ABSTRACT

New Directions in Social Science Research:
The Institutionalization of
Complementary Theory in Sociology

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The study intends to confirm the existence of complementary theory by ascertaining
the main characteristics, determinants and types of neighbourhood disciplinary climate in
Trinidad. Additionally, it seeks to investigate the relationships between and within all
variables associated with neighbourhood, and education.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including questionnaire
(survey), and structured and unstructured interviews, was used over a period of two years.
This reflects a ‘complementary methodological’ approach.

The findings suggest that ‘complementary theory’ exists because it was discovered
that neighbourhood disciplinary climate can be described by factors such as ‘turbulent’ on the
one hand and ‘serene’ and ‘functional’ on the other.

Furthermore, they indicate the existence of ‘complementary theory’ by confirming
that academic achievement (including secondary and university qualifications), size, age-
structure and human capital potential are causally related to neighbourhood disciplinary
climate. Additionally, four ideal types of disciplinary climate (Exemplary
Discipline/Perfect, Neighbourhoods of High Discipline/Quasi Perfect, Neighbourhoods
of Moderate Discipline/Mezzo and Low Discipline/Anomic) were unearthed. The research
found that the relationships between and within all the variables were particularly weak, the
strongest ($r = -0.507$) being between the number of children and the number of adolescents in
neighbourhoods.
The re-conceptualizing of the term education to educational involvement and the search for ‘complements’ of neighbourhood enabled the initiation of this ‘new’ theoretical framework -complementary theory.

KEY WORDS
‘Complementary’ Theory, Neighbourhood Disciplinary Climate, Academic Achievement, Educational Involvement.