Georgia State University
Digital Archive @ GSU

African-American Studies Theses | Department of African-American Studies

4-21-2011

Recovery & Recognition: Black Women and the Lower Ninth Ward

Jamesia J. King
Georgia State University, jamesiaking7@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalarchive.gsu.edu/aas_theses

Part of the African American Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
King, Jamesia J., "Recovery & Recognition: Black Women and the Lower Ninth Ward" (2011). *African-American Studies Theses.* Paper 6.

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of African-American Studies at Digital Archive @ GSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in African-American Studies Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Archive @ GSU. For more information, please contact digitalarchive@gsu.edu.

RECOVERY & RECOGNITION: BLACK WOMEN AND THE LOWER NINTH WARD

by

JAMESIA KING

Under the Direction of Jonathan Gayles

ABSTRACT

Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005 and drastically altered the city of New Orleans causing the most damage to minority and low socioeconomic status communities such as the Lower Ninth Ward. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, African American women in the New Orleans constituted the group most marginalized in society. Following Hurricane Katrina, several studies have explored Hurricane Katrina and disaster recovery in New Orleans. However, few studies have explored gender as it relates to natural disasters and recovery. Therefore, this study explores the experiences of African American women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

INDEX WORDS: Hurricane Katrina, Disaster recovery, African American women, Lower Ninth Ward, New Orleans, Natural disasters, Black Feminist theory, FEMA.

RECOVERY & RECOGNITION: BLACK WOMEN AND THE LOWER NINTH WARD

by

JAMESIA KING

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2011

Copyright by
Jamesia Jeanette King
2011

RECOVERY & RECOGNITION: BLACK WOMEN AND THE LOWER NINTH WARD

by

JAMESIA KING

Committee Chair: Jonathan Gayles

Committee: Sarita K. Davis

Charles E. Jones

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

May 2011

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to Survivors of Hurricane Katrina in the remarkable city of New Orleans. Although six years have passed since the tragic date of August 29, 2005, we shall not forget that "the storm continues" as many New Orleanians struggle, even today, to restore, rebuild, recover, and return to the place they call- Home.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to have been surrounded by supportive and encouraging professors, mentors, family, and friends during the completion of this thesis. I would first like to acknowledge my dynamic committee for their guidance. To Dr. Sartita Davis- thank you tremendously for extending your continuous expertise and support throughout the completion of this project. To Dr. Charles Jones- thank you for challenging me to delve deeper into the heart of my research. To my committee chair Dr. Jonathan Gayles- I am pleased to express many thanks and much appreciation for your knowledge, insight, and commitment throughout this process. I value each of you!

I am grateful to my family- Mom, Dad, and little big brother. Thank you for your motivation and support.

I would like to extend a special thanks to the Executive Director of *A Community Voice*- Ms. Beth Butler and *A Community Voice* in New Orleans for their assistance in the completion of this project.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of the African American women residence of the Lower Ninth Ward included in this project who extended true southern hospitality and took time to share their personal experiences with me. I admire each of you individually and I could not have completed this project without you. Thank you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS……..……v

LIST OF TABLES…….viii

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION……..…1

Background of the Problem……..…1

Problem Statement……3

Purpose of the Study……..…4

Significance of the Study…….……5

Nature of the Study……...6

Research Question……....7

Conceptual Framework: Black Feminist Theory……..……7

Definitions…….……..10

Assumptions……11

Scope, Limitations, and Delimitations……11

Summary…….…12

II. LITERATURE REVIEW……13

Inequalities in U.S. Flood History……..13

Hurricane Katrina/New Orleans/ Lower Ninth Ward……16

Inequalities in Post Katrina New Orleans……...18

Black Women and Hurricane Katrina……22

III. METHODOLOGY……...24

Research Method and Design…….…24

Population, Sampling, and Data Collection……24

Reliability and Validity…….……...……...26

Data Analysis……..…27

Summary…….28

IV. FINDINGS……29

The Participants……..……29

Thematic Analysis……..…32

Theme 1: Lack of Governmental Consideration for the Recovery Needs of Black Women. ……32

Theme 2: Crusade for Justice……..……36

Theme 3: Inadequate Resources…… 38

Theme 4: Discriminatory Treatment of the Lower Ninth Ward…….……40

Theme 5: Communal Bond during Recovery……..…42

Theme 6: Strength & Resilience of Black Women…….……44

Summary…….45

V. CONCLUSIONS and IMPLICATIONS……47

Discussion……...……47

Conclusion……..……53

Implications…….……54

REFERENCES……...…56

APPENDICES

A: Informed Consent……..……64

B: Participant Demographic Information……...……66

C: Interview Guide…….……67

D: Table 1.1 Summary of Individual Participants……..69

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Overview of Participants…….....30

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes a background discussion of the research problem and its social importance. The problem statement is identified followed by the purpose and significance of the study. Lastly the conceptual theoretical framework and its relevance to people of African descent is addressed.

Background of the Problem

Natural and man-made disasters have become increasingly prevalent in the United States and around the world (Waugh & Tierney 2007; Enarson & Dhar Chakrabarti 2009). Within the past decade major disasters such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, and recent earthquakes in Haiti, Chile, and Japan have resulted in destruction of communities and the death of thousands of people. Such disasters have also proven to disproportionately generate environmental dangers to specific racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic status communities than to others (Bullard & Wright, 2009; Powers 2006; Sanyika 2009; Rivera & Miller 2007). For instance, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, "Race, place and class all overlapped in the city of New Orleans in Katrina's aftermath when the city's poor, largely black, residents could not escape from the water that flooded the lower-lying residential areas" (Bassett, 2009, p. 50). History has proven that people of color living in poverty- stricken neighborhoods disproportionately experience the immediate and long-term impacts caused by natural disasters.

Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005 impacting Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama; the three poorest states in the nation. Hurricane Katrina is described as, "… the most destructive hurricane in U.S. history, costing over $70 billion in insured damage" (Bullard & Wright, 2009, p. 3). An estimated 700,000 or more people may have been severely impacted by the storm (CRS Report for Congress). Furthermore, "…the 700,000 people acutely affected by Katrina were more likely than Americans overall to be poor; minority (most often African American); less likely to be connected to the work force; and more likely to be educationally disadvantaged" (CRS Report for Congress, 2005, p. 13). Hurricane Katrina revealed deep-seated racial and economic inequalities in New Orleans caused by historical patterns of racism and discrimination (Hartman & Squires 2006; Sanyika 2009; Philipsen 2007).

The Gulf Coast city of New Orleans experienced the greatest physical damage from the storm as 80% of the city lay covered in floodwaters (Bond, 2007; Bullard & Wright, 2009). An overwhelming disaster such as Hurricane Katrina proved to cause further distress to an already vulnerable population, which constituted the city of New Orleans.

In New Orleans, prior to Hurricane Katrina, "…nearly twice as many people were below poverty level than nationally (24.5 percent vs. 13.3 percent), and more than twice as many children under 18 years of age were below poverty than the average nationally (38.1 percent vs. 18.5 percent)" (Willinger, 2008). In 2000, the population of New Orleans consisted of 485,000 people with African Americans comprising nearly two-thirds of the population (Whelan & Strong, 2009). Although African Americans made- up two thirds of New Orleans' population, they were an extremely marginal and at risk population. For instance, before Hurricane Katrina, "two-thirds of the black population of roughly 353,000 persons were either in poverty, or constituted the working class/working poor and the underclass or were marginalized, with the remaining one-third constituting the middle class" (Sanyika, 2009, p. 87). Racial and economic disparities were prevalent throughout New Orleans. However, gender inequalities were present also.

Before Hurricane Katrina women were marginalized as, "more than one in four women living in New Orleans, and 15 percent of all families there, live below the poverty line, compared to 14.5 percent nationally" (Butterbaugh, 2005, p.17). Women comprised slightly over half the population in New Orleans both pre and post Katrina with Black women being the largest demographic group of 33.8% (Willinger, 2008). Women living in New Orleans were at a significantly higher risk of being poor prior to Hurricane Katrina (DeWeever & Hartman, 2006). Black women, more specifically, were likely to experience obstacles such as educational and employment disadvantages than any other racial group. For example, "more than 55 percent of White women and Hispanic/Latinas age 25 and older attained a bachelors degree or higher, compared to just 14 percent of Black women" (Katrina & Women, 8). Also, in the labor market within the managerial and professional fields, "white women's representation more than doubled that of African American women in the city of New Orleans (65.7% of white women had managerial or professional jobs vs. only 27.2% of African American women)" (DeWeevwer & Hartmann, 2006, p. 90).

Black women in New Orleans represented the racial group that experienced the most social and economic disadvantages, which are largely influenced by the intersectionality of race, class, and gender.

Notably, "gender disaster research suggests both vulnerability and capacity for women facing disaster, and that predisaster, gender-situated issues will likely remain and could worsen after a disaster" (Jenkins & Phillips, 2008, p. 52). It is important that gender disparities do not remain or intensify in New Orleans during the recovery process from Hurricane Katrina. Recent studies have advocated disaster recovery policies that are sensitive to the most vulnerable communities characterized by minorities of low socioeconomic status (Rivera & Miller 2007; Saucier, Smith, & McManus 2007). In the same way, there is a need for "more gender sensitive policy and practice," related to disaster recovery (Enarson & Dhar Chakrabarti, 2009, p. xv).

Presently, it has been nearly six years since Hurricane Katrina drastically altered the city of New Orleans. The Lower Ninth Ward community experienced the most damage as a result of Hurricane Katrina and the failed levee system (Bond 2007; Pine & Wilson 2007). Hence, there has been a substantial amount of research on recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. For instance, recent studies examined the extent to which the Lower Ninth Ward experienced damage from Hurricane Katrina and how the community has undergone recovery (Bates & Green, 2009; Green, Bates, & Smyth 2007; Pine & Wilson, 2007). However, very little research has been conducted on Black women and children in the Lower Ninth Ward, one of New Orleans' most marginalized groups. Therefore, this research study explores the experiences of Black Women, specifically those who chose to remain in the city, with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Problem Statement

Historically, minority communities have experienced the most damage from disasters and are often neglected in various stages of disaster recovery (Powers 2006; Rivera & Miller 2007). For instance, following the disaster of the Chicago Fire in 1871, recovery efforts were not designed with the interest of poor and working-class minorities (Powers, 2006). Advocates of disaster policy reform have often proposed that future disaster relief efforts included culturally- sensitive policies for marginal or vulnerable

communities (Bullard & Wright 2009). This type of disaster policy reform seeks to ensure adequate assistance and recovery to all persons affected by a disaster regardless of their race, class, or place of residence.

It is equally essential that disaster recovery is gender-sensitive in policy and practice (Enarson & Dhar Chakrabarti, 2009). Much like racial and economic inequalities prior to Hurricane Katrina, it is important that gender inequalities do not impact the disaster recovery process. While, "people who were victimized the most by Hurricane Katrina and the social chaos it unleashed afterwards were disproportionately women and children" (Butterbaugh, 2005, p. 17). Indeed,

> "Ignoring and/or rebuilding on long-standing inequalities will only complicate the recovery process of those families most in need of jobs at a livable wage, affordable housing, quality education, health care, accessible public transit, full-service supermarkets, banking and insurance, and safe parks" (Bullard & Wright, 2009, p. 3).

Therefore, it is important to investigate the experiences of Black Women in the current recovery from Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and future disasters.

Purpose of the Study

The research study explored the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward community. A qualitative methodology consisting of in-depth semi-structured interviews was used to explore the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in New Orleans. Qualitative research is conducted to, "empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 40). Thus, a qualitative methodology provides the most appropriate design to understand the experiences of Black women. Specifically, in-depth semi structured interviews are expected to yield a detailed description and understanding of black women's experiences with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Black women residents of New Orleans Lower Ninth Ward pre and post Hurricane Katrina were the theoretical sample. The qualitative study was conducted in New Orleans. The sample population con-

sisted of ten Black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward. It was preferred that the women were legal adults when the Hurricane struck in August 2005; therefore, the desired age range of the sample population was 23-65.

Significance of the Study

Amid the devastations of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Black women were amongst the most vulnerable population. Black women, "…often faced quite limited opportunities and outcomes, especially with respect to employment and earnings, educational attainment, and ultimately the likelihood of living in poverty" (Deweever & Hartmann, 2006, p. 85). Specifically, Black women living in low-socioeconomic communities such as the Lower Ninth Ward reflected a high social vulnerability. For instance, "Residents of the Lower Ninth Ward were less educated, had a higher percentage of physical disabilities, and more households were without a vehicle" (Pine & Wilson, 2007, p. 82). The Lower Ninth Ward was the most heavily damaged community in New Orleans as a result of Hurricane Katrina (Bond, 2007). As a result, several research studies (Bates & Green, 2009; Green, Bates, & Smyth 2007; Pine & Wilson, 2007) have examined disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. However, there is limited literature which explores the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Disasters such as Hurricane Katrina "…are windows that showcase the prevailing gender-based inequalities in society" (Ariyabanda, 2009, p. 11). Extensive research (Bond, 2007; Brunsma, Overfelt, & Picou, 2007; Philipsen, 2007; Sanyika, 2009) has focused on the racial, social, and economic inequalities in New Orleans since the storm. However, comparatively speaking, there has been a lack of research investigating the role of gender in disaster recovery. For instance, Luft & Griffin (2008) assert that the housing crisis in New Orleans is a 'gendered phenomenon' because family structure and a gendered labor market influence women's access to a quality home. Housing patterns are clearly determined by race, class, and gender. However, in previous studies "most of the data collected thus far on housing in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina is not disaggregated by gender" (Luft & Griffin, 2008, p. 50). Thus, an exploration of Black women's experiences in the Lower Ninth Ward opens the lens of gender, which must also be considered and addressed in disaster recovery.

The research study is significant because it seeks to understand Black women's experiences with disaster recovery as influenced by race, class, and gender. The study also seeks to inform gender sensitive rebuilding efforts within disaster recovery from Hurricane Katrina. Such gender- inclusive rebuilding efforts will serve both Black men and women better in the long run by making communities safer, more economically stable, and healthy (Butterbaugh 2005).

Nature of the Study

Historically, black women have been oppressed, silenced, and excluded from public policy (Collins, 2000). More specifically, in the wake of major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, women are often marginalized and misrepresented (Enarson & Dhar Chakrabarti, 2009). Also, "the strengths and capabilities of women are often ignored in policy decisions and in all formal arrangements related to mitigation and recovery, as has been demonstrated in the aftermath of all recent major disasters" (Ariyabandu, 2009, p. 7). Women's experiences should be considered to ensure communities successfully rebuild and combat challenges posed by disasters.

This research study used a qualitative method to "empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relations that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 40). The qualitative method consisted of in-depth semi-structured interviews followed by a thematic analysis. A qualitative methodology allowed participants to describe their lived experiences with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

The participants for the study were expected to include a sample of ten Black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward between the ages of 23-65. Initial participants of the study were recruited from *A Community Voice* (ACV). ACV was founded in October of 2009 by former board members of Louisiana-*Association of Community Organization for Reform Now* (ACORN). Furthermore, ACV is a grassroots organization in New Orleans that works closely with the Lower Ninth Ward community. The organization is committed to fighting for social and economic justice for low to moderate-income families in the New Orleans East and Lower Ninth Ward Community.

Semi-structured interviews were used in the qualitative research study. Semi-structured interviews consist of "standard questions with one or more individually tailored questions to get clarification or probe a person's reasoning" (Leedy & Ormord, 2005, p. 184). Thus, the semi-structured interviews were utilized to gather the experiences of Black Women in the Lower Ninth Ward with disaster recovery. Following the collection of qualitative data from the participants in the study, a thematic analysis was used to code the data and develop themes pertinent to the research study.

Research Question

The guiding question of the research study is: What are the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward? Hurricane Katrina revealed racial, class, economic, and gender inequalities in New Orleans (Brunsma, Overfelt, Bullard Wright, 2009; Hartman & Squires 2006; Picou, 2007). Literature has explored the racial and economic inequalities in low-income communities, such as the Lower Ninth Ward. However, there has been a lack of literature exploring gender inequalities and women's experiences with disaster recovery from Hurricane Katrina. Therefore, the research study seeks to understand the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Conceptual Framework: Black Feminist Theory

This study incorporates Black feminist theory. As a critical social theory, Black feminist theory "… aims to empower African American women within the context of social injustice sustained by intersecting oppressions" (Collins, 2000, p. 25). Historically, black women in the United States have suffered from race, class, and gender oppression (Collins, 2000; Collins, 1998). As a result, black women have often engaged in struggles for freedom and equality. Such struggles, which constitute a collective feminist consciousness among Black women, are marked by three distinct historical periods or "waves" (Taylor, 1998).

History of Black Feminism

The first wave is noted during the abolitionist movement between 1830-1865 (Taylor, 1998). During this period, Black women campaigned to end slavery and resist racially gendered sexual abuse. Black women recognized their oppressive experiences were distinctly different from those of black men

and white women. As a result, many black women channeled their newfound feminist consciousness in major civil rights organizations such as the National Association for Colored Women (NACW) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) (Taylor, 1998).

The second wave of collective feminist consciousness occurred during the civil rights movement in the late 1960's (Hull, Scott, & Smith, 1982; Taylor, 1998). Black women played a significant role in the fight for social justice and equality. However, in their struggle against racial oppression, black women became aware of the gender oppression, which was simultaneously taking place against them in the Civil Rights movement. As a result, out of the civil rights movement emerged exclusive women's organizations such as the Third World Women's Alliance in 1970 committed to operating "as both a think tank and action group against counterrevolutionary institutions (Taylor, 1998).

The first and second wave development of Black feminist consciousness were both linked to Black liberation movements, particularly the civil rights and Black power movements of the 1960's and 1970's (Hull, Scott, & Smith, 1982). As stated by Black feminist who participated in the liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970's, "It was our experience and disillusionment within these liberation movements, as well as experience on the periphery of the white male left, that led to the need to develop a politics that was antiracist, unlike those of white women, and antisexist, unlike those of Black and white men" (Hull, Scott, & Smith, 1982, p. 14). Similar to the oppressive experiences of black women during the liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the experiences and oppression black women encounter in New Orleans are particularly unique and relevant. . Such relevance is articulated within Black feminist theory, which suggests, "as members of an oppressed group, U.S. Black women have generated alternative practices and knowledge's that have been designed to foster Black women's group empowerment" (Collins, 2000, p. 33). The research study seeks to explore the unique knowledge and perspectives of black women regarding disaster recovery in the face of race, class, and gender oppression.

Third Wave

The third and current wave of Black feminism emerged during the 1970's following the Black women's movement. As the third wave of Black feminism continues to evolve, many explanations have

emerged to distinguish third wave Black feminism from the first and second waves. For instance, as the third wave continues many Black feminists embrace the label of "womanist" as a term to describe themselves and their political ideology. However, despite labels third wave black feminists adopt, "these women share their life stories in the public forum as a way of asserting a contemporary Black female identity that is mindful of historical context and community imperatives" (Springer, 2002, p. 1060).

Black Feminist Theory

Black feminist theory continues to evolve and therefore has been defined and redefined by scholars. Alice Walker (1983) developed the term "womanist" to describe a Black feminist. This term seeks to emphasize a love for women and all that encompasses women, which is integral in working to empower black women. Likewise the Cambahee River Collective (Hull, Scott, & Smith, 1982) developed a definition of Black Feminist theory, which asserts:

> "The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives. As Black women we see Black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face" (p. 13).

The historical racial and gender oppression of Black women has contributed to an emerging belief that, "Black women have a self-defined standpoint on their own oppression" (Collins, 1989, 747). This standpoint can be characterized by two interlocking components, which include:

1. "Black women's political and economic status provides them with a distinctive set of experiences that offers a different view of material reality than that available to other groups"

2. "These experiences stimulate a distinctive Black feminist consciousness concerning that material reality" (Collins, 1989, p. 748)

Specifically, black women in New Orleans are not excluded from this historical oppression but perhaps suffer worse social and economic disparities. Such disparities are inevitably linked to the race, gender, and class oppression. Although, “While different socio-historical periods may have increased the saliency of one or another type of oppression, the thesis of the linked nature of oppression has long pervaded Black Feminist Thought.

As Black Feminist Theory attempts to attempts to incorporate knowledge, consciousness, and empowerment amongst Black women it proves to be significant in exploring the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in New Orleans. The role of black women in community empowerment has been explored in previous research studies. Litt (2008) examined the emergency evacuation from New Orleans in a network of low-income African Americans. The study sought to show the quick action of African American women who successfully mobilized the evacuation of 25 individuals who could not otherwise have left the city of New Orleans prior to Hurricane Katrina. An emphasis in community “women- centered networks” was explored in the study. Black women had a positive impact on the evacuation process in their New Orleans community. Consequently, through the lens of Black Feminist Theory, this study also examines how black women in the Lower Ninth Ward used informal networks and self-determination to aide in their own recovery.

Definitions

Black Feminist Theory- a theory grounded in black women's historical experience with enslavement and various forms of oppression. Black feminist theory describes black women as a unique group that exists in a "place" in US social relations where intersectional presses of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation shape black women's individual and collective consciousness, self-definitions, and actions (Collins, 1998).

Disaster Recovery- Begins as a disaster is ending or at the close of the disaster response phase. Involving activities, laws, or policies that return disaster-affected governments, communities, and people to their pre-disaster conditions, it may take months or years to complete and is usually the most expensive phase in the disaster cycle. (Sylves, 2008).

Assumptions

In the research study several assumptions have been formed. Data prior to hurricane Katrina revealed that black women in the Lower ninth were in need of assistance and opportunities for economic advancement. Based on this data assumptions can be made that black women now stand in an even more dire need of help as a result of the environmental disruption of Hurricane Katrina. More specifically, "The social issues that were problem before the storm are exacerbated afterwards- lack of child care, reproductive and basic health care, education and jobs with wages that will lift a family out of poverty" (Butterbaugh 2005, p. 19). It is important to ensure that disaster recovery efforts help to alleviate social problems faced by black women.

Scope, Limitations, and Delimitations

The scope of the research study explored the experiences of Black women to disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. One limitation of the study was that the sample group was limited to black women currently living in the Lower Ninth Ward. Thus, the perspectives of black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward who were forced to permanently evacuate to various cities as a result of Hurricane Katrina were excluded from the study.

Black women participants in the research study will be asked retrospective questions regarding Hurricane Katrina and the Lower Ninth Ward before and after the storm. Asking participants to describe past events and experiences poses a limitation to the study as well. For instance, when describing past events and experiences, persons may forget specific details and thus offer a distorted description of their past experiences.

More importantly, only women's experiences were considered in the study. The varying experiences of men, children, and elders were not included in the study, which provides further limitations. Also, the sample size included in the research will consist of only ten Black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward. Such a small sample size limits the study's implications and generalizations solely to the sample population. Thus, the expected sample of ten participants in the study provided limitations.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the background discussion of the research problem. The guiding question to the research study is: What are the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. Historically, black women have been marginalized and silenced. Specifically, in the aftermath of disasters, the strengths and contributions of women are often ignored in policy making and formal decision related to recovery (Ariyabandu, 2009). Therefore, the study explored the experiences of black women to disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, Black women disproportionately faced limited opportunities, with respect to employment, education, and ultimately the likelihood of living in poverty. Disaster research has suggested the recovery process of previous natural disasters resulted in the marginalization of minority communities. Research has also revealed that women are often ignored or misrepresented following a natural disaster occurrence. As a result, the proposed research will be conducted using a qualitative methodology to explore the experiences of black women with disaster recovery. Black feminist theory, which validates the experiences of black women, will be incorporated as the underlining theory in the research study. The research study is considered significant because it seeks to provide in-depth details regarding the experiences of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. Such descriptions of the experiences of black women in the Lower Ninth Ward can inform disaster policies and promote gender inclusive considerations in future disaster recovery efforts.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward. This chapter explores the scholarship concerning Hurricane Katrina and disaster recovery. The literature review in this chapter first discusses the occurrence of former natural disasters in the United States and their recovery process. The context of Hurricane Katrina, the city of New Orleans, and the Lower Ninth Ward Community is provided followed by policy implementation. Lastly, Black women's experiences during and after Hurricane Katrina are examined.

Inequalities in U.S. Flood History

Insensitive and delayed disaster recovery responses to minority communities and residents are not unique to Hurricane Katrina. Based on the history of natural disasters in the United States, minorities residing in low-income communities have often experienced severe devastation caused by disasters followed by negligent or discriminatory recovery responses (Rivera & Miller, 2007). Throughout U.S. History, African Americans in non-affluent communities disproportionately suffer from effects of natural disasters (Barry, 1997; Brunsma, Overfelt, & Picou, 2007; Philipsen, 2007, Rivera & Miller, 2007).

For instance, Rivera & Miller (2007) explored three case studies of The Great Flood of 1927, The Vanport Flood of 1948, and Hurricane Katrina. The Great Flood of 1927 impacted southern states and, "covered an area comparable to the size of New England" and displaced more than 700,000 people (Rivera & Miller, 2007, p. 505). The critical question raised in the study sought to determine why specific racial, ethnic, and lower socioeconomic status communities seem to experience more environmental dangers than other communities. The researchers argue that, "the natural disasters set in motion patterns of change not only to the physical landscapes but also to the demographic and cultural environments" (Rivera & Miller, 2007, p. 503). The analysis of each disaster revealed shocking realities in United States' practice of equity and fair distribution in the wake of a natural disaster.

During the early twentieth century, the social and political environments for African Americans in the South were hostile. The summer of 1927 witnessed heavy rainfall, which caused the Mississippi River to swell, and the levee system around New Orleans to weaken (Powers 2006; Barry 1997). This

sent water into communities largely inhabited by African Americans. This pivotal event marked the first great natural disaster faced by the country. However, "during this massive flood, African American communities in New Orleans and in other parts of the South, particularly Greenville, Mississippi, were left to 'fend for themselves' " (Rivera & Miller, 2007, p. 505). In some instances, animals were rescued before African Americans were. The Great Flood of 1927 displaced approximately 330,000 African Americans who were subsequently interned in 154 relief concentration camps where they were forced to work.

Similar to the racial discrimination and civil rights violations that occurred during the Mississippi Flood of 1927, the Vanport Flood of 1948 brought the reality of the African American community to the forefront of regional news. Like most of the United States at the time, African Americans in the Portland, Oregon area experienced racial segregation, governmental discrimination, and general white hostility. The plight of the African American community was grim.

Prior to the flood, Portland had been practicing a racial policy adopted in the state's 1857 constitution. This policy "… allowed city officials and union leaders to exclude the non-White population of Oregon from social and economic equality" (Rivera & Miller, p. 508). Such policies were not uncommon during this time period in American History. In the aftermath of the flood, African Americans were forced to live in segregated communities where families paid disproportionate shares of their income for shelter (Rivera & Miller, 2007). Such historical neglect experienced in the wake of disasters may have contributed to the distrust of government officials by evacuees and helped to spark the critical debate of whether levee breaches resulted from Katrina's wrath or deliberate intent to sabotage and cause the fail of the levee system (Sanyika, 2009).

It is important to note that, "Distrust of authorities, among numerous other factors, seems likely to have played a role in New Orleans residents' reactions to evacuation warnings and public health authorities advice" (Cordasco et al, 2007, p. 277). Before Hurricane Katrina, warnings and a mandatory evacuation orders were issued; however, thousands of New Orleans residents failed to evacuate before the storms' landfall. As a result, researchers conducted a study to evaluate the trust that residents extended to authorities recommending mandatory evacuations of the city of New Orleans.

The study was conducted from September 9-12, 2005 (Cordasco et al., 2007). In the study, 58 English-speaking adults who lived in Louisiana prior to landfall of Hurricane Katrina and who were currently receiving shelter at one of the Houston, Texas evacuation centers (The Reliant Center, The Astrodome, and the George R. Brown Convention Center) were chosen to participate. The perceptions and beliefs of residents trust in authorities were revealed. Specifically, the participants of the study expressed distrust in competency, honesty and equity of government leaders and persons working on the evacuation immediately following Hurricane Katrina. As a result of the study's findings the researchers proposed that, "authorities must attend to matters of distrust when crafting policy and direct outreach for disaster preparedness and communications" (Cordasco et al, 2007, p. 280).

The distrust of government leaders among minorities living in New Orleans' impoverished communities is also rooted in the local history of the city. For instance, "Prior to the hurricane, 72% of New Orleans residents were of the minority race or ethnicity and there is a long history of minority groups in the United States distrusting medical and public health leadership" (Codasco et al, 2007, p. 277). This led many to believe the delayed relief efforts were results of racial and class discrimination (Brown, Mistry, & Bigler, 2007). Ultimately, "Even if overt discrimination may not have played a role in the government's response to Hurricane Katrina, the fact that Blacks in New Orleans were disproportionately affected by the disaster suggests that other, more subtle processes were at work" (Henkel, Dividio, & Gaertner, 2006, p. 118). Such processes should be addressed during the disaster recovery stage from Hurricane Katrina.

As depicted in the case studies conducted by Rivera & Miller (2007), the social situation faced by African Americans, and now other ethnic groups, within the context of disaster recovery is relevant even today. Historical and current natural disasters have influenced African Americans attitudes and perceptions of the government's response to disaster response and recovery in low-income communities (Codasco et al, 2007; Sanyika, 2009). African Americans hold more negative attitudes toward government response and to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina than Non- whites (Markel, Delehanty, & Beverlin, 2007). Such attitudes and perceptions could be substantiated through recent studies that reveal African Americans still suffer discrimination, particularly in the disaster recovery process.

Hurricane Katrina/New Orleans/Lower Ninth Ward

Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005. It is described as the most destructive and costly storm U.S. History (Brunsma, Overfelt, & Picou 2007; Bullard & Wright 2009). According to Bullard & Wright (2009), "It was also one of the deadliest storms, with a death toll of 1,325 and still counting, surpassed only by the 1928 hurricane in Florida (2,500 to 3,000 deaths) and the 1900 Galveston hurricane (8,000 deaths)" (p. 3). Hurricane Katrina began as a tropical wave in the South Atlantic Ocean in August 2005. The wave gradually increased into a tropical storm and then into a Category 1 hurricane, which made landfall in Florida on August 25, 2005. Hurricane Katrina's winds increased and traveled across the Gulf Coast making landfall on the Louisiana- Mississippi state border on August 29, 2005 as a Category 3 hurricane (Curtis 2007). Various areas within the Gulf Coast region were affected by Hurricane Katrina; however, New Orleans, Louisiana experienced the greatest devastation (Dynes & Rodriguez, 2007; Sanyika, 2009).

The city of New Orleans suffered the greatest physical damage as 80% of the city lay covered with floodwaters as a result of the Category 3 hurricane and failed levee systems (Bond 2007; Brunsma, Overfelt, & Picou 2007; Bullard & Wright 2009). New Orleans sits three feet below sea level and is surrounded by large bodies of water including Lake Pontratrain to the north and the Mississippi River to the south (Salaam, 2007). Furthermore "in this subsea, subtropical city, buildings routinely sink and shift, concrete buckles dramatically, and virtually every drop of water that falls must be physically pumped to higher ground" (Cooper and Block, 2006, 23). The devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina was predicted years prior by scientists, meteorologists, journalists, policy analysts, and government officials (Sanyika, 2009; Kates et al, 2006). For this reason “it should not have been a surprise that a disaster of that scale would overwhelm the response capabilities of local and state governments” (Gerber, 2007, p. 227). Despite predictions of a storm of Katrina’s magnitude, when Hurricane Katrina struck, the U.S government appeared disinclined to respond to challenges. In essence, "Katrina exposed the limitation of local, state, and federal government operations to implement an effective emergency preparedness and response plan" (Bullard & Wright, 2009, p. 3). The lack of disaster preparedness and neglect from govern-

ment officials affected the most vulnerable communities of New Orleans. The Lower Ninth Ward is one such community.

The Lower Ninth Ward experienced the greatest damage as a result of Katrina (Bond 2007). Located south of the Mississippi River and the famous French Quarter, the Lower Ninth Ward is estimated to be 1.2-1.8 meters below sea level (Green, Bates, & Smyth 2007, p. 315). Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the Ninth Ward constituted a low to moderate-income neighborhood populated by African Americans (Green, Bates, & Smyth, 2007). The neighborhood was poverty stricken with a poverty rate higher than the city as a whole (Bond 2007). According to the 2000 Census, 37% of the population in the Upper Ninth and 34% of the population in the Lower Ninth lived below the poverty line. Although extreme levels of poverty characterize the Lower Ninth Ward, a large majority of its residents owned their own home (Bond 2007; Green, Bates, & Smyth, 2007). Notably, "Almost 60% of the Lower Ninth's residents owned their own homes, compared with 47% in the city as a whole, partly as a result of homes being passed down through generations in this deeply rooted community" (Bond, 2007, p. 16)

Hurricane Katrina and the Industrial Canal levee breach caused significant flood damage in the Lower Ninth Ward. Following the storm, "A torrent of water poured into the neighborhood with a hydrodynamic force that pushed residential structures off their foundations and caused catastrophic damage to the blocks near the failure" (Green, Bates, & Smyth, 2007, p. 315). The impact of Hurricane Katrina on minority communities, such as the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans is immense. Unfortunately recovery from Hurricane Katrina has not been consistent throughout the city of New Orleans and neighborhoods that suffered extensive damage from Hurricane Katrina (Bullard & Wright, 2009).

Neighborhoods such as the Lower Ninth Ward are still in continual need of disaster recovery efforts. Several studies have examined the extent to which the Lower Ninth Ward was impacted by Hurricane Katrina (Green, Bates, & Smyth, 2007; Pine & Wilson, 2007; Sanyika, 2009). Green, Bates, & Smyth (2007) examined the recoverability and current recovery of the Upper and Lower Ninth Ward in light of a survey of 3,211 residential plots of land in the Upper and Lower Ninth Ward in October 2006. The survey assessed structural damage, flood damage, and post recovery. The researchers hypothesized

that structural damage is not the only or perhaps even the primary, impediment to recovery. Instead, impediments to recovery are results of limited resources of residents, the widespread assumptions of non-viability and the slow pace of infrastructure recovery, especially in the Lower Ninth Ward. To carry out the study, two extensive field surveys were used which included a broad Neighborhood Conditions Assessment Survey and an in-depth Building Evaluation Survey.

The study revealed that recovery throughout the city has been stymied by a host of interrelated factors that are both the cause and effect of slow population return. Such factors include levee reconstruction, flood insurance recovery, labor shortages, and an overwhelmed service sector. Additional impediments specific to the Lower Ninth Ward have been access to the neighborhood and media portrayal of the neighborhood as unsalvageable which, "have largely ignored the historical and significance of the Lower Ninth Ward as an area of black home ownership and indigenous New Orleans culture" (Green, Bates, & Smyth, 2007, p. 325). The lack of temporary housing and rebuilding capital were also found to be impediments to disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Inequalities in Post-Katrina New Orleans

Employment

Zottarelli (2006) conducted a study to examine factors that influence short and medium-term post disaster employment recovery after Hurricane Katrina. He hypothesized that blacks are less likely to experience employment recovery than are whites. It was also hypothesized that people residing in New Orleans at the time of Hurricane Katrina are less likely to experience employment recovery compared to people who resided in other locations. To test this hypothesis, a two-stage survey of Hurricane Katrina survivors was conducted. The initial survey consisted of a sample of 1,510 respondents selected randomly from a database of people who sought assistance from the American Red Cross in New Orleans as a result of Katrina.

The results of the study confirmed that Blacks are at a particular employment recovery disadvantage. The findings of the study also suggested that place can play an important and complex role in the

recovery process. Not only have African Americans been subject to scarce employment opportunities in the wake of Katrina, but they are also faced with inadequate housing options (Bates & Green, 2009).

Housing

The floodwaters caused by Hurricane Katrina destroyed the majority of the housing in Orleans Parish, leaving the African American population particularly vulnerable. Bates (2007) examined the challenges for African American housing in New Orleans by examining the status of owner occupants and renters, and by highlighting three black neighborhoods: Ponchatrain Park, Lower Ninth Ward, and Iberville. Markedly,

> "Previous experience with natural disasters suggests that while well-insured home owners will fare relatively well in rebuilding, those without insurance and private funds, residents of multi-family or subsidized rental properties, and those who are tied to the urban core will remain at risk for severe housing problems" (Bates, 2007, p. 13).

According to Bates (2007), "Following typical recovery policy may have left large numbers of African Americans families without sufficient access or resources to meet their housing needs" (p. 13). In addition to housing needs, basic living resources for African Americans are lacking as well as a result standard recovery policies.

Inequality and employment and housing discrimination, to name a few, are evident in New Orleans post- hurricane Katrina. However, such inequalities were more severe for African Americans in low-income communities prior to Hurricane Katrina (Hawkins, 2009; Sanyika, 2009; Wilson, 2009). Moreover, "Hurricane Katrina and its disastrous aftermath revealed the profound socioeconomic contradictions already existing in the fabric of New Orleanian society" (Sanyika, 2009, p. 87). As a result, the socioeconomic conditions of the majority-black population in New Orleans preceded Hurricane Katrina.

Policy

Hurricane Katrina revealed, the lack of effective policymaking and administration from the federal government. For example,

> "For the sake of simplicity, these obstacles can be summarized as falling into several basic categories, including organizational (e.g., the Federal Emergency Management Agency's [FEMA] move into the Department of Homeland Security [DHS] has been widely seen as diminishing its capabilities in dealing with natural disaster events), institutional (e.g., U.S. federalism creates important policy goal and incentive incongruities between levels of government), and behavioral (e.g., Americans do a fairly poor job of individual preparedness for emergencies/disasters)" (Gerber, 2007, p.227).

Gerber (2007) argues that it is critical to understand how these obstacles are connected to inform future policy implementation for policy scholars as natural disaster vulnerability becomes increasingly prevalent in the United States. Several studies suggest modifications to future disaster recovery policies using Hurricane Katrina to highlighst the inadequacy of current policies (Olasky, 2006; Birch, 2006; Mallory, 2009; Koritz & Sanchez, 2009).

Much like New Orleans and Hurricane Katrina, cities nationwide are subject to an array of natural hazards. For instance, "According to the Census Bureau, more than half of the nation's 297 million people live in costal areas- most in major cities- and seven of the top 10 fastest- growing cities are coastal" (Stehr, 2006, p. 493). This evidence affirms the importance of disaster policy implementation and management. However, "Despite the increasing vulnerability of urban areas to catastrophic events relatively little attention has been explicitly paid to issues that would inform both the literatures concerning urban studies and those that focus on the social science aspects of disaster" (Stehr, 2006, p. 493). As a result research conducted by Stehr (2006) represents a modest attempt to begin a dialogue between those who study more traditional topics in urban governance and those who study how communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.

Stehr (2006) insists that community resilience serves as a possible influence to public policy. In particular, "One aspect of community resilience focuses on hazard mitigation- that is, activities designed to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property and break the cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage from disasters" (Stehr, 2006, p. 497). However, the research suggests there are strong political and economic forces at work that will make widespread urban hazard mitigation difficult to achieve. As a result the research introduces and promotes the concept of "comprehensive emergency management". This concept is grounded in the ideas that loss- reduction efforts should be oriented toward mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery activities suitable for a variety of localized hazards including those that are natural, technological, or man-made.

Reconstruction after a disaster is part of a sequence of four identifiable post disaster periods, which include: emergency, restoration, reconstruction, and commemorative or betterment construction (Kates, Colten, & Leatherman, 2006). Also, "Planning for reconstruction is divided between city, state, and federal government, each assisted by outside advisors and contractors with distinctive but often overlapping responsibilities and intentions" (Kates, Colten, & Leatherman, 2006, p. 56). Since Hurricane Katrina, the Lower Ninth Ward has been an initial target for heavy investment and a wide range of recovery options have been proposed. Such proposals have included The Lambert Plan, Bring New Orleans Back Commission, and the Peoples Plan to name a few.

Research has examined the intersections of race and class on the impact of hurricane Katrina. However, few studies have focused on the equally important issue of gender as it relates to disaster recovery policies in minority communities. The study utilized the Black feminist theory to examine the historically oppressive conditions of Black women. Black feminist thought demonstrates Black women's emerging power as agents of knowledge by portraying African American women as self-defined, self-reliant individuals confronting race, gender, and class oppression (Collins, 1986; Collins, 1990; Shockley, 2007; Taylor, 1998)

Black Women and Hurricane Katrina

In light of historical discrimination in disaster recovery and policies, recent studies have notably explored the experiences of black women in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Several studies (David, 2008; Jenkins & Phillips, 2008; Litt, 2008; Ramalho & Durodoye, 2008; Jenkins & Phillips, 2008) highlight the perspectives and experiences of black women following Hurricane Katrina and subsequent flooding.

As a result of historical discriminations in disasters, African Americans possess great distrust for government officials who often issue evacuation warnings and updates (Cordasco, 2007; Litt, 2008). However, Litt (2008) explores the quick action of black women whom mobilized the successful evacuation of 25 individuals who would not otherwise have left. Existing network ties of black women to their communities impacted the evacuation process. For this reason, "It is clear that for the individuals in this network, government warnings did not appear to carry the same power or authority as the passing of informal knowledge through trusted women network members" (Litt, 2008, p. 43). The role and influence of women within their communities are significant during disaster events.

Ramalho & Durodoye (2008) examined the experiences of black women who were displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Nine Black women who resettled in San Antonio one year after the storm were interviewed for the research study. The research revealed several compelling themes that encompassed a remembrance of the traumatic hurricane experience including: reliving the hurricane, recollections of home in New Orleans, detachment and change, and perseverance.

In addition to evacuation and resettlement experiences, black women also experienced parenting challenges after Hurricane Katrina. Significantly, "parenting is a gendered endeavor that takes place in a society stratified by race and class" (Peek & Fothergill, 2008, p. 70). Therefore, Peek & Fothergill (2008) examined the responses of mothers and fathers to hurricane Katrina. The study revealed that women were primarily responsible for care activities. Mothers of all race and class backgrounds took on care giving responsibilities; however their experiences were not the same. It is important to note that, "Low-income African American women faced different, and often more challenges because they were more likely to be

displaced to unfamiliar places, to lack agency in that decision, and to have fewer resources" (Peek & Fothergill, 2008, p. 97). The unique experiences of black women can inform disaster future disaster policies and processes. Thus, the research study explored the experiences of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward on disaster recovery.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the chosen research method and its design appropriateness to the research study. The chapter also addresses how the sample population was chosen, including the criteria used in sample selection. Data collection procedures for the study are provided followed by the internal and external validity and reliability of the study. Lastly, this chapter discusses the chosen method of data analysis used in the study.

Research Method and Design Appropriateness

Hurricane Katrina revealed inequalities throughout the city of New Orleans. According to Enarson & Dhar Chakrabarti (2009) gender -based inequalities were amongst those revealed as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Although there is literature related to the experiences of Black women in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, there is a dearth of literature on the experiences of Black women who have decided to remain in marginalized and high flood-impacted communities, specifically the Lower Ninth Ward. Qualitative research provides an opportunity to, "keep a focus on learning the meaning that participants hold about the problem or issue" (Creswell, 2007, p. 39). This form of inquiry allowed the researcher to gather in-depth information regarding the experiences and meaning of disaster recovery to Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. In-depth semi structured interviews were conducted to allow Black women to describe their lived experiences with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

One-on one interviews are chosen as opposed to other forms of qualitative data collection such as focus groups or observations because interviews are expected to yield detailed information such as: facts, people's beliefs and perspectives about the facts, feelings, motives, present and past behaviors, standards for behaviors, and conscious reasons for actions or feelings (Leedy & Ormord, 2005).

Population, Sampling, and Data Collection

The target population included Black women currently residing in New Orleans Lower Ninth Ward community. Recent qualitative studies (Davis &Land, 2007; Lawson & Thomas, 2007; Luft, 2008; Ramalho & Durodoye; 2008), which explored the experiences of women following Hurricane Katrina, consisted of considerably small sample populations. For instance, (Ramalho & Durodoye, 2008) exam-

ined the experiences of black women who were displaced as a result of Hurricane Katrina by conducting interviews with nine African American women who fled the New Orleans and resettled in San Antonio, Texas. Notably, "One general guideline in qualitative research is not only to study a few sights or individuals but also to collect extensive detail about each site or the individual studied" (Creswell, 2007, p. 126). Small sample populations allow researchers to gather detailed and in-depth information from each individual participant. Therefore, the expected sample was to consist of 10 women from various economic and educational backgrounds between the ages of 23-65. Participants within this age range were expected to have been legal adults when Hurricane Katrina struck in August 2005. The participants were also expected to represent various backgrounds including but not limited to a myriad of educational, occupational, income, and household characteristics. Black women are chosen for this study because of their ability to speak to their unique experiences in the Lower Ninth Ward regarding Hurricane Katrina and the current disaster recovery process.

A purposeful sampling method was used to complete the proposed research study. By using purposeful sampling, "the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon of the study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). Participants must be current residents of the Lower Ninth Ward. The participants must also have been natives of New Orleans and residents of the Lower Ninth Ward prior to Hurricane Katrina. Initial participants for the study were obtained through *A Community Voice* (ACV). However, snowball sampling was also used to identify additional participants.

A Community Voice (ACV) is a grassroots organization founded by former members of Louisiana -Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). The organization is committed to fighting for social and economic justice for low and moderate-income families in the New Orleans East and Lower Ninth Ward Communities. It is the organization's mission to ensure that the needs of these communities are not marginalized and ignored during the disaster recovery process due to racial and economic discrimination. This organization proved to be helpful in recommending initial participants for the research study.

While investigating complex and sensitive issues surrounding Hurricane Katrina and disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward, the possibility of participants retreating to a vulnerable and emotional state after completing the interviews was considered. Therefore, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was secured to ensure that the study did not impose undue risks on the participants in the research study. The approved protocol number is H11253. Participants were given an informed consent explaining the purpose and extent of their voluntary participation in the research study. In addition, their records were kept private to the extent allowed by law and information given was used specifically for the proposed research study only. All information was removed that can personally identify each participant.

Semi-structured interviews were used in this study. Semi structured interviews are most appropriate as opposed to structured or unstructured interviews because they allow opportunities to ask follow-up questions, get clarification, or probe the participants' reasoning. Semi-structured interviews consist of "standard questions with one or more individually tailored questions to get clarification or probe a person's reasoning" (Leedy & Ormord, 2005, p. 184). The interviews were conducted in a location convenient to the participants of the study. The qualitative interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes on average. Interviews were recorded using a digital recorder. Following the collection of qualitative data from the participants in the study, a thematic analysis was used to code the data and develop themes pertinent to the research study.

Reliability and Validity

When conducting research studies, there are often threats to the internal and external validity. This study proves to be no different. Internal validity is threatened by the potential bias of black women participants regarding specific aspects of disaster recovery in their communities. In addition to the bias of black women participants, the internal validity may be jeopardized by my personal bias as a black woman researcher. Furthermore, participants were asked to reflect on past events and experiences. Thus, the retrospective views of the participants provided limitations and thus pose a threat to the internal validity of the research study.

The small sample population of Black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward posses a threat to the external validity of the research study. Several measures were taken to limit the internal and external threats of the study. Efforts were be made to center the voices of the participants of the study. After the qualitative interviews were conducted, they were be transcribed and sent back to the participants for verification that each response is correct. Also, double coding was conducted to ensure accurateness. A code consists of, "a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative…or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldana, 2009). Thus, this coding method was completed twice to limit possible threats to validity. For instance, a specific statement given by a participant of the research study was assigned a code. The same statement was assessed a second time to ensure the same code was assigned and ensured reliability.

Data Analysis

In qualitative research, a data analysis consist of, "preparing and organizing the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion" (Creswell, 2007, p. 148). Therefore, after the qualitative research was conducted, interviews were transcribed. The manuscripts were then reviewed and coded using the structural coding method. Structural coding, "…applies a content-based or conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data to both code and categorize the data corpus" (Saldana, 2009, p. 66). A thematic analysis was used to identify pertinent themes in the data. This type of analysis is significant because, "thematic analysis or the search for themes in the data is a strategic choice as part of the research design that includes the primary questions, goals, conceptual framework, and literature review" (Saldana, 2009, p. 140). Themes were identified as implicit repeating topics within the data. For this purpose, "themes can consist of such ideas as descriptions of behavior within a culture, explanations for why something happens, iconic statements, and morals from participant stories" (Saldana, 2009, p. 139).

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the research method and design of the proposed research study. A qualitative research method was used to carry out the study. The qualitative method was chosen to help generate detailed information regarding the experiences of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. The proposed research method and design helped to uncover the experiences of Black women with the current disaster recovery process in their community.

Based on the previous qualitative studies conducted on Hurricane Katrina and women, the selected sample population was expected to include ten Black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward. The sample was selected using the snowball effect and initial participants of the study were recruited from *A Community Voice*. The study was conducted in New Orleans. After the interviews were conducted the qualitative data was further explored using structural coding and thematic analysis.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of African American women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. Therefore, the study utilized a qualitative methodology and was conducted in February 2011. Black women were recruited from *A Community Voice*- a non-profit community organization in New Orleans Ninth Ward. Of those recruited, nine Black women residents of New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward were included as participants in the study. Participants were interviewed one-on-one and shared their personal experiences with disaster recovery. All interviews were conducted and recorded using digital voice recorders. The interviews were then transferred to an electronic file and transcribed.

After each interview was transcribed, the interviews were then reviewed and coded using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was used to identify pertinent themes in the data collected, which highlights the lived experiences of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. Following the application of thematic analysis several themes emerged.

This chapter presents the findings of the study divided into three sections. The first section highlights each individual participant in the order that they were interviewed for the study. Pseudonyms were chosen by the researcher to keep the true identity of participants confidential. Data from each interview, which supports distinguishable themes and subthemes, are presented in the second section. Lastly, the final section provides an overall summary of the chapter.

The Participants

Nine Black women who currently live in New Orleans Lower Ninth Ward community were participants in this study. In addition, each participant also lived in the Lower Ninth Ward prior to Hurricane Katrina. The women were interviewed individually in their respected homes. The participants ranged in age from 35 to 76 years of age. Mrs. Kathleen is the oldest while Patrice is the youngest.

Table 1: Overview of Participants

Women	*Age*	*Education*	*Income p/y*	*Marital Status*	*# Of Children*	*Home: Own /Rent*	*Occupation BK= Before Katrina AK= After Katrina*
Ebony Wilson	35	Some College	30,000	Married	2	Own	BK: Admin Assistant AK: Caregiver
Barbra Woods	60	Some College	40,000	Married	4	Own	BK/AK: Admin Assistant
Ellen Rose	61	High School	20-25,000	Married	2	Own	BK/AK: Cosmetologist
Patrice Adams	35	College Degree	25,000	Single	0	Own	BK/AK: Community organizer/ consultant
Melanie Stevenson	59	College Degree	36,000	Married	1	Own	BK: Elementary Teacher AK: Retired
Kathleen Davis	76	High School	Retired	Single/ Widow	2	Own	BK/AK: None Retired
Alicia Smith	56	Some College	12,000/ Disability	Single	0	Own	BK: Sales Associate AK: Retired/Disability
Mary Ann Johnson	61	Some College	None	Single	0	Living w/ friend	BK: Beautician AK: Unemployed
Sharon Jones	57	High School	Retired	Single	1	Own	BK: Insurance agency officer AK: Same company-retired 2008

Ebony: Ebony Wilson is 56 years old. She owns her home in the Lower Ninth Ward and is currently a full time caregiver to her mother and husband. Before Hurricane Katrina, Ebony worked as an administrative coordinator. Ebony has lived in the Lower Ninth Ward all of her life and desires to see her

community fully recover from Hurricane Katrina. Therefore, she is involved with several community organizations and coordinates activist initiatives to lobby for recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Barbra: Barbra Woods is 60 years old. Barbra is married and has lived in the Lower Ninth Ward since 1972. She is a proud homeowner. Following Hurricane Katrina, Barbra and her husband were the second family to move back in the Lower Ninth Ward's Historic district and began rebuilding. Barbra works as an administrative assistant in New Orleans.

Ellen: Ellen Rose is 61 years old. The recovery process has been and remains a continual struggle for Ellen, but she continues to persevere and is a proud homeowner in New Orleans Lower Ninth Ward. She loves her community and would love to see more people return home and rebuild. Ellen is a cosmetologist.

Patrice: Patrice Adams is 35 years old. Patrice is a single female and known throughout the community for her work as an activist and community organizer. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, Patrice also worked as a community organizer and advocate for the needs of her community. Patrice has lived in the Lower Ninth Ward all of her life and is a proud homeowner and New Orleans native.

Melanie: Melanie Stevenson is 59 years old. She is married and has been a Lower Ninth Ward resident all of her life. Melanie chose to return to the Lower Ninth Ward and rebuild her home after Hurricane Katrina because she loves her community. She is affiliated with community activist organizations and works as a community organizer and activist on behalf of the Lower Ninth Ward. Melanie is a proud homeowner and retired public school teacher.

Kathleen: Kathleen Davis is 76 years old. She is a widow and has lived in the Lower Ninth Ward since 1952. As a proud homeowner, she would like to see more recovery initiatives take place in her community. Mrs. Kathleen is retired.

Alicia: Alicia Smith is 66 years old. She is single female and proud homeowner in the Lower Ninth Ward. Alicia has lived in the Lower Ninth Ward since 1963. She loves New Orleans, and particularly the Lower Ninth Ward community. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, she worked as a sales associate. However, Alicia became disabled in 2002 and retired.

Mary Ann: Mary Ann Johnson is 61 years old. She is a single female and currently seeking a residence of her own in New Orleans. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, Mary Ann was a home renter in the Lower Ninth Ward and worked as a beautician. However, after Hurricane Katrina her home was destroyed. Mary Ann is currently unemployed.

Sharon: Sharon Jones is 57 years old. She is a single female and proud homeowner in the Lower Ninth Ward. Diane has lived in the Lower Ninth Ward since 1996. She has committed to working and being a positive influence in her community. Diane is currently retired and undertakes small business endeavors.

Thematic Analysis

Theme 1: Lack of governmental consideration for the recovery needs of Black Women

Most Black women participants in the study stated there has indeed been a lack of consideration by government officials for the unique recovery needs of Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward. More than half of the participants felt that recovery implemented by the local and state government has not been sensitive to the needs of Black women. For instance, when asked how much consideration was given to African American women in recovery plans, Ellen stated,

> "I don't think enough consideration was given because I have seen single women, older women trying to help themselves. I've seen women out nailing boards up, cleaning debris, and cutting grass. So I don't think enough consideration was given to African American women. It was a struggle to get back here and it's still a struggle."

Likewise Kathleen affirmed,

> "Well, not much actually. Women who are widowed or single like I am, we were not considered for anything special. We had to do the best that we could with what we had so when we came home the situation was far worse than it is now."

Alicia also expressed, "I don't think any (consideration) to me. If it is maybe it's 5 % because it really wasn't nothing given to us". Similarly, Sharon stated,

> "I would say not much, I don't know if it's isolated but as a whole general consensus there wasn't much consideration taken into account when they decided to do the little that they did. I think that would be the best way to say it".

Participants specifically referred to the lack of consideration for the recovery needs of single black women. Melanie expressed why single Black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward perhaps suffer from increasingly distressing experiences with disaster recovery as opposed to married Black women.

> "At every angle they made it difficult for people to return especially females because you have a husband or significant other and the two of you are going through this together it made it easier. But if you're a single female and you're trying to do this alone you become discouraged"

The distinct burden that single Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward encounter is significant because as noted by Barbra, the make-up of Lower Ninth Ward Pre-Katrina consisted of, "predominately Black, and predominately black females raising children. I'm blessed to have a husband, but most of the females here were raising kids on their own." Mrs. Kathleen stated,

> "There was nothing special being done to alleviate the problems that you had as a widow or single black woman in this area. You had to depend on whomever you knew. I'm a widow and my husband had only been dead a year and therefore I had to do everything myself. I had to find someone to work on my house and do everything that needed to be done. We just had to fend for ourselves the best way we could".

Overall, African American women participants felt there was a lack of consideration from government officials despite Black women representatives within city council, the U.S. Senate, and House of Representatives. Ebony expressed,

> "There were a lot of women at the table, but here we are five plus years later and even with us being at the table there is no recovery in this area as well as other flooded areas of the city where there is a predominately African American community".

Government Programs- FEMA/Road Home Program

Participants identified the lack of government consideration and assistance to be demonstrated in their experiences with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the post-Katrina Road Home program for housing recovery. The Road Home program is the main grant for rebuilding permanent housing for uninsured or underinsured homeowner (Bates & Green, 2009). Notably,

> "The Road Home grants were intended to close the gap between insurance payouts and the cost of repairing or rebuilding a home. The grant funds up to $150,000 for repairs and rebuilding at FEMA standards for base flood elevations for owners who reoccupy their original properties" (Bates & Green, p. 236).

However, many participants' experience with FEMA, and particularly the Road Home program, were not satisfying causing difficulties in recovery. The lack of funding and assistance from FEMA and Road Home have caused many participants to face housing recovery needs at this present moment, nearly six years after Hurricane Katrina.

Ellen described her experience with FEMA during the beginning stages of the recovery process. She was denied rental assistance by FEMA because of an identity mix-up, which caused her to lack sufficient funds to rebuild:

> "I ran out of money because FEMA refused to give me rental assistance. It was a mix up or problem with names and family members using your address and getting money, so it was a big mix up with me and I ended up not getting rental assistance. So I ran out of money and that's why you see some things not finished like the porch and driveway is not finished and some things in the house. I went to different organizations and talked to different ones about getting help to finish my building but no avail. So I'm just waiting for something to happen or wait awhile to finish building. But that's my problem because I ran out of money and I didn't get rental assistance. By the time HUD did call me for housing assistance, I had moved in here".

According to Melanie, when asked about her experience with FEMA, she stated, "FEMA I think did not treat us fairly".

Barbra described her experience with FEMA,

> "FEMA is the biggest let down for us. No, I don't have any respect for FEMA. I know that they didn't know what they were doing, it was proven that they didn't know what they were doing, and they certainly were not geared to help African American women because we really suffered. We really suffered and they just didn't meet our needs. With FEMA the process was unbelievable because you had to go in the long lines because everybody was trying to get whatever FEMA was offering. When you got there the bureaucracy of it. When you got there you had to have identification and most of us lost our identification. We didn't leave away from here with birth certificates, social security cards, and that kind of thing. It was just what they put you through. But I must say that the centers that we went to in Georgia, the Red Cross Center was more equipped to help us than FEMA. They gave us more help than FEMA did".

She also discussed the Road Home program,

> "As far as the government was concerned, I don't think they did enough for us. The insurance company screwed us. Road Home, everybody think we got $150,000, that is not even the truth and what we did get we had to fight for that".

Likewise, Kathleen stated,

> "You could go to three different people in the Road Home Program and get three different types of information"

In addition, Sharon carefully provided her opinion of the Road Home program,

> "I don't know if I could label most successful but most successful as the rating, I would say the Road Home program. I guess I would have to say the most successful in the fact that they did compensate to some degree to most people but the program itself was crap. The administration, the service, the information flow, and all of that was very tedious. So when I want to say it was effective, the outcome or the purpose of the program could have been the most effective, so it's kind of hard to say but the bottom line with all of the hoops it would have been the most successful because it allowed people to get back into their homes".

Based on the opinions of Black women participants regarding government officials' consideration in recovery and their personal experiences of with government programs such as FEMA and the Road Home, Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward experienced neglect during the recovery process.

Theme 2: Crusade for Justice

As a result of the lack of governmental consideration for the needs of residents in the Lower Ninth Ward community, participants described how they have joined in the fight for recovery of the Lower Ninth Ward. Nearly six years after Hurricane Katrina, Black women residents discussed their engagement in a crusade for justice. Participants often articulated this action as a "fight for recovery". In their individual fight for recovery, participants expressed their hope to obtain justice and the resources needed in their community. For instance Melanie considered what inspires her activism surrounding recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward,

> "Justice. It's not about JUST-US, but it's about Justice. And I feel as an African American and African American female that everybody deserves justice that's all. We want to be treated equitable and fairly and that's what inspires me to participate in activism".

For many participants it has been and continues to be a prolonged fight to obtain justice and the necessary resources in the Lower Ninth Ward community. Barbra shared her experience,

> "We have had to push our way to get some of the things that we needed and I don't think that this community or females in this area were given any type of recognition. I think we are and still are the forgotten area".

Alicia noted the current fight for recovery needs in the Lower Ninth Ward community. She stated,

> "I feel that people are like 'It was just a hurricane' but it's not- It's your life, it's your culture. I don't just think of me, I think of others that needed help more than I needed help and it was just too many people. I think because it was a predominately black area they are not worried about you. And when I listen to the media, we are still fighting for the same things. And most of all we are fighting because we don't have anything down here that most people say we do have".

Melanie discussed the distinctive differences in how states affected by Hurricane Katrina handled the recovery process. As a result, residents in the state of Louisiana are still fighting:

> "I looked at the disparity between how persons that were affected by Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi and Louisiana were treated. Haley Barbour made sure that each person that were affected by the Hurricane got their 150,000 dollars across the board and they didn't have to fight for it. They made us jump through hoops and assessed our properties not considering that in this particular area we had to build from the ground up and that takes more money than refurbishing a home. You had to fight for elevation funds and people are still fighting for those funds".

Ebony stated how it is important for women and residents of the Lower Ninth Ward to continue fighting to obtain the recovery efforts needed in their Lower Ninth Ward community,

> "And that's good cause like I said 6 plus years... We just gonna keep fighting and we believe that one day the door is going to open and we are going to get everything that we are suppose to get."

Educational Concerns in the Lower Ninth Ward

The fight for schools is currently a leading concern for Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. Notably, prior to Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans' urban public school system was among the poorest achieving systems in the United States (Casserly, 2006). According to Ebony,

> "Right now we are in the fight of our life for schools. We are not in the master plan for schools. We were in the master plan in 2008. 2010 fast forward, we are out of the plan for schools".

This is a major concern because as Melanie stated, prior to Hurricane Katrina, in the Lower Ninth Ward,

> "We had five public schools and one private school in the Lower Nine! And now we have one. That says to me that we're not concerned about educating children in the Lower Nine or children in the Lower Nine have to seek out their education outside of their community".

Black women see this fight as a long-term obligation, which was seen when the Lower Ninth Ward community fought to open the only school currently in the Lower Ninth Ward Post Katrina. According to Melanie,

> "We don't have schools. We have one school and we wouldn't even have that had we not just fought for it because they were adamant that they were not going to open Martin Luther King School. The community got together as a whole with the assistance of the principal who was principal of the school pre-Katrina and the staff that returned. They were adamant that they were not going to reopen this school and we got back in and people did what they had to do in order to get the school reopen".

Patrice also expressed,

> "Martin Luther Elementary is the only school open in the Lower Ninth Ward. They are doing K-8th grade right now. It's not even one school because she had to go charter. She didn't even get the investment that she was supposed to get from the city of New Orleans. Local government did not support her coming back. As a matter of fact, they tried to arrest the people who were gutting the school when they were gutting it trying to get the school back and running. Unbelievable, that they told her that the population wouldn't support her coming back and she opened to maximum enrollment and a waiting list to 700 kids. They bus our kids all around the city".

Ebony stated, "I can't say that the city has done a whole lot. The city has been forced to do something. The opening of King school- we forced the city to step up to the plate".

Nearly six years following Hurricane Katrina, it seems as if many have forgotten the extent of destruction caused by the storm in New Orleans and particularly to the poorest neighborhoods in New Orleans such as the Lower Ninth Ward. The government has placed a halt on funding and recovery initiatives to be implemented in the Lower Ninth Ward. As a result, the experience of Black women in the Lower Ninth Community has been one of activism for the necessary recovery needs of the community such as schools to educate children- the future leaders of the Lower Ninth Ward community.

Theme 3: Inadequate Resources

In addition to fighting for recovery needs, such as schools in the Lower Ninth Ward, Black women in the community articulated their experiences with the lack of basic resources such as grocery stores, drug stores, banks, parks and community based living. The participants discussed how such basic

resources for livelihood were accessible in their community before Hurricane Katrina. Furthermore, communities such as Saint Bernard Parish have recovered from Hurricane Katrina with basic resources such as supermarkets, but there are no indications of the Lower Ninth Ward receiving such resources six years following Hurricane Katrina. Melanie stated, "As far as the community is concerned, we are still fighting for recovery because we don't have the things that we need to keep this community a float and being apart of the community ". Barbra explained,

> "We don't have a supermarket in this neighborhood. We don't have a drugstore, we lost Walgreens, we had Popeye's, we lost Popeye's. We have these little corner grocery stores and a can of cream is like $1.77. We don't have anybody that is really coming to ask us what do you need in this neighborhood".

Melanie also discussed her experience with inadequate resources in the Lower Ninth Ward.

> "We don't have...you know they've done everything to discourage people from returning to Lower Ninth Ward. We don't have grocery stores, healthcare facilities. On every other corner you will see a gas station and the little Iranians will have the little grocery stores but everything in them is so high so you have to do what you have to do. You have to work odd jobs; I worked for the Census last year because my retirement is just not enough. So you find those things that are going to assist you in making it in life."

Ellen also discussed the lack of resources and recovery. She predicted that the Lower Ninth Ward's population would increase if more resources were available in the community. She expressed,

> "I think a lot of people would want to come home if there were more businesses. Different areas are booming but we don't have that here. Just a few homeowners that want to come back and rebuild their property because they really don't have anywhere else to go. I feel like more people would come back if we had more businesses in this area and if people were just a little more concerned about helping us here. I think it's a slow process. To me it's just not happening fast enough".

Healthcare

The foremost resource needed in the Lower Ninth Community is access to quality healthcare. Research has shown that, "Hurricane Katrina impacted many people whose ability to access health care was already limited by underinsurance or lack of insurance" (Kutner, 2007, p. 214). Ebony stated,

> "Well you know the thing is that we have no healthcare. We had a clinic that was open by two black women. She and all of us have put up a tremendous fight to get funding from the city for this clinic to no avail. So unfortunately this December the clinic shut down. So that meant when I got sick, because now I don't have any health insurance. When I got sick I had to go all the way uptown to St Andrew and St Thomas health clinic. I had to go outside of my community for healthcare. Healthcare is essential to women like me, cause I'm a baby boomer and now I'm taking care of my mother and my husband who are disabled. There are so many challenges. Why can't we have healthcare in our community?"

Melanie explained,

> "Well the major thing on the front burner is Healthcare. Many African American women post Katrina are struggling with trying to find healthcare because many of us were employed Pre-Katrina and now many of us are no longer employed and therefore we no longer have insurance so we need to find quality healthcare. There are no healthcare facilities in the Lower Ninth Ward. If you find a facility, they expect you to pay exorbitant prices for co-pays, medication…there are not many programs to assist you in paying for medications if you are not issued".

Resources such as supermarkets, banks, schools, recreational facilities, and healthcare in a community are vital in to the survival and livelihood of its residents. The repeated testimonial experiences of Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward attest to the need and desire for such resources in the community.

Theme 4: Discriminatory treatment of the Lower Ninth Ward

Most participants did not feel discriminated against in any way during the recovery process, but felt that they had been discriminated against based on their class status as residents of the Lower Ninth

Ward. Participants identified communally with the Lower Ninth Ward and the discrimination that it has received throughout recovery from Hurricane Katrina. More than half of the participants addressed the discrimination that the Lower Ninth Ward has experienced during the recovery process. Such discrimination was identified in lack of funding and resources for recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward community in comparison to other areas throughout the city of New Orleans. Sharon discussed the disheartenment she felt as a result of the Lower Ninth Ward experiencing discrimination and not receiving the adequate funding and assistance following Hurricane Katrina. She stated,

> "And one thing that I'm very disappointed in the Lower Ninth Ward was the most devastated area. They used us as a poster child to get all of the grant money and everything that came into the city of New Orleans and some for the state of Louisiana. And yet the Lower Ninth Ward got less assistance than any other place here. But you got to know your history before the storm. The Lower Ninth Ward was the poster child anyway".

Ellen shared her experience and outlook with discrimination. She expressed,

> "I haven't had any problem with discrimination. I don't feel like I've been discriminated personally but I just feel like we have been overlooked here as a community or as a whole. When you go further out everything is coming back so strong all the businesses and it seems like we've been over looked. It's like "Oh, that's the Lower Ninth Ward- we can just deal with them later or they're not significant". It's like we just get passed by. So that's why I said it's not my personally I just feel like it's the area and other places are just booming. Metarie is booming and different places. Everyone is coming back so strong and we are sitting here struggling. Maybe it is discrimination. It's like we're not important enough. I even look at that bridge- the St. Claude Bridge. It's always going up and I feel like something should be done about that bridge, but for years we've been dealing with that. And the train...its like there's money for everything but there is no money for the little bridge over the train track. We wait for hours trying to get out of the Lower Ninth Ward. If it's not the bridge you're going to the train, if it's not the train it's the bridge or both. It's like where is the money for that? They give you money for areas that need to be worked on and be

> enhanced but no one ever talks about the bridge or the train track. That's enough to make you want to move I tell you right there- the train track and the St Claude Bridge going up. That's how I feel and it's so much we need here in the Lower Ninth Ward."

Barbra felt as though discrimination has been a factor in her experience with disaster recovery. When asked did she feel discriminated against in any way, Barbra stated, "Oh, Definitely. The first neighborhood they dealt with was the French quarters. They put more money into the superdome than they have into this area. It's a mess. Also Kathleen stated, "I feel discriminated against. The mere fact that the things that we need down here is because I live in the Lower Ninth Ward that I'm being discriminated against."

Finally, Melanie expressed,

> "I don't feel that the government or the city has made the effort that has been necessary to do that and I feel there was an outpouring of resources Post Katrina based on what people saw in Lower Nine because we were the poster child for Katrina. They weren't worried about the French Quarter because the French quarter was not affected but they were showing everybody what happened in the Lower Ninth Ward. This is why the resources poured in but those resources were disseminated in every community except Lower Nine and that's unfair. We want to be treated fairly and equitable".

The community where a resident of New Orleans resides should not determine the type or extent of disaster recovery assistance received by the resident. Black woman residents of the Lower Ninth Ward distinctively stated their feelings of discrimination of the Lower Ninth Ward, which directly affects and their living experience.

Theme 5: Communal Bond during Recovery

The bond amongst Black women throughout recovery from Hurricane Katrina was noteworthy. Not only did the Black women residents experience a bond amongst other black women in the community, but they also recalled the bond with friends, neighbors, and volunteers who have been instrumental in their recovery from Hurricane Katrina. As a community activist, Ebony discussed how she has con-

nected with other women activists in the Lower Ninth Ward as well as other women through out New Orleans. She stated, "So it's not that I know just the women in this area, we've all connected in regards to other areas in the city in our fight to get recovery but it has not happened".

Also Barbra shared her experience and bond with women throughout the Lower Ninth Ward. She discussed how this bond has helped her deal with various challenges associated with recovery:

> "We have a lot of elderly people in this neighborhood and (we) especially the ladies in this block we have really bonded so we look out for each other- so that's who helps us (each other)". We decided that we were going to look out for each other. We would go around and make sure we knew who was giving out food, or clothing, or any type of help. Light bulbs, paint, we got in our automobiles and we went around trying to find those things for us until we were able to get Road Home assistance which wasn't a big help at all".

Alicia's experience was unique. However, it represented the communal bond of Lower Ninth Ward residents. Alicia discussed with much gratitude how she was able to return back to the Lower Ninth Ward because her friend/neighbor's son offered to rebuild her home. She stated,

> "First I had said that I wasn't coming back and then I was calling her everyday crying and they had a man helping us out in the Road Home and he said "Ms Smith you can go back home". I said 'NO! I can't go back home cause I can't help myself'. So her son said Ms Alicia- "I'm going to build you a house!"

Likewise Sharon Jones expressed her experience with rebuilding houses and the help she received from her friend. She stated,

> "I was really blessed because the guy that built this house as soon as the phone start ringing he said I want you to know that I got you. So I didn't have to worry about somebody ripping my money off. He charged a fairly good price but he does really great work so that I didn't have to worry about that".

The help and support participants received during recovery is significant because it has contributed to a many of the woman participants being able to move back into their homes in the Lower Ninth

Ward community. In the absence of government officials and basic resources, residents of the Lower Ninth Ward community relieved the challenges of recovery by generously lending assistance to their neighbors, friends, and family.

Theme 6: Strength and Resilience of Black Women

Interestingly, when asked to discuss the general experiences of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward, most participants pointed out the resilience of Black women. Despite many challenges, such resilience has been incorporated into the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. More than half of the participants identified the resilient characteristics of Black women. For instance, Sharon recalled,

> "Women in the Ninth Ward were always Vikings. We always were. Rule of thumb was if you were in the Ninth Ward you knew what you had to do. We were raised in the Desire project and we didn't know we were poor. Come on now, if you want to talk about the women of the ninth ward! To me, we had that because we was always able to make something from nothing. That's the women of the 9th ward, Vikings, that I remember from being little seeing all the women in the projects doing what they had to do".

Barbra identified women in the Lower Ninth Ward as being resilient as well, specifically "fighters". She expressed,

> "I am hopeful that this area will be better than it was and somebody will see that we really care and see that we weren't just single parents and renting. Sixty to seventy percent of the people who lived down here owned their homes. We have pride in our neighborhood. We are very proud black women and we want our children to do better and we want them to live better because we are fighters".

Ebony stated,

> "I always knew, and I was always told by my mama, that Black women are strong women. We have had to carry a heavy load on our backs from the days of slavery and that definitely carries

> over to today's black women. We are strong, sturdy, beautiful, and powerful black women and we need to continue that path".

Likewise, Melanie noted that resilience of Black women as being genetically innate. She stated,

> "They never thought that Lower Ninth Ward would have this many people in its population at this point as it does because they don't understand the resilience of African American females. We have been going through grandmothers and great-grandmothers who were heads of households and they taught us how to survive. So survival is in our genes and I don't mean our Calvin Klein's".

Alicia also stated,

> "We are a strong people, people that care about each other. We are people that help and that need help. We're concerned about other people children, their families, and how they doing. We tend to be a little stronger and 'God will make a way" I know you've heard that a lot of times but I think sometimes we are just forgotten but as a Black women we are wonderful Black women and we are strong. And whatever the trauma is we shall overcome".

The resilience of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward is evident. The Lower Ninth Ward constituted as one of the most devastated communities in New Orleans as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Six years later, the community has not fully recovered. However, Black women have demonstrated their resilience by choosing to stay in the Lower Ninth Ward and fight for the revitalization of the community.

Summary

Participants in the study had their individual experiences with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. However, there were various similarities, which represented the collective experiences of Black women participants in this study. The finding revealed that participants perceive government officials to have a lack of consideration for the needs of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward; therefore many women are currently participating in a fight for justice and recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. Participants agreed that there was a lack of resources and overt discrimination of the Lower Ninth Ward post-

Katrina. Nonetheless, Black women continue to show resilience and strength in their experience with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. Therefore, the study utilized a qualitative methodology, which empowered Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward to share their personal stories and experiences with disaster recovery. Black women who are current as well as pre-Katrina residents of the Lower Ninth Ward Ninth were recruited for the research study. Initial participants were recruited from *A Community Voice*- a non-profit community organization in New Orleans Ninth Ward. Nine Black women were interviewed and included in the research study. Face to face interviews were conducted individually with each participant.

This chapter consists of four sections. The first section includes a thorough overview of the discussion and conclusion of the research study. Each of the of the five themes identified in the thematic analysis will be discussed in relation to the literature and theoretical framework considered in Chapter 1. The conclusion of the study will be stated in the second section followed by implications of the study in the third section. Lastly, recommendations for future research are considered.

Discussion

The current lived experiences of Black women residents of the Lower Ninth Ward included in the study are directly impacted by Hurricane Katrina, which struck in 2005. As described by Brunsma (2007), "The disaster that is Katrina is ongoing" (p. xv). Nearly six years later, although floodwaters are withdrawn and many homes have been renovated, there is a dire need for continual recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. The present reality surrounding the experiences of Black women and disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward is in alignment with the history of natural disasters in the United States. As noted in chapter 2, following the occurrence of natural disasters in U.S history, minorities residing in low-income communities often experience the most devastation from disasters combined with negligent and discriminatory recovery responses (Rivera & Miller, 2007).

Lack of government assistance

Most participants stated directly that there has been a lack of consideration by government officials for the unique recovery needs of Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward. More specifically, participants expressed that there is a lack of consideration for single black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. It is interesting that Black women participants in the study, both married and single women, identified possible distressing experiences that single Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward encounter. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, "In both the city of New Orleans and its broader Metropolitan Statistical Area, the percentage of female-headed families falling below the poverty line exceeded the national average, topping off roughly 40% (DeWeever & Hartmann, 2006). Such statistical evidence would suggest that governmental consideration would be given to female-headed households, such as households in the Lower Ninth Ward that consists of a large percentage of Black single female-headed families. However, this has not been the experience of single black females in the Lower Ninth Ward. As Ms. Kathleen stated,

> "Women who are widowed or single like I am, we were not considered for anything special. We had to do the best that we could with what we had so when we came home the situation was far worse than it is now. There was nothing special being done to alleviate the problems that you had as a widow or single black woman in this area".

The lack of governmental consideration was expressed in the participants' experience with FEMA and the Road Home Program. Six years later following Hurricane Katrina, limited governmental assistance and a plethora of resources (i.e., health care facilities, schools, supermarkets) in the Lower Ninth Ward constitute the experiences of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. Such lived experiences have initiated *political activism* in the lives of several Black women in the study.

Political activism is included in the core five themes of Black Feminist Thought. To reflect the distinctive themes of African American women's experiences, the core themes of U.S. Black feminist thought, "rely on paradigms that emphasize the importance of intersecting oppressions in shaping the U.S

matrix of domination" (Collins, 2000, p. 269). Participants in the study described their activism and compulsion to fight for resources and recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Fight for Recovery

A major concern expressed by Black women in the study was the need for adequate schools for children in the Lower Ninth Ward. This concern has lead to activism surrounding the opening of Martin Luther King School in 2007 and the current demand for more schools during recovery. As Ebony stated,

> "Right now were are in the fight of our life for schools. We are not in the master plan for schools. We were in the master plan in 2008. 2010 fast forward we are out of the plan for schools".

Hurricane Katrina considerably affected the New Orleans school district, particularly, primary schools in the Lower Ninth Ward. For instance, "The majority of the districts most damaged schools were in the same neighborhoods that sustained the worst overall destruction: the Ninth Ward, Lakeview, St. Bernard, and others" (Casserly, 2006, p. 205). Although the New Orleans Public school district prior to Hurricane Katrina was considered among the poorest in the nation, Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward are nevertheless concerned about access to quality education for children in the community.

There is a disheartening difference in the present number of schools available to children in the Lower Ninth Ward compared schools available pre-Katrina. For instance, as Melanie stated,

> "We had 5 public schools and 1 private school in the Lower Nine! And now we have one. That says to me that we're not concerned about educating children in the Lower Nine or children in the Lower Nine have to seek out their education outside of their community".

Martin Luther King School, which is the only school currently open in the Lower Ninth Ward, currently has a waiting list of students who desire to attend. The opening of additional schools in the Lower Ninth Ward could help offset this waiting list at Martin Luther King School. Also, more schools in the Lower Ninth Ward could potentially persuade families who temporarily relocated to other cities to return home. Therefore, during disaster recovery, the experiences of many black women in the study have included activism, specifically, to reopen schools and also fight for other inadequate resources.

Inadequate Resources

As noted by Wright & Bullard (2009), "Large swaths of neighborhood have been racially red-lined- with little commercial or business activity- even though many of the former residents have returned" (p. 267). This consideration is consistent with the current experiences of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward. For instance, Ebony recalled,

> "The game's that they have been playing is that- Well you don't have the demographics to support a school. The thing is the old adage "you build it they will come". We have lots of young people who have children and want to come back to this community but there are no schools here. So they stay away from here and that's all part of the game".

Also Barbra stated,

> "We don't have a supermarket in this neighborhood. We don't have a drugstore, we lost Walgreens, we had Popeye's, and we lost Popeye's. We have these little corner grocery stores and a can of cream is like $1.77. We don't have anybody that is really coming to ask us what do you need in this neighborhood. They keep telling us that we need more people to come back. Well, we have more people back. It's like the movie-Field of Dreams, if you build I they will come. That's my sentiments. Build it! Five years later they say you out to be over it-but we still need help.

Black women's experiences in the Lower Ninth Ward fighting for resources such as supermarkets and drugstores are also considered in Black Feminist Theory. Collins (2000) suggests, "Black feminist thought's identity as a "critical" social theory lies in its commitment to justice, both for U.S. Black women as a collectivity and for that of other similar oppressed groups" (p. 12). The activism of Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward stems from their desire to receive resources they believe is due to the Lower Ninth Ward. For example, Melanie stated that justice inspires her activism surrounding recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. She expressed,

> "Justice. It's not about Just US- but it's about justice and I feel as an African American and African American female that everybody deserves justice that's all. We want to be treated equitable and fairly and that's what inspires me to participate in activism".

The Lower Ninth Ward is in dire need of resources such as supermarkets, drugstores, and health care facilities. Throughout the recovery process, previous research studies have described the progress in recovery in neighborhoods such as the Lower Ninth Ward. However, nearly six years following Hurricane Katrina, the substandard recovery conditions in the Lower Ninth Ward remain the same. Bullard & Wright (2009) observed,

> "Streetlights are not in service in all areas, and lights on Interstate 10 in some areas of these communities function only sporadically. Most schools remain closed three years after the storm, and supermarkets have not returned in adequate numbers to service these predominately African-American areas" (p. 271).

Likewise Logan (2009) notes,

> "Although public officials have assiduously avoided saying so, there is a high probability that re-development in some neighborhoods will be discouraged by public policy…These include repair of infrastructure damage and reopening of facilities such as schools and police and fire stations" (p. 256).

Many residents consider the current condition of the Lower Ninth Ward six years following Hurricane Katrina as blatant discrimination. In addition, previous research has noted discrimination or redlining that existed in New Orleans in neighborhoods such as the Lower Ninth Ward decades prior to Hurricane Katrina (Taylor & Silver, 2006; Bullard & Wright, 2009).

However discrimination that is currently taking place during the recovery process in the Lower Ninth Ward, Black women participants continue to demonstrate a sense of communal bond with others throughout the Lower Ninth Ward community. A communal bond and formed relationships with others is a distinguishing characteristic of Black Feminist Thought. Collins (2000) notes, "Women talk to one another, and "their friendships with other women- mothers, sisters, grandmothers, friends, lovers- are vital to their growth and well –being" (p. 114). This idea in connection with Black Feminist thought was illuminated in the participants. For example, during the recovery process Vanessa expressed, "So it's not that

I know just the women in this area, we've all connected in regards to other areas in the city in our fight to get recovery but it has not happened". Barbra also stated,

> "We have a lot of elderly people in this neighborhood and (we) especially the ladies in this block we have really bonded so we look out for each other- so that's who helps us (each other)". We decided that we were going to look out for each other. We would go around and make sure we knew who was giving out food, or clothing, or any type of help. Light bulbs, paint, we got in our automobiles and we went around trying to find those things for us until we were able to get Road Home assistance which wasn't a big help at all"

Despite the various experiences of Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward, Black women's display of strength and resilience is admirable. Deweever & Hartmann (2006) argue that "Multiple disadvantages faced by the women of the Gulf both increased their vulnerability in a time of crisis and, unless proactively addressed, remain an impediment to their ability to rebuild their lives long after the storms" (p. 85). The intersecting oppression of race, class, and gender influences the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward. However, most Black women in the study expressed their strength and willingness to endure hardships in their community during recovery.

Ebony recalled,

> "I always knew, and I was always told by my mama, that Black women are strong women. We have had to carry a heavy load on our backs from the days of slavery and that definitely carries over to today's black women. We are strong, sturdy, beautiful, and powerful black women and we need to continue that path".

In response to the resilience of Black women, Melanie also stated,

> "They never thought that Lower Ninth Ward would have this many people in its population at this point as it does because they don't understand the resilience of African American females. We have been going through grandmothers and great-grandmothers who were heads of households and they taught us how to survive. So survival is in our genes and I don't mean our Calvin Klein's".

From Black women's current lived experience with disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward, one can conclude that although nearly six years following Hurricane Katrina, Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward are faced daily with the long-term effects of Hurricane Katrina.

Intersectionality

As Black women residing the in the Lower Ninth Ward which is classified as a low-income minority community, race, class, and gender oppression are presented in the experiences of the Black women in the research study. Intersecting oppressions are a main characteristic of Black Feminist Theory. Racially, the women in the study represent the race that was most affected by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans (Bullard & Wright, 2009). The socioeconomic status of the women serves as a representation specifically to class oppression. For instance, many participants expressed the lack of income- and personal resources of which they earn to help them fully recover from Hurricane Katrina. Most participants in the research study earned less than 37,000 annually. Likewise, the experiences with governmental programs and such as FEMA and recovery programs such as the Bring New Orleans Back (BNOB) Commission, also serve as an indication that women's needs were not fully considered and therefore has contributed to forms of gender oppression experienced by Black women in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Conclusion

As natural disasters become more prevalent throughout the U.S and the world, it is important that communities such as the Lower Ninth Ward are not continually overlooked and discriminated against during recovery process. The experiences of Black women in the research study included but are not limited to governmental neglect during recovery, political activism, inadequate resources, neighborhood discrimination, community bonding, and resilience. Based on the findings of the research study, one can conclude:

1. The national, state, and local government's subsidies and disaster recovery plans have not resulted in a rapid recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward.

2. Six years following Hurricane Katrina, Black women in the research study continue to face recovery challenges as a result of residing in the Lower Ninth Ward.
3. Lack of recovery and perceived discrimination towards the Lower Ninth Ward has provoke Black women in the research study to use activism as a means to achieving justice.
4. In this study, Black women prove to be valiant despite facing continuing recovery challenges as residents in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Immediately following Hurricane Katrina, leading government recovery plans to rebuild and reconstruct New Orleans such as the Bring New Orleans Back (BNOB) Commission were implemented. However, despite the financial investment in recovery plans such as BNOB, the Lower Ninth Ward has not been a benefactor in recovery. It should be noted,

> "In its deliberations, the BNOB never effectively included the voices of the black poor, or those who were displaced by Katrina. Its far-reaching areas of concern covered sweeping proposals to remake the city and local government based on the elite's wish list for "good government" reforms rather than on the best interests of the city's African American population" (Sanyika, 2009, p. 95).

The current experiences of Black women in the research study highlight racial, gender, and class oppression in the Lower Ninth Ward. Black women in the study articulated the current struggle in fully recovering from Hurricane Katrina. Inadequate assistance and consideration from the various levels of government has sparked activism in the lives of Black women to combat oppressive and discriminatory recovery acts in the Lower Ninth Ward. However, philanthropic actions demonstrated by local and national citizens will help to alleviate the recovery challenges faced by Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Implications

The findings of the study imply that the history of disaster recovery continues to repeat itself. The history of natural disasters in the U.S. is characterized by people of color residing in low-income neighborhoods experiencing the immediate and long-term impacts caused by natural disasters. The expe-

riences of Black women residents in the Lower Ninth Ward reveal that recovery plans implemented by the state of Louisiana and local governments have not been gender- inclusive in practice. It is evident that marginalization of minority communities in New Orleans continues to occur throughout the disaster recovery process. Philanthropic efforts would prove to be beneficial in improving the disaster recovery process in the Lower Ninth Ward.

REFERENCES

Ariyabandu, M. M. (2009). Sex gender and gender relations in disasters. In E. Enarson & P.G. Dhar Chakrabarti (Eds.), *Women, gender, and disaster: Global issues and initiatives* (pp. 5- 17). Los Angeles: Sage

Barry, J. M. (1997). *Rising tide: the great Mississippi flood of 1927 and how it changed America*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Bassett, D. L. (2009). The overlooked significance of place in law and policy: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina. In R. Bullard & B. Wright (Eds.), Race, Place, and Environmental Justice after Hurricane Katrina (pp. 49-63). CO: Westview Press

Bates, L. K. (2006). Post-Katrina housing: problems, policies, and prospects for African Americans in New Orleans. *Black Scholar*, 36, 13-31.

Bates, L. K. & Green, R. A. (2009). Housing Recovery in the Ninth Ward: Disparities in policy, process and prospects. In R. Bullard & B. Wright (Eds.), Race, Place, and Environmental Justice after Hurricane Katrina (pp. 229-245). CO: Westview Press.

Birch, E. L. (2006). *Rebuilding Urban Places after disaster: lessons from hurricane Katrina*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bond, J. (2007). In Katrina's Wake: Racial Implications of the New Orleans Disaster. *Journal of Race and Policy*, 3, 16-32

Brown, C. S., Mistry, R., & Bigler, R. (2007). Hurricane Katrina: African American Children's Perceptions of Race, Class, and Government Involvement Amid a National Crisis. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 7, 191-208.

Brunsma, D. L., Overfelt, D., & Picou, J. S. (2007). *Sociology of Katrina: Perspectives on a modern catastrophe*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield

Bullard, R. D. & Wright, B. (2009). *Race, place, and environmental justice after hurricane Katrina: Struggles to reclaim, rebuild, and revitalize New Orleans and the Gulf Coast*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press

Butterbaugh, L. (2005). Why did Hurricane Katrina hit women so hard? *Off Our Backs*, 35, 17-19

Casserly, M. (2006). Double Jeopardy: Public education in New Orleans before and after the storm. In C. Hartman & G. Squires (Eds.), There is no such thing as a natural disaster (pp. 197-214). New York: Routledge.

Collins, P.H. (1986). Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black feminist thought. *Social Problems*, 33, S14-S32.

Collins, P. H. (1989). The social construction of Black Feminist Thought. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 14, 745-773.

Collins, P. H. (1998). Fighting words: Black women & the search for Justice. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Collins, P. H. (2000) Black feminist thought: knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment. New York: Routledge

Cordasco, K. M., et al. (2007). "They Blew the Levee": Distrust of authorities among Hurricane Katrina Evacuees. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 18, 277-282.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches*. California: Sage

Curtis, S. A. (2007). *Hurricane Katrina damage assessment: Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi ports and coasts.* Reston, VA: American Society of Civil Engineers.

David, E. (2008). Cultural trauma, memory, and gendered collective action: The case of women of the storm following Hurricane Katrina. *NSWA Journal*, 20, 138-162.

DeWeever, A. A., & Hartman, H. (2006). Abandoned before the storms: The glaring disaster of gender, race, and class disparities in the Gulf. In C. Hartman & G. Squires (Eds.), There is no such thing as a natural disaster (pp. 85-102). New York: Routledge.

Dynes, R. R., & Rodrigues, H. (2007). Finding and framing Katrina: The social construction of disaster. In D. Brunsma, D. Overfelt, & J. Picou (Eds.), The sociology of Katrina: Perspectives of a mod ern catastrophe (pp. 23-34). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield

Enarson, E., & Dhar Chakrabarti, P. G. (2009). *Women, gender and disaster: global issues and initiatives.* Los Angeles: Sage

Gerber, B. J. (2007). Disaster Management in the United States: Examining Key Political Challenges. *The Policy Studies Journal*, 35, 227-238.

Green, R., Bates, L., & Smyth, A. (2007). Impediments to recovery in New Orleans' Upper and Lower Ninth Ward: One year after Hurricane Katrina. *Disasters*, 31, 311-335.

Hartman. C., & Squires, G. (2006). *There is no such thing as a natural disaster: race, class and Hurricane Katrina*. New York: Routledge

Hawkins, R. (2009). Same as it ever was, only worse: Negative life events and poverty among New Orleans Katrina survivors. *Families in Society*, 90, 375-381

Henkel, K. E., Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2006). Institutional Discrimination, Individual Racism, and Hurricane Katrina. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 6, 99-124.

Hirsh, A. R., & Levert, A. L. (2009). The Katrina Conspiracies: The problem of Trust in rebuilding an American City. *Journal of Urban History*, 35, 207-219.

Hull, G. T., Scott, P. B., & Smith, B. (1982). All the women are white, all the Blacks are men, but some of us are brave: Black women's studies. Old Westbury, N.Y: Feminist Press.

Kates, R. W., Colten, C. E., Laska, S., & Leatherman, S. P. (2006). Reconstruction of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina: A research perspective. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, 103, 14653-14660.

Koritz, A., & Sanchez, G. J. (2009). *Civic engagement in the wake of Katrina.*

Kutner, N. G. (2007). Health needs, health care, and Katrina. In D. Brunsma, D. Overfelt, & J. Picou (Eds.), The sociology of Katrina: Perspectives on a modern catastrophe. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield

Litt, J. (2008). Getting out or staying put: An African American women's network in evacuation from Katrina. *NSWA Journal*, 20, 32-48.

Luft, R. E. (2008). Looking for common ground: Relief work in Post-Katrina New Orleans as an American parable of race and gender violence. NWSA Journal, 20, 5-31.

Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2005). Practical research: planning and design—8th ed.

Logan, J. R. (2009). Unnatural disaster: Social impacts and policy choices after Katrina. In R. Bullard & B. Wright (Eds.), Race, Place, and Environmental Justice after Hurricane Katrina (pp. 87-111). CO: Westview Press

Malloy, R. P. (2009). *Law and recovery from disaster: hurricane Katrina*. Farnham, England: Ashgate

Markel, D. P., Delehanty, W., & Beverlin, M. (2007). Media Framing and Racial Attitudes in the Aftermath of Katrina. *Policy Studies Journal*, 35, 587-605.

Olasky, M. N. (2006). *The politics of disaster: Katrina, big government, and a new strategy for future crises*. Nashville, Tenn: W Pub Group.

Peek, L. & Fothergill, A. (2008). Displacement, gender, and challenges of parenting after Hurricane K trina. *NWSA Journal*, 20, 69-105.

Philipsen, D. (2007). Uncle Sam's Broken Arm- Historical Reflections on Race, Class, and Government in the Wake of Katrina. *Journal of Race & Policy*, 3, 33-45.

Pine, J. C. & Wilson, H. J. (2007). Community at Risk: An examination of four neighborhoods flooded from hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. *Journal of Race & Policy*, 3, 67-87.

Powers, M. (2006). A Matter of Choice: Historical lessons for disaster recovery. In C Hartman & G. D. Squires (Eds). *There is no such thing as a Natural Disaster: Race, Class, and Hurricane Katrina.* (pp. 13-35). New York: Routledge.

Ramalho, E. M., & Durodoye, B. A. (2008). Looking Back to move forward: Katrina's black women survivors speak. *NWSA Journal*, 20, 116-137.

Rivera, J. D., & Miller, D. S. (2007). Continually neglected: situating natural disasters in the African American Experience. *Journal of Black Studies*, 37, 502-522.

Saldana, J. (2009). The Coding Manual for Qualitative researchers. New York: Sage

Sanyika, M. (2009). Katrina and the condition of black New Orleans: The struggle for justice, equity, and democracy. In R. Bullard & B. Wright (Eds.), Race, Place, and Environmental Justice after Hurricane Katrina pp. 87-111. CO: West view Press.

Saucier, D., Smith, S. J., & McManus, J. L. (2007). The possible role of discrimination in the rescue response after Hurricane Katrina. *Journal of Race and Policy*, 3, 113-121.

Shockley, K.G. (2007). Finally Heard: African Centered Perspectives on Hurricane Katrina. *Journal of Race & Policy*, 3, 88-101.

Springer, K. (2002). Third Wave Black Feminism? Journal of Women in Culture and Society. 27, 1059-1082.

Stehr, S. D. (2006). The political economy of urban disaster assistance. *Urban Affairs Review*, 41, 492-500

Sylves, R. (2008). Disaster policy and politics: Emergency management and homeland security. Washington, DC: CQ Press

Taylor, U. (1998). The Historical Evolution of Black Feminist Theory and Praxis. *Journal of Black Studies*, 29, 234-253.

Taylor, J. & Silver, J. (2006). From poverty to prosperity: The critical role of financial institutions. In C. Hartman & G. Squires (Eds.), There is no such thing as a natural disaster (pp. 233-254). New York: Routledge.

Whelan, R. K., & Strong, D. (2009). Rebuilding lives post-Katrina: Choices and challenges in New Orleans's economic development. In R. Bullard & B. Wright (Eds.), Race, Place and Environmental Justice after Hurricane Katrina (pp. 183-204). CO: Westview Press.

Willinger, B. (2008). Katrina and the Women of New Orleans. *Newcomb College Center for Research on Women.*

Wilson, W. J. (2009). More than just race: being black and poor in the inner city. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Zorttarelli, L.K. (2008). Post- Hurricane Katrina Employment Recovery: The Interaction of Race and Place. *Social Science Quarterly*, 89, 592-607.

APPENDIX A

Georgia State University
Department of African American Studies

1 Informed Consent

Title: Recovery & Recognition- Black women and the Lower Ninth Ward

Principal Investigator: Jonathan Gayles, PhD
Student Investigator: Jamesia King

Sponsor:

I. Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences of Black women with disaster recovery in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward community. You are invited to participate because you are a Black woman and resident of the Lower Ninth Ward community. A total of 10 participants will be recruited for this study. Participation will require a total of two hours of your time.

II. Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to meet with the researcher Jamesia King twice. The first meeting is a 1-hour interview. The second meeting is for a follow up conversation to review the written transcript of the interview. The interview will take place at a location of your choice. The interviews will be audio taped. You will not be personally identified in the work. You will choose an alternate name.

III. Risks:

There may be minimal risk in this study. We will try to limit risk and provide privacy. If you experience any discomfort you may contact the researcher. Also, you may choose to not participate in the study at any time. Contact information to a local counseling center will also be provided if needed.

IV. Benefits:

The information learned in this experience may empower subjects to reflect critically on the politics and issues regarding disaster recovery in the Lower Ninth Ward community. The study will also potentially benefit society by informing public policies or influencing non-profit organizations to change their policies related to disaster recovery.

V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you have the right to drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

VI. Confidentiality:

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. The information that you provide will be used in this research study only. All information that can personally identify you will be removed. The student investigator will only have access to the information provided. Information may also be shared with those who make sure the study is done correctly (GSU Institutional Review Board and the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP). The information you provide will be stored in a locked cabinet. The audio recordings will be erased after transcription review. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results. The findings will be summarized and reported in group form. You will not be identified personally.

VII. Contact Persons:

Contact persons are Jonathan Gayles at 404-413- 5142 or by email: jgayles@gsu.edu, and Jamesia King at 832-381-4168 or by email: jamesiaking7@gmail.com. Please contact the researchers if you have questions about this study. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or svogtner1@gsu.edu.

VIII. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you are willing to volunteer for this research and be audio recorded, please sign below.

_____ _____
Participant Date

_____ _____
Principal Investigator or Researcher Obtaining Consent Date

APPENDIX B

Part I: Demographic Information

1. Age: _____
2. Education: High School/ Some College/ College Degree/ Graduate Degree
3. Income: _____
4. Marital Status: Married/ Single
5. Number of Children: _____
6. Home Ownership: Rent/ Own
7. Occupation:

Before Hurricane Katrina_____

After Hurricane Katrina_____

Residence before Hurricane Katrina: _____

Part II. Contact Information

Primary contact:

Participants Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Secondary Contact:

Relatives name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

APPENDIX C

***The following questions are apart of the interview guide*:**

1. How long have you lived in the Lower Ninth Ward?

2. How much consideration was given to African American women by the authorities in their recovery plans for the Lower Ninth Ward after Katrina?

3. In your opinion, which recovery programs are most successful? Why?

4. Do you think the recovery programs are sensitive to your needs as a Black woman in the Lower Ninth Ward?

5. Tell me some of the challenges you as an African American woman have faced during the recovery process?

6. How are you dealing with your challenges?

7. What kind of assistance was offered to you during the recovery process?

8. What improvements, if any, do you think could be made in the recovery process that would better assist black women in the Lower Ninth Ward?

9. Did you feel discriminated against, in anyway, during the recovery process?

10. What efforts, if any, would you like to see take place in the current recovery process?

11. What are some of the post Katrina policies, if any, that are geared towards helping African American women?

12. How effective have they been generally and to you personally?

13. How would you assess the role of FEMA and its contribution towards you as an African American woman?

14. In your opinion, is the recovery process on going or standstill? Why?

15. Overall, what do we need to know about the experiences of African American women in the Lower Ninth Ward?

APPENDIX D

Table 1: Overview of Participants

Women	*Age*	*Education*	*Income p/y*	*Marital Status*	*# Of Children*	*Home: Own /Rent*	*Occupation BK= Before Katrina AK= After Katrina*
Ebony Wilson	35	Some College	30,000	Married	2	Own	BK: Admin Assistant AK: Caregiver
Barbra Woods	60	Some College	40,000	Married	4	Own	BK/AK: Admin Assistant
Ellen Rose	61	High School	20-25,000	Married	2	Own	BK/AK: Cosmetologist
Patrice Adams	35	College Degree	25,000	Single	0	Own	BK/AK: Community organizer/ consultant
Melanie Stevenson	59	College Degree	36,000	Married	1	Own	BK: Elementary Teacher AK: Retired
Kathleen Davis	76	High School	Retired	Single/ Widow	2	Own	BK/AK: None Retired
Alicia Smith	56	Some College	12,000/ Disability	Single	0	Own	BK: Sales Associate AK: Retired/Disability
Mary Ann Johnson	61	Some College	None	Single	0	Living w/ friend	BK: Beautician AK: Unemployed
Sharon Jones	57	High School	Retired	Single	1	Own	BK: Insurance agency officer AK: Same company-retired 2008