SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES OF RIO DE JANEIRO

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ABSTRACT: The intention of this paper is to show how the exchange of resources help the residents of low income communities lead productive lives, and how the exclusion from this exchange impedes community development and renders individuals and groups susceptible to poverty, risk, and vulnerability to outside stressors. The theory of Social Capital explains that the exchange of resources is necessary for residents of low income communities to live a productive life in diminished poverty. However, if the social bonds that facilitate this exchange are broken, individuals become socially excluded from the benefits of this exchange. Social exclusion occurs when individuals or groups are denied access to opportunities and resources they require. When individuals and groups cannot participate in the exchange of social and physical resources, levels of trust between members of a community will decrease along with the potential for development. Deprivation in one sphere of society generated by social, political, and economic vulnerability will affect deprivation in other areas. In this paper, I will discuss observable geographic exclusion and inclusion, as it appears in the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro.

KEYWORDS: Social Exclusion, Social Capital, *Favelas.*

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INTRODUCTION

The word *favela* is used to describe low income settlements in Brazil. These settlements are fundamentally characterized by poverty, 'self-help' construction, ambiguous legal statuses, isolation, searing public sentiment, and the influx of organized crime. Over the years, many actors including local leaders, politicians, drug traffickers, NGOs, residents, and the police have tried to govern these sprawling communities with varying degrees of success. Today, a complex network of relationships exists between these actors that collectively attempt to govern the *favelas* of Rio. Contingent upon the political situation, power within these rival governing bodies fluctuate. The resulting relationships are hardly static. Depending on which actor has the most control, *favela* life can result in fear, stability, war, peace, or anything in between.

Originally, *favelas* were formed as illegal squatter settlements when emancipated slaves–turned soldiers–were not compensated for their efforts in the War of Canudos circa 1895. The soldiers returned to Rio and established a settlement–in protest–on Morro da Providência which sat in front of the old War Ministry. The government did nothing. Over time, this settlement grew in population, attracted new inhabitants, and ran out of space. Before long, similar *favelas* existed in several locations, marking Rio distinguishably by contiguous low and high income settlements. Due to recent tenor laws, many *favelas* are no longer illegal, but are still in the process of receiving public and regulated services, as well as reversing their unwarranted stigmas associated with squalor and disease.

Due to the complicated nature of *favela* government combined with their ambiguous legal statuses, these low income communities are vulnerable places filled with extreme poverty. The life for *favela* residents is one that is physically, economically, socially, and politically isolated from the rest of the city. In the absence of true government control, the residents of the *favelas* rely on their own social ties to mitigate their poverty, deprivation, and vulnerability. Residents rely on their relationships for survival. In this sense, social capital and the exchange of resources becomes an extremely important and vital phenomenon that occurs in the *favela* arena of Rio de Janeiro.

What is social capital? Social capital can be explained simply in a cyclical model involving three steps. The first step is conceptualizing the idea for a

community development initiative. The second step is utilizing either a strong bonding or weak bridging social tie to share and exchange necessary resources and capital. The third, and most important, step is to actually produce the development initiative. When pooled resources are utilized, the product of social capital (the resulting development) can help the individual to achieve new development initiatives. Thus, the cycle of social capital can once again be set into motion.

The theory of social capital explains that the exchange of capital is necessary to promote community development and to alleviate poverty. However, when individuals and groups are passively or actively excluded from this exchange, they are subsequently excluded from the participation in social, economic, and political realms of society. The lack of this fundamental participation further excludes and isolates the residents of these communities. In this paper, it is my intention to clarify why social exclusion occurs, and to examine how social exclusion affects community development in the *favelas* Rio de Janeiro. I intend to discuss the causes and consequences of social exclusion as experienced by three community projects within the *favela* arena.

THE NGOS: CATALYTIC COMMUNITIES, CIACAC, & CALLE

It seems imperative to note that the majority of this paper was researched from a strong NGO perspective. From July 2008 until January 2009, I researched and contributed to two NGOs and one community development project in three different geographical locations in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The names of the NGOs are Catalytic Communities, Centro Integrado de Apoio a Crianças e Adolescentes de Comunidades (CIACAC), and Calle.

 The first project, Catalytic Communities exists virtually as an online website promoting the exchange of sustainable community projects for replication. The second project, Centro Integrado de Apoio a Crianças e Adolescentes de Comunidades (CIACAC) is a grassroots program located in the North Zone of Rio providing children with an alternative to drug trafficking involvement. The third project, Calle, is located within the South Zone of Rio and is primarily run by international volunteers who teach English to both children and adults. From one to three times per week, I met with these organizations to determine how social capital functioned to increase community development in the low income communities. My

intention was to determine how and if social capital was accomplished to produce positive community development.

I found that social capital is vital to the workings of low income communities. Especially in low income communities, many residents heavily rely on the exchange of resources between neighbors. According to the theory of social capital, a community can benefit by collectively exchanging the resources and capital offered by all of its members. When a community is able to work collectively and exchange resources, the welfare and general well-being of the community improves (Márquez et al. 2008). For example, every month CIACAC hosts a community lunch. Without the donations from the local shops and the participation of all the children who had been assigned to bring a specific ingredient or item, the lunch would not be possible.

In order for members of low income communities to lead "productive lives outside poverty" they must be able to participate in the exchange of resources with other individuals or groups (Silver 1994). Although members of cohesive social groups "may share very little in common," the resources that are shared ultimately aid in community development efforts (Kabeer 2005). Not to mention, the fact that members may often share little in common, ensures a diverse set of resources which can be exchanged. In low income communities, the horizontal exchange of resources facilitated through strong bonding and weak bridging social ties are utilized to produce vary levels of development initiatives intended to improve the community.

The sharing of resources is extremely important when individuals or groups cannot afford or do not have to particular means. If social capital explains increased social capital, and increased development, what happens when people are socially excluded? When the social ties connecting individuals and groups to capital are broken, communities are rendered unable to produce social capital, and community development initiatives do not occur. When people are excluded from this exchange and excluded from participation in certain social spheres, social capital and development both decline. The residents of low income communities are left vulnerable, deprived, isolated, marginalized, susceptible to violence, and prone to the involvement in illegal and dangerous activities.

While performing my cross-sectional field research in Rio, I observed three main examples of social exclusion. The leading instances of social exclusion related to political and economic boundaries as well as the absence of adequate health care. Inversely, I also observed instances of social inclusion, meant to reverse the affects of

social exclusion. These inclusionary factors were linked primarily to education and communication. The primary intellectual merit of this paper lies in the investigation of how social exclusion affects those living in the low income communities of Rio de Janeiro, and how social inclusion can benefit the well-being of *favela* residents.

INVESTIGATING SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The multidimensional and dynamic term social exclusion was first coined in 1974, by the then French Secretary of State for Social Action, René Lenoir. Social exclusion occurs when the social bonds that tie individuals and groups to the institutions that manage society are intentionally or unintentionally ruptured. When these ties are broken, and groups are denied access to both services and opportunity that is made available to others. Social exclusion is not just limited to the constraint of possessions or the sharing of resources. Beyond material poverty, social exclusion can also be considered identity-based discrimination when individuals and groups are passively or actively denied access to position, rank, status, respect, or simply the companionship of others (Barker 2005). The lack of communication and cooperation impedes resource exchange and community development. Without the sharing of resources individuals and groups become susceptible to poverty, risk, and vulnerability to outside stressors.

Social exclusion occurs in a variety of social settings and is exacerbated by a multitude of factors. The socially excluded often suffer from a combination of linked problems such as being underpaid, underemployed, or unskilled. Other problems often include inadequate housing and health care, the exposure to crime, and the absence of familial ties (Social Exclusion Unit 2001). Any predisposition to vulnerability increases the likelihood of social exclusion, as many causes and consequences of social exclusion are interrelated (Márquez et al. 2008). Individuals and groups are traditionally discriminated against based on religion, age, class, race, ethnicity, indigenous and migrant status, and gender. These factors generally influence the landless, the poor, the poorly educated, those who have insecure livelihoods, the disabled, the elderly, the sick, children, single parents, marginals, and other social 'misfits' (Sen 2000).

One of the most important characteristics of social exclusion is that the contributing factors are often interrelated and combine to create ever more

multifaceted and cyclical problems (Social Exclusion Unit 2001). Due to the fact that social indicators are so interrelated, deprivation is one sphere will automatically affect exclusion from another realm of society. For example, "being excluded from the opportunity to be employed or to receive credit may lead to economic impoverishment that may, in turn, lead to other deprivations such as undernourishment or homelessness" (Sen 2000, 11). The exclusion from certain social relations can lead to other deprivations, thus exacerbating the "functionings" (or lack thereof) of the excluded (Márquez et al. 2008).

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE

Generally, there are two types of social exclusion: active and passive. Active social exclusion occurs when either the organization, or the individual, makes a conscious choice to exclude themselves or others. Active exclusion occurs when individuals are purposefully and deliberately denied access, membership, and participation in social situations. For example, in the low income communities of Rio de Janeiro, the local drug trackers often prohibit residents and community leaders from "circulating freely within their community and to other communities…throughout the wider city" (Williamson 2000, 38). Resultantly, *favela* residents are actively excluded from receiving benefits they would stand to gain through bonding and bridging ties with members of other communities. Through active social exclusion encouraged by the drug traffickers, *favela* residents suffer from the inability to exchange capital horizontally. In the absence of exchange, individuals and groups are limiting their potential to benefit from their neighbors and to produce social capital.

Passive exclusion occurs when individuals and groups are unintentionally deprived from social advantages without deliberate attempt (Haan 1999). The majority of low income community residents are "employed in low-paying occupations, such as in domestic services, the garment industry, solid waste recycling, security service, and day labor; even crime constitutes a type of income-generating activity for some residents" (Riley et al. 2007, 5). Due to the type of job that a *favela* resident is capable of performing, most residents are passively excluded from the benefits provided to formal sector employees. These benefits include job security, minimum wage compensation, pension, and health insurance (Riley et al. 2007).

Through passive social exclusion, *favela* residents are excluded from receiving benefits that are offered to those in a higher paying occupation. The lack of benefits for *favela* residents will directly relate to the welfare and quality of life they are able to enjoy.

CONSEQUENCES OF EXCLUSION

According to the World Bank, communities are dynamic entities characterized by various forms of divisions and differences that can lead to conflict (Grootaert et al. 2004). One of these divisions is related to social fragmentation. The fracture of a community into smaller social groups occurs quite frequently as smaller groups are better equipped to manage and facilitate collective action and capital exchange. Francis Fukuyama suggests that individuals who form tight-knit social groups are most successful at diverting public resources to their favored cause, thus bringing the benefits of development to individual, group, and community (Fukuyama 2001).

Although social fragmentation can be beneficial in aiding specific in-groups, it can also be detrimental to specific out-groups. When the bonds that connect individuals to the cultural, ethical, intellectual, and theoretical aspects of society are ruptured, individuals become divided along ideological lines (Haan 1999). As certain individuals fall within those ideological boundaries and are included with the group, others fall outside those boundaries, and are excluded. When individuals or groups are excluded from participation in certain social spheres, either intentionally or unintentionally, the exchange of capital does not take place.

In this manner, social exclusion can be used as a framework to understand deprivation, dependence, vulnerability, and poverty (Haan 1999). Individuals and groups that become socially excluded are restricted from engaging in a set of formal and informal exchanges with one another. Without the safeguard of collective action, participation, and exchange the benefits of social capital cannot be realized. Ultimately, the exclusion "from common facilities or benefits" will significantly handicap and impoverish the life an individual or group can enjoy (Sen 2000, 11). The resulting social, political, and economic disenfranchisement will invariably beget deprivation, isolation, and poverty.

Without membership, access, participation, and the ability to exchange resources, individuals and groups are rendered unable to protect themselves against

poverty, vulnerability, and other variables that influence discriminatory practices (Márquez et al. 2008). Without group participation, individuals cannot receive emotional, physical, or fiscal support from his neighbors and are left vulnerable, susceptible, and deprived. According to Aristotle, "an impoverished life is one without the freedom to undertake important activities" and is considered a life marked by inadequacy, shortage of income, and the inability to exchange capital (Sen 2000, 12). The consequence of social exclusion can lead to social vulnerability which can result in the decrease of social capital, the decrease in development. Social exclusion can also increase isolation, marginalization, deprivation, vulnerability, poverty, and the involvement or victimization of drug or gang related violence (Barker 2005).

OBSERVABLE GEOGRAPHICAL EXCLUSION: BOUNDARIES

In the *favelas* of Rio, I observed three types of social exclusion. The first form of social exclusion relates to political boundaries that were actively imposed through the politics of drug trafficking. The drug trafficking movement inhibits both movement and communication of *favela* residents throughout the city. The second type of social exclusion relates to economic boundaries. Due to the location of each *favela*, both distance and the economic means to travel became two major obstacles excluding residents from accessing the benefits of the urban center. The third form of social exclusion relates to the geographic isolation. Social isolation caused by the lack of public services reinforces other forms of social exclusion caused by social, political, and economic boundaries.

POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Boundaries are one of the foremost problems exacerbating social exclusion in Rio de Janeiro. Politically, the low income communities are often controlled by one of four drug trafficking factions (Comando Vermelho, Comando Vermelho Jovem, Amigos dos Amigos, and Terceiro Comando). In 2008, a map was made by the mayoral campaign of Fernando Gabeira depicting where the *favelas* are located, which drug trafficking faction or militia is currently in control as well as areas of recent conflict. The map clearly illustrates many rival drug factions located in close proximity to one another. Subsequently, it is not surprising that the different factions often fight over territory in which they sell drugs. Not all *favelas* are ideal for selling

drugs, nor are all places in the *favelas* for that matter. Ideally, drug traffickers choose a *boca de fuma* (a point of sale), that is both hidden from police, yet accessible to clients. Traffickers are often at war with one another to obtain exclusive rights to these areas, and are often at war with the police. The subsequent environment of hostility subjects residents to extreme danger and also excludes them from forming bonds with residents in other *favelas*. It is difficult and unsafe to make friends with individuals who live in another community controlled by a different drug faction.

Due to the rivalry amongst the drug factions, residents and non-residents alike, find it almost impossible, and generally unsafe, to enter communities that are not their own. "The segregation of urban environments and the 'subcultures' of violence, criminality, drug dependence and squalor…often characterize…territorially excluded neighborhoods" (Kabeer 2005, 3). Spatially, residents are often kept within their own neighborhoods under the watchful eye of their neighborhood drug faction. "The spatial dimension of exclusion is not entirely divorced from its resource and identity dimensions since it is usually culturally devalued and economically impoverished groups that inhabit physically deprived spaces" (Kabeer 2005, 3). The result of this restriction is community isolation and the inability to share resources and ideas horizontally.

Political boundaries also affect the ability for individuals and groups to communicate with one another. As previously mentioned the active or passive subscription to a drug trafficking faction will dictate where and to which communities certain people have access. Due to restrictions imposed by drug traffickers and the political control of the *favela*, isolation and immobility become other obstacles associated with social exclusion.

The community development project Calle utilizes the skills of domestic and international volunteers to provide educational services to residents of Tabajaras located in Copacabana in the South Zone of Rio. The purpose of this organization is to educate residents to ultimately improve their quality of life. Due to the restrictions imposed on them by the drug traffickers, expansion and replication of this project in a different community to provide similar benefits cannot occur. Calle is cannot reproduce itself in other communities in need of similar aid. Although Calle has been successful within the community of Tabajaras, the organization lacks the support of residents living outside of their community. In this instance, if the community of

Tabajaras was not isolated, it is likely that Calle would be able gain local support, and it would be able to aid other communities across the city.

In Brazil, I taught English classes at Calle. One day, I was out in a touristy neighborhood downtown called Santa Teresa when I met a very friendly waiter by the name of João. João and I spoke for a while in both English and Portuguese before he mentioned that he would greatly value the opportunity to practice his English. He felt strongly about improving his English so he could better communicate with his customers. I told João about my English class in Tabajaras. I even sketched directions to the class on a napkin. Days later, I was telling a friend that I was saddened that João had chosen not to come join the class. My friend told me it is not that he did not want to come; it is that he could not come. This is when I first realized the implications of political boundaries.

Due to the political boundaries drawn by the drug trafficking factions, individuals and groups are not allowed to freely transverse the city. In this manner, individuals are excluded from participating in events intended for their benefit. Inversely, Calle is also restricted from replicating its program in a different low income community. Ultimately, political boundaries have the potential to restrict individuals and groups from exchanging social capital to produce development.

ECONOMIC BOUNDARIES

The physical geography of certain *favelas* inherently limits accessibility and creates boundaries that are difficult to cross. "Spatial disadvantage may lie in the remoteness and isolation of a location which makes it physically difficult for its inhabitants to participate in broader socio-economic processes" (Kabeer 2005, 3). In the case of CIACAC, transportation frequently becomes an obstacle contributing to social exclusion. Not only is it difficult and costly for residents to arrange transportation to travel outside the *favela*, volunteers find it difficult and costly to access the community. Ultimately, distance, and the subsequent cost of transportation, severely limits movement both into and out of certain *favelas* throughout the city. The lack of mobility, socially and economically excludes the low income residents who live outside of the city center.

CIACAC (Centro Integrado de Apoio a Crianças e Adolescentes de Comunidades) is an NGO based in Parada de Lucas which is located in the North

Zone of Rio de Janeiro. The purpose of this organization is to take children, ages 7-13, outside of the community to examine the occupations, art, and functionings of the wider city. The goal of the organization is to prevent children from joining the drug trafficking movement by exposing them to an alternative view of life outside of their *favela*. The children involved with this program simultaneously practice their written skills to discuss complex ideas such as self-esteem, citizenship, and identity.

In order to access opportunities outside the *favela*, the organization must have means by which to travel. On average, the trip from Parada de Lucas to the city center takes approximately one hour and costs 4.40 Reis (~2.20 USD). Due to the lack of disposable income, many residents find themselves unable to participate in leisurely travel. Therefore, CIACAC is tasked with finding a way to take a large group of children safely into the urban center on an extremely limited and often nonexistent budget. Often, their ability to travel comes from the utilization of strong and weak social bonds after intensive planning and saving. Due to their geographical location and financial position, the process of travel is never easy. In this manner, social exclusion occurs when society fails to "extend to all sections of its population the economic resources and social recognition which they need in order to participate fully in the collective life of the community" (Kabeer 2005, 4).

CIACAC is passively excluded from receiving benefits that an organization located closer to the city center may enjoy. Clearly, the closer you are to a certain activity, the less time it takes to get there, and less money is spent on transportation. Not only is travel out of the *favela* a problem, travel into the *favela* is just as difficult. The director of CIACAC often complains about the inability to attract volunteers that could enrich her organization. When given the option of volunteering your time in the center of the city, near one of the most famous beaches in the world, or a landscape much more removed from the benefits of urban life, many volunteers will choose to work near the city center. Therefore, there is little surprise that CIACAC has a difficult time attracting volunteers to Parada de Lucas.

The inability to attract volunteers passively excludes CIACAC from engaging in the in the exchange of capital necessary to ensure the maintenance and growth of the organization. The lack of capital also diminishes the interest of the children. Due to economic social exclusion, CIACAC becomes a vulnerable and unstable NGO. CIACAC suffers the inability to travel, the inability to attract volunteers, and perhaps the largest fear is that the children will get bored, and stop attending. On several

occasions Neuza, the director of the organization, expressed her concern for the future of CIACAC. "If I were to close my eyes" she said, "CIACAC would cease to exist". Without volunteers, and without the ability to travel outside of the community, many children become susceptible to the activities of the drug trafficking movement.

Many children are attracted to drug trafficking. "Gangs employ mostly teenagers to guard their domains and give them ranks as if they were in a real army. They incorrectly presume that the police won't hurt children" (Foek 2005, 2). Some suggest that children are attracted to the drug factions because they lack a developed sense of danger (Glüsing 2007). Others suggest that children are recruited because they have shorter jail sentences as minors (Cohen 2007). Either way, children and adolescents are particularly at risk of becoming involved in violent, organized crime (Dowdney 2003). Due to the unequal wealth distribution in Brazil, *favela* residents are often associated with extreme poverty and met with racial discrimination (Olivera 1996). In an arena where the majority of residents are poor, children tend to idolize the drug traffickers because they are seen with both money and power. In this manner, it is not a difficult task to entice children to become part of the drug trafficking hierarchy at an early age.

During the 1970s, before the cocaine industry emerged in Brazil it was uncommon for children to be involved in the marijuana drug trafficking operation. If children were involved in drug trafficking, they would be used primarily as look-outs, and they would infrequently be carrying weapons (Dowdney 2003). Accordingly, in 1979, where there were only 2,208 child deaths related to firearms in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro (UNESCO 2005). In 2003, after the cocaine industry gained momentum, there were 16,345 deaths of children who were under the age of 18 (UNESCO 2005). In less than twenty years, the number of child related mortality increased seven times what it was before cocaine became a powerful factor in the *favela* arena. Today, approximately 50 to 60 percent of the drug factions are made up of children under the age of eighteen and they are frequently entrusted with large sums of drugs and guns (Dowdney 2003).

By and large, the most consistent profile describing the victims of gang related violence is an afro-Brazilian male between 15 to 25 years of age (Dowdney 2003), (Glüsing 2007). Quickly becoming the most common cause of death amongst the Brazilian youth, it said that "more people under the age of twenty-six are killed by guns each year in Rio" which is more than in "many designated war zones" (Foek

2005, 2). In 2003, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), estimated that the number of deaths by firearms between 1979 and 2003 was approximately 550,000 people. Of those, 205,722 of which were between 15 and 24 years of age. In this manner, 40 percent of all the victims of firearms in Rio were under the age of 25. Additionally, almost without exception, the majority of murders in adolescents in Rio result from the involvement in drug trafficking operations (Foek 2005).

Children that grow up in this volatile environment, without adequate and structured recreation, are routinely exposed to armed violence and death. This is why it is so important to raze economic boundaries contributing to social exclusion. When individuals and groups become economically excluded, residential safety decreases while vulnerability of the community increases. In this instance, we can see how economic boundaries both influence and threaten the stability of NGOs and the residents they are trying to protect.

ISOLATION: HEALTH AND PUBLIC SERVICES

The built and social environment of the *favelas* in Brazil reflects the extreme income disparity of the country. After a tumultuous formation process, those *favelas* that were not eliminated by the government, currently house thousands of people living in extreme poverty. The inclusion of drugs into the *favela* arena has complicated matters of governance as many actors are now violently vying for control. Social, economic, and organizational characteristics of a community will ultimately have an effect on the health of a community. Isolation and its impact on health is one of the most common results of social exclusion for the low income communities of Rio de Janeiro.

In the low income communities, residents are subjected to extreme fear, danger, poverty, and isolation. This impoverished state will ultimately present major health implications for its residents. A community suffering from deprivation will result "in frustration, stress, family and social disruption, which in turn increase violence, crime rates, drug misuse, alcoholism and other social outcomes likely to adversely affect health" (Szwarcwald et al. 2000, 534). In this way, low income communities contribute to the intensification of "poor health conditions and violence" (Szwarcwald et al. 2000, 534).

Income inequality is highly correlated with health status. It has been noted that "people of lower socioeconomic groups have poorer health than those at the top" (Szwarcwald et al. 2000, 530). In the paper, Health Conditions and Residential Concentration of Poverty: A Study in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the authors use indicators such as income, homicide rate, birth rate, violent crime, and infant mortality rate to assess the general health of the low income communities. It can be observed, in the study Health Conditions and Residential Concentration of Poverty, that "the geographical patterns of health inequality followed the same spatial pattern determined by the socioeconomic structure" (Szwarcwald et al. 2000, 530). In this way, income becomes an indicator of poor health.

Favela residents are "not formally linked economically, socially, and culturally to the rest of the urban population" (Riley et al. 2007). "Unlike electric or water companies, banks, or other private businesses, health service providers have little or no economic incentive to move into slums" (Riley et al. 2007). Aside from health care centers that are sponsored by NGOs and volunteers groups health services are virtually nonexistent within the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro. The intense lack of public services available to *favela* residents including health care centers result in isolation without the means to communicate, unify with individuals in similar circumstances, or obtain the services needed to properly mitigate poverty.

In developing countries, the government is usually unwilling or unable to meet the needs of the residents living in low income communities. The residents are then forced to create their own informal infrastructure relying on the social bonds, and associations they foster with others.

> "Health service, by definition, requires specialized, skilled, or trained personnel. It requires an infrastructure for delivery of care that involves provision of specialized information, physical examination, diagnostic services, hospitalization, medications, follow-up care, prevention, and surveillance. None of these services can be provided or created by the slum dwellers themselves" (Riley et al. 2007).

Ultimately, health programs located in the *favelas* are deficiently funded and staffed (Szwarcwald et al. 2000).

Due to their inability to create a health care system of their own, *favelas* largely support "severe, near end-stage complications of the chronic diseases" and little is known about the "spectrum and burden of disease" within the *favela* (Riley et al. 2007). "As might be expected, the greater poverty of socially excluded groups translates into poorer levels of health, particularly when their poverty is combined

with locational disadvantages of remoteness and lack of infrastructure and social services" (Kabeer 2005, 20).

In Parada de Lucas, there is an NGO called Amor Pela Vida which provides physical therapy to the residents in need. Meanwhile, within the community of over 30,000 inhabitants, there is no general practitioner. Similarly, in another community called Morro de Prazeres, there is a NGO devoted to teaching residents about the treatment of dental disease while there is also an absence of general health care. Through active exclusion, *favela* residents are unable to generate or receive adequate health care as both the government as well as doctors chooses not to set up shop in the *favelas*.

Although certain *favelas* are dotted with specialized health care NGOs, the communities are largely devoid of primary health care services. Evidence suggests that "racial inequalities in children's health were largely the result of socio-economic, differentials by race" (Kabeer 2005, 22). The result is a definite decrease in the opportunity to receive equal health care treatment to others located in more prestigious areas. Therefore, low income communities can contribute to the intensification of crime, violence, and poor health conditions (Szwarcwald et al. 2000).

INCLUSION

The opposite of social exclusion, is of course, social inclusion. Whenever there is an in-group, there is always inversely, an out-group. As one social group forms around an issue or initiative, a counter group is automatically created. In-groups primarily reap benefits, while out-groups are often excluded from benefits. If social exclusion increases vulnerability, dependency, and poverty, social inclusion should accomplish the opposite. The strategy of inclusion is designed to resist social exclusion. Social inclusion is a complex phenomenon that encourages the incorporation of individuals to certain institutions and social groups. Through inclusion, the likelihood of an individual or group to ward off problems related to dependence, poverty, and deprivation increase.

Social inclusion is characterized by an individual's ability to participate fully in the social realm of society, community, or even family (Viswanathan et al. 2003). Social inclusion, social acceptance, and the admission into a social group, ensures the

individual's right to active participation and the exchange of capital. Participation in the decision-making process of a group allows individuals to protect their best interests as well as the ability to garner emotional, physical, and fiscal benefits necessary to solve problems and promote community development. Social inclusion gives power to the members of a social group to ward off vulnerability and to avoid extreme poverty by acting collectively.

Some obstacles to integration include many ways in which individuals and groups are excluded or rendered vulnerable. These obstacles include low income, racism, the barriers that prevent access to employment and affordable housing, as well as the mechanisms for general participation in the civic and political sectors of society (Viswanathan et al. 2003). Many of these socio-economic problems exist within the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro. In order to overcome these obstacles, individuals seek group acceptance to ensure lively and involved participation, equal opportunity, and basic welfare (Viswanathan et al. 2003).

Along with the admittance into social group, social inclusion is concerned with creating policies to negate exclusion and exclusionary outcomes (Márquez et al., 2008). In order to address the impact of past discrimination and exclusion, inclusion requires a framework to promote social, economic, and cultural equity. Policies, NGOs, and projects with the intention of social inclusion are geared towards increasing opportunities and access to individuals and groups. "Strategies of shared management could enlarge the possibilities of execution of effective and enduring actions, mainly in regard to projects turned to social development and integration of the slums into the city and the society at large" (Szwarcwald et al. 2000, 533). In this section, I will focus on the NGOs involved in social inclusion.

OBSERVABLE GEOGRAPHIC INCLUSION:

In the low income communities in Rio de Janeiro, the inclusionary factors of communication and education are used to mitigate poverty and vulnerability caused by social exclusion. Catalytic Communities uses communication as vital tool to reverse political and economic isolation. If individuals and groups can communicate both problems and solutions with one another, it is likely that the well being of the community will improve. Similarly, CIACAC and Calle use education as a tactic to reduce community vulnerability and to promote the exchange of capital. By reversing

social exclusion by means of education and increased communication, it becomes likely that the community will improve and development will ensue.

COMMUNICATION

In order to raze the exclusionary boundaries created by the drug factions, Catalytic Communities, a Brazilian based NGO creates a virtual space for its members. In this manner, individuals and groups without prior association were able to connect, dialogue, and exchange resources to produce social capital. The premise of Catalytic Communities is to provide a virtual space in which valuable ideas and resources can be exchanged without the danger of physical trespassing. Ultimately, the goal of the NGO is to provide a safe and accessible environment in which community leaders can access information related to community development.

In practice, individuals and groups quickly exhaust the capital available to them through their strong social bonds. In order to gain additional capital, a larger social network is required. By inviting social community development projects from around the world to publish their development initiatives, Catalytic Communities is ensuring access to a wider network of individuals and resources. Not only does Catalytic Communities escape spatial boundaries, but linguistic boundaries as well. By translating the community projects into Spanish, Portuguese, and English, Catalytic Communities is truly trying to eliminate obstacles that exclude and deprive individuals and groups. Through the creation of a new spatial forum, Catalytic Communities is reducing the possibility of poverty and exclusion while increasing social inclusion.

However, there are certain organizations that are hesitant to have their community projects published and publicized on the Catalytic Communities website. One of these organizations is located in *favela* Rocinha. The organizers of this organization think that by publishing a summary of their community development project on the Catalytic Communities website, that somehow their project will be usurped. Afraid that Catalytic Communities would take the credit for their organization, thus organization is actively excluding their organization from receiving the benefits made available through a broader network of weak social bonds. Not only are they excluded from receiving benefits, they are also simultaneously contributing to the exclusion of others. By choosing not to contribute a summary of their

organization, others will be deprived of the knowledge necessary to reproduce this project in other places where it could be beneficial. If groups fail to participate in an opportunity designed to foster involvement, they are actively excluding themselves and others.

When people fail to share their development initiatives, they are creating benefits only to be utilized by themselves. There is no horizontal exchange of ideas, methods, or resources. These organizations are also simultaneously excluding themselves from reaping the benefits offered to their organization by others. When residents and community leaders choose not to form ties, or are prevented from forming ties, they are subsequently limiting their access to resources necessary for community maintenance and development.

When used correctly, the Catalytic Communities website is meant to foster social relationships and promote collective development. Throughout her doctoral research in Brazil, Theresa Williamson discovered community projects that responded to diverse needs of local residents, but noticed the absence of communication and cooperation between them (Williamson 2000). For example, while one community had a community sewage program, their children were left idle on the streets with nothing to do. Meanwhile, another community had a daycare program for the children, but who had no such sewage system. The idea of Catalytic Communities is to facilitate initiatives by exchanging ideas and resources horizontally. By including individuals, Catalytic Communities hopes increase the weak bonds connecting individuals in order to promote relationships, and development while ultimately, mitigating poverty and promoting development.

EDUCATION

One of the problems with the low income communities in Rio de Janeiro is the inadequate and sub-standard education system. All too often, children in low income communities are sent to underfunded and ineffective schools. In Brazil, although "attendance rates were high, non-white children were 1.7 times as likely to be absentees from primary school and 5 times as likely to be illiterate" (Kabeer 2005, 30). The result is an education system filled with apathy on the part of the teachers, and despair on the part of the students. If students feel as if they cannot learn, and the teachers feel they cannot teach, no one lives up to their potential.

The director of CIACAC, Neuza, realized that although the trips had been an extremely successful part of her NGO, felt the children were not gaining much from the experience. Neuza once asked the children to write a paragraph about a trip they had taken to the museum. Without much thought, all the kids wrote that the trip was great. Sure, it is great the trip happened. But, really, how was the trip? Just because you were able to go on a trip, does not make the trip a good one. After playing the devil's advocate for some time, the true sentiment of the children began to emerge. Getting the children to voice their honest opinions was a huge hurdle. One child said innocently that he disliked waiting on line to enter the museum. Even simple critiques were difficult to lure from the children who are so often unheard and reprimanded for voicing their opinions. However, once the children learned that it was acceptable to have an opinion, the group was then able to discuss possibilities for improvements on future trips.

CIACAC encourages the children not just to accept things or to take them at face value. Neuza encourages them to think critically, reflect, criticize, and eventually to write. Realizing the children were having difficulty reading and writing, the director of CIACAC integrated a written component to her bi-weekly *oficinas* (workshops). The goal of adding a written component to CIACAC was meant to educate the children. When these kids grow up, the hope is that they will be able to challenge unfair policies and to protect their well being using their intellect and critical thinking skills.

CIACAC is devoted to helping individuals and groups maximize their social inclusion by minimizing their vulnerability. One way to do this is through education. Being able to stand up for yourself and being able to analyze things critically are both very important skills necessary to ensure social inclusion within a larger society. Knowing how to write, and how to observe things that need change are both extremely important for the children to learn to mitigate their vulnerable status.

Calle is also an NGO utilizing education to socially include individuals and groups. Calle is a community development project located in Copacabana that utilizes the skills of volunteers to provide an informal educational environment. By offering classes designed to aid the residents of Tabajaras, Calle is ensuring the social inclusion and subsequent benefits to its members. The goal of education is to include members of the community and to help prepare them to ward off deprivation, poverty, and vulnerability. Any inclusionary practice is meant to increase the ability for

individuals and groups to participate and share capital to improve their lives, and the lives of others.

Calle is a community project with the objective to socially include members of the community and to integrate them within society. Arão is member of Calle, a resident of Tabajaras, and he owns a *barraca* (stand) on the beach of Copacabana. Arão utilizes the opportunity offered by Calle to take English classes so that he can improve his business. By communicating with many of his English-speaking customers, Arão gains a competitive edge over other *barraca* owners. By taking the English classes offered by Calle, Arão is learning a skill that is being utilized to help him improve his quality of life both socially and financially. Thus, the idea of social inclusion, serves to mitigate poverty and vulnerability. In this case, Arão is using Calle to gain educational experience to secure his economic position.

Ultimately, education is an integral component in mitigating the impoverished status of the *favela* residents. Education is one way that individuals and groups can focus on in order to mitigate their poverty. Being able to write, critique, and speak a new language aids in the skills of the individual necessary to overcome active and passive exclusionary practices.

CONCLUSIONS

Social exclusion is a "multidimensional phenomenon, encompassing income, assets, education, health, dignity and voice" (Kabeer 2005, 2). Social exclusion occurs when individuals or groups are denied access to opportunities and resources they require in a market economy (Social Exclusion Unit 2001), (Sen 2000). The rupture of social bonds connecting individuals to one another will decrease participation and the exchange of capital. Social capital is heavily relied upon to produce and to maintain development initiatives. When individuals and groups cannot participate in this exchange, levels of trust between members of a community will decrease along with the potential for development. When individuals are unable or unwilling to cooperate, the community cannot exchange capital and the community as a whole cannot benefit or improve.

Social exclusion, linked to poverty and inequality has the potential to negatively affect the level of vulnerability of a community. Vulnerability focuses on various dimensions of deprivation caused by the exposure to an outside stressor

(Turner et al. 2003). The low income communities with socially excluded residents will not be able to produce social capital and poverty, deprivation, dependence will ensue. Due to the cyclical nature of social exclusion, deprivation in one section of society will likely breed exclusion in another section.

Social exclusion is a cyclical phenomenon caused by a number of variables including to the lack of capital and resources, accessibility to services and education, the type and quality of cultural capital, as well as a broader financial situation (Sen 2000). Due to the fact that social exclusion occurs in many social realms, evaluating social exclusion by one problem alone would likely obscure other forms of exclusion. Generally, deprivation in one sphere of society generated by social, political, and economic vulnerability will affect deprivation in other areas.

In order to reverse the affects of social exclusion, attention must be paid to the policy and attempts to encourage social inclusion. Education, communication, and health programs "reduce the harmful effects of relative deprivation and efforts to strengthen social ties, may have an important impact" on the underprivileged living in low income communities (Szwarcwald et al. 2000). NGOs were most successful promoting inclusionary practices relating to education and communication. Both education and communication practices were used to break down the exclusionary barriers that kept certain residents isolated, vulnerable, and deprived. Future understanding of inclusionary practices can help mitigate the poverty of *favela* residents. Inclusionary policy can positively affect those who are stigmatized, impoverished, and discriminated against.

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