correlation suggests that group identity and group cohesion are related. This suggests that a model where group cohesion alone precedes goal orientation would be more accurate. Although the causative relationship between group identity and group cohesion cannot be discerned based on the findings in this study, it can be inferred that group identity would precede group cohesion if the final step before action were goal orientation. This differs from the originally proposed model in that group identity and group cohesion do not equally determine the presence of goal orientation and formation. The revised model is shown in Figure 5-1.

Limitations

Research on fringe groups is notably difficult and this study was no exception. The referral sampling method did not carry out as expected. Many of the study participants did not refer other homeless persons because they did not know how to locate these individuals. They were also hesitant because they did not want those that they were referring to feel as though they had been called out for their homelessness. Because of this, it is impossible to determine how many tiers of referrals were achieved. The findings of this study are therefore not generalizable to the overall homeless population or to homeless persons in general.

Only nine persons of 63 total in the sample agreed to the qualitative interview. This is a small number compared to the overall study group and a very small fraction of the 952 totally homeless persons in Alachua County. The information gathered from the interviews cannot be generalized to the study sample, the general population of homeless persons in Gainesville, or to homeless persons in general.

Additionally, the locations of data collection limited the representativeness of the sample. Homeless persons spend their time in various locations throughout Alachua County. Data were collected primarily at the St. Francis House shelter and soup kitchen and at the Downtown Community Plaza during daylight hours and during three food handouts arranged by the HomeVan. As previously explained, these sites were chosen primarily for safety of the researcher and because these were the most accessible sites. Despite the above sampling limitations, the demographic makeup of the quantitative sample was closely reflective of the demographic makeup of all homeless persons in Gainesville.

Negative stigmas associated with being a homeless person may have rendered some items for measuring group identity useless. The most notable example from data collection is the item “I am glad to be a homeless person” from the group identity scale. The issue here stems not from negative attitudes towards being a group member, but negative attitudes towards being homeless, disenfranchised, stigmatized persons with limited resources. Pre-testing of the instruments did not reveal this issue.

This negative stigma also limited the willingness of participation in either the quantitative or qualitative portion of the study. This was more present in the qualitative portion, as only nine of 63 persons asked to participate agreed to do so. The social sensitivity of the factors often leading to homelessness such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental illness, make it

difficult for people to feel comfortable discussing their situation, even if the study does not involve those issues.

Additionally, the quality of data are difficult to determine due to the above-mentioned stigma and negative social implications of homelessness. While the concepts being studied were not closely related to the circumstances of homelessness, homeless persons develop negative attitudes towards outsiders because of the perception that nothing is being done to help. I had many people decline to participate by commenting on the vast number of studies having been performed and a belief that nothing has come of them.

The homeless population in Gainesville has not participated in a social movement as of the data collection for this study. Because of this, it was impossible to measure action capacity based on action. This limits the inferential power of the proposed model because I was unable to measure action capacity as an outcome variable. Goal orientation was chosen as the outcome, as in the model it is the final step before action capacity is achieved. This model has never been tested and is based solely on the conceptual frameworks laid out by previous scholars on new social movements. Because it has never been tested, there is a possibility that goal orientation is not the final step before action capacity can be achieved.

Implications for Research

The findings of this study suggest several implications for research on social movements:

- Group cohesion is related to the presence of group identity, and thus should be examined as a variable in social movements.
- The causal relationship between group identity and group cohesion is unknown and should be further investigated.
- Quantitative instrumentation on social movement variables needs to be further developed.

The importance of group cohesion in social movement dynamics needs to be further explored. Group cohesion has been studied for decades in the social psychology research for

groups as small as work groups and as large as communities. Whether it has been excluded from social movement research because it is not an entirely sociological concept is unclear, but the importance of its presence in social groups is undeniable. Exploratory studies are necessary to verify the presence of group cohesion in established social movement groups. Comparisons of group cohesion levels for social movement groups and non-social movement groups should be carried out in addition to qualitative examinations of movement participants' perceptions of cohesiveness among groups.

This study suggests that group cohesion is closely tied to group identity. The nature of this relationship needs to be determined to better understand how group dynamics influence collective action. At this time it is difficult to propose an effective model for social movements. New social movement literature is heavily focused on the role of identity in movement activities; now that it has been suggested that group cohesion is closely related to group identity, it is necessary to examine this relationship, as it may play an equal role establishing a movement. The causal direction of this relationship must be established quantitatively to develop a viable model. Qualitative explorations focused on group cohesion of new social movements with strong identity components will resolve whether group cohesion plays an equal role in movement emergence as group identity, or if it's merely a byproduct.

Research on new social movements tends to be highly qualitative. However, the use of quantitative and qualitative measures increases the validity of findings, and therefore the theoretical implications. Although the role of identity has been thoroughly researched from a new social movement perspective, no viable quantitative instruments are available from the literature. The instruments used in this study were taken from social psychology research. Researchers must develop and test valid and reliable instruments for measuring the presence of

social movement components. Additionally, the instrumentation available should be made appropriate for groups where membership may be socially shameful. While being homeless does not necessarily mean that a person is part of a homeless movement or shares common identity with other homeless persons, most participants in this study indicated high levels of group identity despite not being “happy to be a homeless person.”

In addition to the above implications for social movement research, the findings of this study can be used to improve the methods used for research on fringe groups. Despite sampling difficulties, consultation with experts and homeless persons allowed me to decide which sites would get the most representative sampling of homeless persons to ask to participate. I was able to achieve a representative sample by accessing only two sites where homeless people congregate in all of Gainesville. Use of this kind of insider knowledge allows researchers to make the best of conducting studies on hard to reach persons by allowing representativeness without necessarily achieving generalizability.

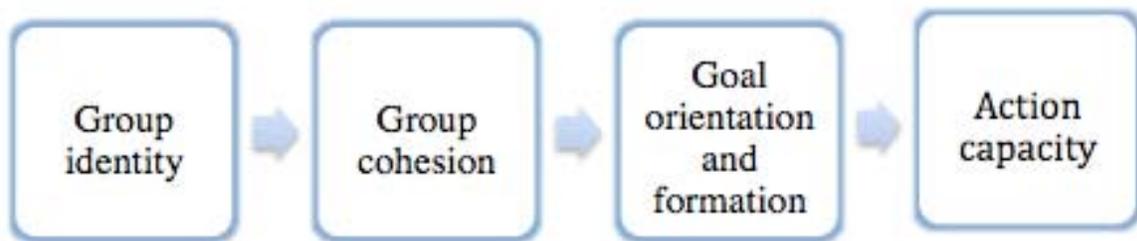


Figure 5-1. Revised model for new social movements.

APPENDIX A
ITEMS IN GROUP IDENTITY SCALE

- I have a lot in common with other homeless people.
- I feel strong ties to other homeless people.
- I find it difficult to form a bond with other homeless people.*
- I don't feel a sense of being "connected" with other homeless people. *
- I often think about the fact that I am a homeless person.
- Being a homeless person is not related to how I feel about myself.*
- Being a homeless person is an important part of my self-image.
- The fact that I am a homeless person does not really cross my mind. *
- I'm glad to be a homeless person.
- I often regret that I am a homeless person. *
- I don't feel good about being a homeless person. *
- I feel good when I think about myself being a homeless person.

* Reverse scored items

APPENDIX B
ITEMS IN GROUP COHESION INDEX

- I hang out with other homeless people.
- I travel with other homeless people.
- Most of my daily interaction is with homeless people.
- Homeless people work together.
- I like hanging out with other homeless people.
- I enjoy working together with other homeless people.
- Homeless people help each other.
- When I need help, I turn to other homeless people.
- Homeless people share common beliefs.
- I learn about services through other homeless people.
- I seek comfort from homeless people.
- Homeless people feel that they can make a difference by working together.
- All of my homeless friends have been here a long time.
- Most of my friends are homeless people.
- When I get sick, I turn to other homeless people for help.
- I eat with other homeless people.
- I sleep in the same place as other homeless people.
- When I seek help, I usually do so with other homeless people.
- I seek advice from other homeless people.
- When homeless people have a plan, they stick to it.
- Homeless people believe that they can improve their own situation.
- Homeless people believe that policymakers are not on their side.

APPENDIX C
ITEMS IN GOAL ORIENTATION SCALE

- I just try to avoid being unskilled at doing the things I need to do to survive.
- When I am doing something, I find myself thinking a lot about not messing up.
- When I am doing something, I focus on not doing worse than I have done in the past.
- I just hope I am able to maintain enough skills to survive.
- I am just trying to avoid performing the things I need to do poorly.
- I am willing to choose a challenging task that I can learn a lot from.
- For me, development of my personal ability is important enough to take risks.
- I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge.
- I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks where I'll learn new skills.
- I like to show that I can perform better than others.
- I prefer to work on tasks that allow me to prove my ability to others.
- I try to figure out what it takes to prove my ability to others.
- I enjoy it when others are aware of how well I am doing.
- I would avoid taking on a new task if there were a chance that I would appear very unskilled to others.
- Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning something new.
- I prefer to avoid certain situations where I might perform poorly.
- I'm concerned about taking on a task if others could tell that I had low ability.

APPENDIX D INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Homeless Experience

- How would you describe your experience as a homeless person?
- Thoughts about Homeless People
- How would define a homeless person?
- Follow up probe: Some people make distinctions between different types of homeless people, ie: long-term, short-term, or one-time. Do you think this is true that differences between these groups actually exist?
- Follow up to the follow up: do you identify with any of these groups?

Social Activities

- Who do you spend the most time with? Why?
- Follow up probe: why or why not do you spend time with other homeless people?

Everyday Activities

- Where do you sleep at night? Are there usually the same people there night after night?
- Follow up: Who are these people? Would you describe them as being part of your group?
- Where do you normally have your meals? Do you usually eat with the same people?
- Follow up: who are these people? Would you describe them as being part of your group?

Leadership

- To you, what makes a person a leader?
- Do you know any people within the homeless community that you would identify as leaders? Who?
- Follow up: Do you see yourself as being a leader? Why/why not?
- Are there any people you identify as leaders for homeless issues who are not necessarily part of the homeless community? Who?

Goal Orientation

- What are some of your goals related to your situation as a homeless person?
- Follow up: Do you feel that you can achieve these goals? Why/why not?
- List 2-3 personal goals for the next 3 months.
- Follow up: Why did you mention these? Do you feel that these are achievable?
- List 1-2 personal goals for the next year or more.
- Follow up: Why did you mention these? Do you feel that these are achievable?
- If different from above: why do you consider these goals to be more long-term than the previous ones?

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW PROCESSING FORM

Site: _____

Date: _____

Participant ID: _____

1. Main issues or important points to note
2. Information I got (or failed to get) on target questions

Subject

Details

Goals

Group ID

Group Cohesion

Leadership

3. Other important or interesting points
4. Nonverbal cues which may provide information

Cue

Context & Details

Silence

Body Language

Refusal to answer

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Norma Cadavieco was born in 1984, in Miami, Florida. She grew up mostly in Miami and Fort Lauderdale, graduating from Western High School in Davie, Florida in June 2002. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in family, youth, and community sciences from the University of Florida in August 2006. Norma was accepted into the joint B.S./M.S. program in Family, Youth, and Community Sciences before her final year of undergraduate study. In this program, she was able to begin graduate courses during her senior year.

Upon completion of her master's program, Norma hopes to continue researching homelessness and social movements to improve programming and outreach for homeless persons and the poor in the U.S.

Norma currently resides in Brooklyn, New York with her black cat, Radon. She is working as a case manager in a transitional housing facility in Manhattan for formerly homeless adults.