

**Kilombo do Kioiô: The Use of an Artesanato Program
as a Program of Social Justice**

**Independent Study Project
Final Paper**

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Abstract

The women's artisan group, Kilombo do Kioiô, part of the Ação Social da Paróquia Sao Bras (Sao Bras Parochial Social Action Group) in the neighborhood of Plataforma, Salvador, Bahia, works to insert poor Afro-Brazilian women into the economic market and wider society. This community of women is struggling to survive in a society in which they are marginalized by their gender, race and socio-economic position. They are also struggling to survive two types of violence that are pervasive in Plataforma: domestic violence and violence related to drug trafficking.

This research project studies how working as artisans affects the participants' social and economic position in their community and the wider society. It studies how the artisan classes increase the participants' ability to participate in many aspects of society by increasing their self-esteem and encouraging them to work towards a better life for themselves. The data was collected during three weeks spent at the organization through interviews with the participants and organizers of the Kilombo do Kioiô as well as through observation of and participation in the artisan group activities such as classes and home visits.

Introduction

The organization Kilombo do Kioiô seeks to change the lives of the women of this community through production and sale of artisan products, professional development, literacy programs, medical and nutritional assistance. They implement these programs through weekly meetings, community celebrations and a school to train community leaders. My research focuses on the group's production and sale of artisan products and the programs that interact with this production to insert the women of Kilombo do Kioiô into broader society. The main challenges these women face are unemployment, domestic violence and violence related to drug trafficking. In this social context, in which there are few opportunities for women to try to make a better life for themselves, the Kilombo attempts to create and encourage these opportunities.

The Kilombo do Kioiô works specifically with mothers in the Plataforma community. The founders of the project chose to work only with mothers because they felt mothers were the people most in need of help. The majority of the mothers in this community are the only parent at home. The other requirements to participate in the Kilombo are that the mothers do not have a fixed family income and that one of their children is under the age of nine.¹ This does not mean that all the mothers who participate are young mothers because many of the mothers have been participating for many years. The mothers are of all ages and the majority is Afro-Brazilian as is the population of Plataforma at large.²

¹ Cruz, Field Journal: 29

² Field Journal: 6.

Statement of Social Relevance

Approximately 80 percent of Salvador's 2.5 million residents are black or brown and low-income and the majority of Afro-Bahian poor are women and children.³ Women living in the community of Plataforma on the periphery of Salvador are prime examples of the marginalization suffered by this population. They are marginalized by their physical location, their lack of economic resources, by their gender and by the fact that they are Afro-Brazilian. Living in a culture that traditionally assigned women to work only within the home as mothers and homemakers, women in Brazil are often responsible for the home and family as well as needing to earn money to support their family. While Brazil continues to promote the myth of a racial democracy even in the predominately Afro-Brazilian city of Salvador, whiteness is valued over blackness. Thus these women are marginalized because of their socio-economic position, their race and their gender. In this context, many people are working with handicrafts as a way to improve the conditions of populations with very few opportunities.

Methodology

I interviewed participants in the Kilombo do Kioiô's artesanato classes and the coordination of the Kilombo do Kioiô. I chose to focus on the coordination and three to four interviews with project participants to conduct as in-depth of a study as possible in three weeks. The participants I interviewed are women who live in the neighborhood of the organization and are active participants in the Kilombo do Kioiô. My goal in my interviews and interactions with these participants was to focus on understanding the

³ McCallum 2007: 55

reality of these women and thoroughly analyzing the personal, social and economic forces involved in their experience with the Kilombo do Kioiô and their work as producers of handicrafts.

The interviews included the following questions:

Artisan group members:

- When did you decide to join the artisan group? How did you find out about it?
- Why did you decide to join the group?
- What is your role in the group- what do you produce?
- Do you participate in other activities with Kilombo do Kioiô besides production of crafts?
- What is your income from your production in the group?
- How has your life changed since you joined the group?
 - How has the group affected your family?
 - Has the group changed how you participate in your community?
- Has the group affected your pride in yourself or your community?
- Has the group made you feel like you can make more decisions about what you want in your life- for example, do you feel you can make more decisions about what you want for your family?
- What do you think are the biggest challenges the community of Plataforma faces?
What are the biggest challenges the community of mothers in Plataforma face?

Coordinators of Kilombo do Kioio

Background questions:

- What is the mission of Kilombo do Kioiô?
- How was Kilombo do Kioiô founded? Where does it receive funding?
- What are your goals—what specific changes do you hope to contribute to in the lives of the participants?
- How do you implement your programs?
- Why did you decide to call it Kilombo do Kioiô?
- What are the biggest challenges the project faces?

Artisan Project Specific Questions

- What is the process for a woman to join the program?
- How does the artisan project interact with the other programs?

In addition to asking these questions in a combination of formal and informal interviews, I also observed daily activity in the Kilombo coordinators' office. I also observed the entire artesanato process—from production to sale. I also observed how the artisan program interacts with the other programs of the organization such as medical services. I also participated in the home visits conducted by the animadoras and the animadoras' classes.

Although I had not planned it this way, the majority of my interviews and observation were with the coordinators of the project. This was due to the way the coordination placed me in the organization. I was given a desk in the main office and expected to participate in the events in which the coordinators participated. This provided many benefits because I was able to observe the operation of the Kilombo and to learn what motivates the work of the Kilombo in an in-depth manner. It did, however, mean that the focus of my research was not on the day-to-day experience of women participating in the

program and instead was on the goals and programs of the Kilombo. I believe it most likely also affected the outcome of my interviews as I was seen as an authority figure by the participants in the project who I interviewed since I was placed within the coordination. I feel that it may have influenced the participants I interviewed to be very positive about the project and to sometimes not feel uncomfortable being honest. I do not have any evidence of this but by the way I was treated in the project, it seems very likely.

Definition of Portuguese Terms

Artesanato: handicrafts or more specifically, products made by hand. In the case of the Kilombo do Kioiô it includes needle point, painting and jewelry.

Animadora- term from the Catholic Church, it literally means “an animator”—someone who encourages and inspires people. In the case of the Kilombo do Kioiô, animadoras are more specifically teachers.

Cesta basica- food and household goods basket

Kilombo do Kioiô- a runaway slave community. The founders of the Kilombo do Kioiô use it because it also means a gathering a place or a protected place. One of the Kilombo’s coordinators explained more completely the meaning of the name—“It makes you think of Zumbi [a Kilombo leader]...A kilombo is a place for reunion and meeting together so the Kilombo do Kioiô is a meeting of mothers. Kioiô means something that you put in food that adds flavor and goodness to the food. So we are a place that changes things to be happier and better.”⁴

⁴ Oliveira, Field Journal: 11

Theoretical Framework

The movement to improve the lives of women and work to secure women's rights in Brazil has been characterized by the tensions between the women's movement and the feminist movement as well as the interaction between leftist groups and movements for women's rights since the end of the military dictatorship in 1988. To understand how Kilombo do Kioiô functions as an organization working to improve the lives of women, it is important to understand how it fits into this interaction between feminist movements, leftist organizations and non-governmental organizations.

In "Brazilian Feminism and Women's Movements: A Two-Way Street," Vera Soares et al describe the history of feminist and women's movements in Brazil. Women's movements in Brazil were first fostered by the development of a new constitution in 1988 in which a widespread struggle for democratic rights was taken up by many groups.

(Social movements in Brazil lecture) A feminist movement first began in Brazil in the suffragist campaigns of the early twentieth century. (Soares 1995, 304) In addition to the broader liberal movement for human rights, there was a movement to organize low-income women to work towards better living conditions and involve these women in the struggles in broader society for rights going on at the time. These progressive movements were mostly silenced by the military dictatorship beginning in 1964 until the mid-1970's when feminist organizations and leftist organizations became stronger once again.

(Soares 1995, 304)

The movements of the 1970's were influenced by other feminist movements of the same time in the United States and Europe. The movement in Brazil at this time "questioned the role of women in the family, at work, and in society and struggled to

transform human relationships by eliminating those based on social and gender discriminations.” (Soares 1995, 306) Through the 1970’s the feminist movement was mostly under the broader umbrella of leftist organizations. As feminist groups began to want more autonomy they sought alliances with other women’s groups in Brazil and worked to diversify its discussion of the interests of women.

The feminist movement was deeply influenced by this process of diversification. The goals of feminism expanded and changed with the broader participation of women from lower socio-economic standing.

“...at a 1987 national feminist conference, approximately 79 percent of the participants were active in labor unions, in the Black movement, in neighborhood associations, in mothers’ clubs, in the church and in political parties. Feminists from autonomous groups, known as ‘historic feminists’ or ‘fossils,’ came to be in the minority at these meetings. The growing interest in feminist conferences from women’s groups organized around broader social issues as well as from women workers reflected a complex relationship of collaboration and conflict that had developed since the mid-1970s.”⁵

This trend is very important for the question of how the artisan’s group works to empower women as projects like Kilombo do Kioiô, if successful, address many essential pieces in the continued movement for the improvement of the quality of women’s lives.

In conjunction with the reemergence of movements for women’s rights in the 1970’s, the black movement also reemerged. The black movement is seen as a failure for black Brazilian women who were not included successfully in the movement. In addition to the black movement’s failure to sufficiently incorporate women’s perspectives and

⁵ Soares 1995, 310

needs, “Brazilian society...has been much more receptive to women’s critiques and demands than to those of the black movement.”⁶

Kilombo do Kioiô shares the goals of the black women’s movement to improve basic conditions in order “to break the vicious cycle that confines the black population and black women in particular, to the subterranean levels of Brazilian society.”

In addition to the history and issues of movements for women’s rights in Brazil, race is an important factor in the lives of the women involved with Kilombo do Kioiô. Ana Maria Goldani discusses the profound impact of race on women’s domestic structure in “Racial Inequality in the Lives of Brazilian Women” and the affect of family formation on women’s decisions about work. She writes, “A woman’s economic participation in the labor force varies markedly when she becomes a mother and even more when she has more than one child.” Also, although Brazil has created women’s councils and special agencies to change social policies related to women, they have largely ignored “women’s multiples roles and the responsibility women shoulder for domestic duties and dependent care.”

Cecilia Sardenburg et al address the specific reality of the women of the community of Plataforma, in which Kilombo do Kioio is located, in the article, “Tempos de mudança, vidas em mutação: o empoderamento de mulheres na Bahia através de gerações” (Times of Change, Lives in Mutation: Empowerment of Women in Bahia Across Generations). The study first outlines the history of the women of Plataforma. The neighborhood was built around the Sao Braz factory at the end of 19th century. The majority of the factory’s employees were women in a time when job opportunities for women were very limited. The factory included various cooperatives including for food

⁶ Carneiro 1993

and clothing as well as daycare and schools. When the factory closed in 1963 Plataforma thus lost much of its infrastructure and job opportunities. The majority of opportunities for women to make money after the closing were in the informal sector.

The study's focus is to analyze the processes of empowerment among the women of Plataforma. The authors define empowerment as the process through which someone is able to make strategic choices about their lives when they were previously denied the ability to make those choices. The authors used a survey to collect data on the current situation of women in Plataforma to evaluate changes in empowerment between generations. The study is still being completed. At this time 150 surveys have been returned and the authors have outlined the basic findings.

The first finding is that the education of most of the women has been interrupted. Although the respondents said education was very important, only one of the respondents so far has completed a year of higher education. The study finds a high level of unemployment and among those who are making an income the majority's income comes from the informal sector. (This coincides with the author's previous study on women and employment in Plataforma, 1997.)

With respect to political involvement, the study found little political involvement among the women. Participation in groups was almost solely limited to participation in church groups, especially in Evangelical churches. The study found that in terms of family relations, motherhood has a large impact on the lives of women as it is a common reason for the interruption of school and makes their insertion into the workforce difficult. (This coincides with a previous study on motherhood conducted in the neighborhood by the author in 1997.) A more recent trend the author found was that the

women, while not comfortable talking about sex, did know the basic forms of contraception. Finally, the study finds that the majority of respondents experience domestic violence. Husbands or companions were the most frequent aggressors. In other cases the violence was between members of the community or took place at the work place.

The study's definition of empowerment and emphasis on the interaction of many different aspects—education, employment, violence, family relations—in the lives of the women in Plataforma provides a very useful structure for my analysis of how participating in the artisan classes affect the lives of the participants.

In addition to the history of black women in Salvador, the history of women in the Plataforma neighborhood and patterns of domestic life for black women, the issue of black women's identities in Brazil is also very important to my research. Through out my project I kept in mind the questions raised by Sueli Carneiro in "Black Women's Identity in Brazil,"

"As a project in construction, the shaping of women's identity today calls for a n ongoing battle to guarantee women's citizenship rights. But will those rights guarantee full citizenship for all Brazilian women? In our struggle for women's rights, are we promoting the construction of a single 'universal' identity for women?...When we struggle to guarantee equal opportunities for men and women in the labor market, for which women are we guaranteeing jobs?...When we feminists speak of breaking out of the myths of the 'home,' the private sphere, where we are a muse idealized by poets, which women are we talking about?"⁷

⁷ Carneiro 1993

In “Local Development in the Global Economy” Juan Pablo Perez Sainz, et al provides a framework for the study of how a community inserts itself into the global economy. While my research is studying a project to insert a community into the city economy, their framework addresses many of the issues I will study. This study analyzes three cases in Latin America whose insertion into the economy was “from below” as opposed to directed by multinational companies or by the government.

The study finds three factors that affect this insertion “from below”, all linked to the socio-economic conditions of the households involved. The first factor is “the need for households (involved in the project of economic insertion) to incorporate gender and generational equality in order to maximize income generation.” A part of this is having a “non-authoritarian” decision-making process within the families. The second factor in successful insertion is education. While the authors discuss the fact that the presence and quality of education relies up national policy, I studied how the different types of education provided by Kilombo do Kioiô may make up for the lack of education provided by the government. The third and also very important factor given by Perez Sainz is that insertion into a market does not necessarily lead to reduction in poverty. It is the type of insertion rather than the act of insertion that is most important.

“The generation of employment in the globalized activity is significant, but what matters more is the kind of jobs that are created. Labor can be viewed merely as a cost to be minimized or it can be seen as a form of human capital to be developed. The first approach signals the ‘low road’ toward global integration, whereas the latter envisions a ‘high road.’ In this sense, the quality of employment is a

strategic issue, and knowledge—in a broad sense—must be understood as a strategic resource...”⁸

These factors provide a structure to evaluate how if the Kilombo do Kioio is successful in inserting the women it works with into the economy by addressing more issues than just the teaching of skills to be used in production.

Perez Sainz also discusses one of the most significant challenges to successful economic integration that he encountered. This was the challenge of competition in which a market is flooded with too many of the same product. His suggested solutions to the problem of “how to increase the number of winners while minimizing the number of losers” are some well-known techniques such as providing credit, training, and support for technological development. He also suggest a less conventional solution by suggesting the communities can use their collective resources to increase the cohesion of the production group. This could lead over time “to more widely diffused capabilities and increased competitiveness.”⁹

This use of collective resources connects to the author’s belief that community capital is also very important in successful economic integration. Their definition of community capital is “the individual appropriation of community resources that are socio-cultural in nature (social norms and values, identity, reciprocity and trust).”¹⁰ This approach also focuses on the fact that any market is greatly influenced by social and cultural contexts and is not autonomous. The community participants can use the different types of socio-cultural resources unique to their community to contribute to the cohesion and development of the community’s business or businesses.

⁸ Perez Sainz 2008

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

“Reciprocity, for example, expressed through frequent sharing of tools, raw materials, labor and other resources, can generate sufficient trust leading to cooperative actions among businesses. Solidarity can be a valuable asset when the community is faced with external threats, and it can encourage the crystallization of business organizations that can strengthen local firms. And finally, the deepening of community norms can encourage forms of competition within the cluster based on innovation rather than imitation.”¹¹

Results and Analysis of Research Findings

I found that to understand the programs of Kilombo do Kioiô, one must first understand the way the mothers in the Plataforma community are struggling with two specific symptoms of the marginalization of Afro-Brazilian women in Salvador—domestic violence and violence related to drug trafficking. These two issues are very important in the lives of the participants and coordinators of the program because they are a day-to-day threat to their survival. I learned about these issues through conversations and home visits with women of the Plataforma community as well as through my conversations and interviews with the coordinators of the program.

The coordinators of Kilombo do Kioiô believe that the majority of mothers who participate in the Kilombo are victims of domestic violence. (Also see: Theoretical Framework for data on this provided by Cecilia Sardenburg: “Tempos de mudança, vidas em mutação: o empoderamento de mulheres na Bahia através de gerações.”) “It has increased in recent years and the mothers “suffer violence not just from their husbands but from their children as well.”¹² It is likely the problem is even more widespread than

¹¹ Perez Sainz 2008

¹² Cruz, Field Journal: 3; Oliveira, Field Journal: 9

the number of cases reported suggests because many women do not tell anyone about the violence they experience.¹³ The system in place to address this problem is insufficient.

As Denys Cruz, the chief coordinator of the Kilombo do Kioiô project said,

“You file your case against the aggressor but then they don’t give you protection, you have to just go home. It’s absurd... If you go to the police station right here [by the Kilombo], it’ll just be men there and they don’t care if you report domestic violence. They don’t want to hear about it...The thing is that women are scared to report the violence. And then if they do get the courage to report it, nothing happens, they don’t get any results.”¹⁴

The problem of drug related violence is also pervasive in the community of Plataforma. Many of the mothers who participate in the Kilombo programs have children or significant others involved in drug trafficking. They “have many cases of adolescents involved with the drug problem...Just this Saturday one of the mothers had a son who was killed because of drug trafficking. It’s so easy to give up and not even have the force to care for and defend your other children.”¹⁵ Also, the violence related to the drug trade affects any mother even if she or her family is not involved with drug trafficking due to the widespread problem of police violence.

“My son was walking up the street and two policemen yelled out from behind him, ‘Stop!’ He stopped right where he was with his hands up. He told me, ‘Mom, I stopped there and I thought, I’m going to die. My heart was jumping in my chest and I started thinking about you and Dad.’ Imagine! Then the police came up by him with their guns and when they saw his face they said, ‘Oh, this isn’t the one

¹³ Oliveira, Field Journal: 9

¹⁴ Denys, Field Journal: 32

¹⁵ Ibid.

we want.’ They looked up the road and saw another guy walking up the road and said, ‘Oh, there’s the one we’re looking for.’ To them all blacks look the same.”¹⁶

This creates a constantly stressful environment as described by one of the mothers whose home I visited: “I don’t even like to hear about it. I get so worried. I don’t even like to watch the news. I start crying. Watching it and hearing about the violence, it makes me scared to even leave the house and I worry a lot because I have a son.”¹⁷

These problems are further exacerbated by Plataforma’s lack of infrastructure and the conditions of being a periphery community isolated from the resources provided by the center of the city. Plataforma does have a “Posto de Saude” (medical clinic financed by the government) but this clinic does not have a doctor.¹⁸ It is an hour or longer bus ride to a doctor and a visit is forty reais (about twenty U.S. dollars), which is very expensive for community members. There is only one police station for domestic violence cases in the area and no domestic violence shelters.¹⁹

As in much of Salvador, there is a high rate of unemployment in Plataforma. As all the participants in the Kilombo do Kioiô are mothers, they all have children to support—many with five or six—and are usually the only parent in the home. The majority of the women are making less than one hundred reais (about fifty U.S. dollars) a month when they join the project.²⁰

The problems of domestic violence, violence related to drug trafficking and unemployment create an environment in which it is difficult for the women to imagine the possibility of anything good in their lives or to feel that they control anything. Thus

¹⁶ Field Journal: 12

¹⁷ Ibid: 14

¹⁸ Ibid: 1

¹⁹ Ibid: 9, 32

²⁰ Oliveira, Field Journal: 10

Kilombo do Kioiô's efforts to insert mothers into the economic market and to help them secure an income are inseparably connected to their efforts to help the women survive these problems and hopefully triumph over them. The artesanato program attempts to do this by providing a way to develop the capital of these women. Thus in this case development of capital does not just mean increased economic capital. It also means increased human capital and community capital.

My research focused on how the Kilombo do Kioiô's artesanato class increased these forms of capital. The goal of the class is to provide a way for the participants to increase their income. Artesanato was chosen by Kilombo do Kioiô's founders because it can be taught to anyone even if they cannot read and it is something that the women can do in their homes.²¹ The classes teach how to make a variety of handicrafts. During my time at the project, most of the classes were needlepoint classes. Other classes include painting classes and jewelry classes. The classes are taught by the animadoras (see definition of Portuguese terms) who also conduct periodic visits to the homes of participants.²²

Attendance at these classes is a requirement for Kilombo participants to receive other services provided by the Kilombo such as medical services and a cesta (see definition of Portuguese terms). Participants' attendance is monitored very closely. Participants must bring documents to excuse their absence from a class or meeting. If a participant comes to give an excuse without proof, the coordinators right down an

²¹ Ana, Field Journal: 36

²² Field Journal: 3, 5

“observation.” Participants are only allowed two observations. If they have more than two observations, they cannot participate in the program.²³

The artesanato classes are also used to teach about other subjects such as health or human rights. Often these are taught by professors or non-governmental organizations. For example, there are classes about laws related to domestic violence and classes about reproductive health taught by Grupo de Apoio de Prevenção a AIDS (GAPA-Organization for Prevention of AIDS). Other programs such as vaccination programs are also often enacted through the classes.²⁴

Each class has twenty to twenty-five participants and is taught by four animadoras. The classes are three hours long. At any time there are three to four classes in progress at the Kilombo. The participants sit in a circle and the classes are taught experientially—the animadoras teach the basic skills needed, give the students a pattern or directions to follow and then the students work on their own for at least two and a half out of the three hours. In the classes I observed, at any given time about half the students would be working quietly and half would be talking in groups of two or three about problems they were having or good things that had happened to them.²⁵

The first type of capital that the artesanato works to increase is economic capital. In its first years the project identified that the mothers were going hungry because they “weren’t working and... they weren’t working because they didn’t have the qualifications to get a job anywhere and there weren’t many job opportunities.”²⁶ The program teaches skills that can be used to at the very least give a small boost to monthly income through

²³ Field Journal: 1

²⁴ Cruz, Field Journal: 30, 32

²⁵ Field Journal: 24

²⁶ Cruz, Field Journal: 28

the sale of products the women learn to make in class. The Kilombo does not keep any data on how much money a participant who begins making products to sell typically earns. For many of the women, any extra money is helpful. There are many mothers “with eight or nine children and no one in the family is working so any extra money is helpful.”²⁷ It is not enough money for the coordinators to consider it a desirable permanent job and thus the classes also work to increase the participants’ economic capital by adding to other skills that can be used in the work force.

These skills include communications skills learned through their interactions with the animadoras and the coordinators. They learn problem solving skills because they are given directions to follow and must self-direct themselves. The animadoras do not let them stop working on something if it has problems and make them go back and re-do any mistakes so they must solve any problems that come up.²⁸ The artesanato work is also a time to practice counting skills as one must count stitches and count spaces on the patterns. The directions and the rules included in the class also teach the mothers how to deal with expectations and follow rules, something that many of them have not had to do because they have not ever worked and did not complete school. These skills add to the participants’ potential for securing a permanent, salaried job, which is the ultimate dream the organization has for every participant.

The Kilombo also provides support in the process of getting a job as participants often talk with the animadoras about their job search and ask for advice.²⁹ The Kilombo also gives the participants connections that could lead to a salaried job. Businesses will tell the Kilombo about job opportunities or will ask the coordinators to recommend

²⁷ Correia, Field Journal: 18

²⁸ Field Journal: 23

²⁹ Ibid: 23

someone for a job.³⁰ The Kilombo also has other programs that add to the participants' economic capital such as a literacy program.³¹

Alongside the development of the participants' economic capital is the development of their community and human capital, which go hand in hand with and also encourage the growth of economic capital. Community capital includes having shared values, solidarity, sharing benefits among the community, pride in the community, respect for members of the community and members of the community taking action to help each other.³² The artesanato classes are an impressive example of community capital. The classes are a time for the mothers to share their problems with each other and to provide support for each other. Because the Kilombo is a Catholic organization there are also shared values discussed by the animadoras with the students. The mothers take pride in the Kilombo and have respect for the other members because they enjoy their time there so much.³³ Connections that can lead to jobs for the participants are one example of community capital that clearly overlaps with economic capital.

Many examples of this community capital are seen in the Kilombo's response to domestic violence suffered by its members. One striking example is the Kilombo community's reaction to the murder of one of its animadoras by her husband as described the chief coordinator of the Kilombo, Denys Cruz.

“The only reason he [the animadora's husband] was ever put in prison was because of the pressure of the Kilombo. We put his picture on all the telephone poles, we got on the radio and the television talking about what had happened and

³⁰ Field journal: 17

³¹ Field Journal: 37

³² Perez Sainz 2008

³³ Field Journal: 12

that police weren't putting him in jail. Everyone in the city knew about what had happened. The police went on television to say that they were going to arrest him so that they wouldn't look bad. They did arrest him but nothing would have happened if we hadn't done all that."³⁴

The Kilombo has also collected money to send women who wanted to leave their husbands to other cities. The community also often acts as a safe place for its members and provides a group of people with whom a community member can share her problems.

The artesanato classes also increase the participants' human capital. I define human capital as resources an individual can call on in their everyday relationships and interactions with others. One of the principal ways the classes do this is by increasing the participants' self-esteem. The seemingly simple act of learning how to make the artesanato products is the first part of the class that adds to the participants' self-esteem. As Ana, a coordinator at the project for five years said, "When they started here they said, 'I can't do that. I'm not able to do something so complicated.' In a few weeks when they are able to do it, they realize what they're capable of and they start to believe that they can do much more than they think." This often means they go back to school or think about doing something different with their lives.³⁵

The growth of self-esteem was very apparent to me in my own observations in the three weeks I spent at the project. Women who had recently joined the program were much quieter, kept their heads down and did not ask many questions. Mothers who had been with the program for years, on the other hand, did not hesitate when expressing themselves and were not scared to participate in anything. Women who

³⁴ Cruz, Field Journal: 33

³⁵ Ana, Field Journal: 36

have been there for longer themselves encourage the younger mothers' self-esteem by encouraging them to ask questions and often bluntly, but nicely, telling them to speak up.³⁶ The coordinators also encourage this in a similar way in their interactions with the women. One example of this is how one of the coordinators, Maria Angela, advised a woman who told Maria Angela that she couldn't get a note from the doctor saying why she missed class because they wouldn't give it to her—"If they say no, tell them you need the piece of paper. Make sure they listen to you."³⁷ I heard directions and advice similar to "make sure they listen to you" everyday at the Kilombo.

One of the Kilombo's coordinators, Maria Angela, is a clear example of this. In my interactions with her and observations of her she was one of the most energetic and talkative people I have ever met. When she began at the program as a student eight years ago she was very different by her own description—"Before I started (the classes) at the Kilombo, I was a very slow and quiet person. My life was just for me. I just kept to myself. I didn't have the will to say what I felt or thought. I kept everything inside."³⁸

The coordinator Claudia Oliveira is another example of this. As she describes,

"Before I started working here, I was so shy. I would just walk with my head down and I was so scared to talk to people I didn't know. I had to start making calls here and answering the phone and I was just dying of fright to do that. The other coordinators taught me how to talk on the phone and answer the phone. I learned to talk to people and be really confident."³⁹

³⁶ Ibid: 6

³⁷ Ibid: 23

³⁸ Correia, Field Journal: 15

³⁹ Field Journal: 10

The other issues discussed in the class also increase the participants' human capital as they become more educated and aware of issues that affect their lives. Their ability to communicate and interact with other people also increases as their insertion to the economic market increases. They begin to do things like travel to places in the city they never went to before, they have to talk to people they do not know and have to make phone calls.⁴⁰ The time in a structured environment with other women can also help them deal with personal conflicts in a less aggressive way than they previously did.⁴¹ The expectations the program has for the women such as attendance and appropriate behavior also increase a participant's human capital because as the program demands more of her, the more she expects of herself—"When we are proving everyday to the women that they have rights and duties, they start to have different expectations and ideas."⁴²

The classes also act as a type of therapy for the mothers. It is time for them to share their problems with other women and to receive advice or help from the other women. It can also be a time when they can forget about their problems and return to a time in which they didn't have children and can just be with the other women.⁴³ As they have this time apart from their problems or in a community that helps them address those problems, the mothers can begin to think about their futures again. The Kilombo is a place that makes them feel positive, where they have fun and where they have a chance to think about themselves and make plans for their future.

⁴⁰ Field Journal: 10

⁴¹ Ibid: 37

⁴² Ibid: 35

⁴³ Ibid: 19

Conclusion

The mothers of Plataforma's lives would not be improved if the Kilombo do Kioio focused only on increasing their economic capital. The problems of domestic violence and violence related to drug trafficking are problems that must be addressed alongside the issues of unemployment and poverty. Using the artesanato classes as its tool, the Kilombo works to address all of these issues by working to increase the participants' community and human capital in addition to their economic capital. In conjunction with a possible small but important increase in monthly income that can help take care of the mothers and their families' basic needs, their ability to further increase this income and their ability to participate in society at large also increases. The program works to help each participant develop as a whole person rather than focusing on simply providing them with increased economic capital. As the women come to class every week to learn and share with the other women, their community capital and human capital also increases. They become more confident, they gain an understanding of their rights and they have access to the support provided by the Kilombo's community of women. As Ana, one of the coordinators of the Kilombo do Kioio said,

“The biggest challenge is making the people more conscious of their rights and the potential they have. Many of the mothers here, who are actually working as mothers *and* fathers, don't know the potential they have. They don't see the value they have. They don't understand or appreciate how important their role is in the community and they don't see what a difference they can make in their

community. At the Kilombo we try to show them in a concrete way that they can change their lives.”⁴⁴

The coordinators of Kilombo do Kioiô, who all live in the Plataforma area, are examples of these possibilities for concrete change. Three of them are enrolled in university and attend classes in the evening after work. The other two coordinators are preparing and planning to also enter university soon by going back to school and preparing to take the university entrance exam. All of them say that the Kilombo played a huge role in their decision to go back to school as it made them believe in their ability to accomplish what they want to accomplish. As Maria Angela, a former student and now coordinator says, “[The Kilombo] is where I learned to walk forward and to hold my head up. I learned here that with faith I can do anything. It saved my life.”⁴⁵ The work and the dedication of these women to improve their lives and the lives of their fellow women in Plataforma are inspirational to any woman working to provide for her family and to fulfill her dreams as well as to anyone struggling to improve the ability of women anywhere in the world to fulfill these dreams.

Areas for Future Research

Because of the high number of issues faced by women living in periphery communities in Brazil, the possibilities for future research into the community of Kilombo do Kioiô are endless. For example, I was not able to study in-depth many important issues such as access to health care. Other areas for research, specifically related to Kilombo do Kioiô’s program, is to study what makes a woman succeed in the

⁴⁴ Ana, Field Journal: 35

⁴⁵ Correia, Field Journal: 19

Kilombo's program and what contributes to a woman not benefiting from the program or not continuing with the program. I did not have time to analyze any such cases during my time there as the stories I learned about and saw during my time there were all positive.

It would also be interesting to research the animadora program specifically. There are over forty animadoras who teach classes, do home visits and attend the animadora classes. It would be interesting to see the outcomes of this program and more of the structure of that program. It would also be interesting to look more in-depth at how the women in Plataforma are experiencing domestic violence and violence related to drug trafficking. The participants in the Kilombo do Kioiô's programs were always very eager to talk about these problems of violence and had a lot to say about them. The problem of violence is a very complicated problem that by their own descriptions is very important in their lives.

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ISP Appendix

1. Could you have done this project in the USA? What data or sources were unique to the culture in which you did the project?

I could not have done this project in the USA because my project relies on data collected through my first-hand interviews and interactions with the participants of the organization I studied. My experience of being in the community shaped my understanding of the organization in a way that would have been impossible if I did not see and experience the conditions of the community first-hand.

2. Could you have done any part of it in the USA? Would the results have been different? How?

I could have done the theoretical framework in the USA because I was able to find many sources on the internet. The results would have been different because I would probably have chosen different sources as being important than I did after learning more about the project. It also would have been a much narrower research project as I wouldn't have been able to present new knowledge in my paper.

3. Did the process of doing the ISP modify your learning style? How was this different from your previous style and approaches to learning?

The ISP modified my learning style in that it was easier and easier for me to learn by observing and listening than it had been when I began the ISP. I was able to start making connections between things I observed as time went by. The ISP cultivated my ability to learn without having things told to me or laid out clearly for me.

4. How much of the final monograph is primary data? How much is from secondary sources?

About eighty percent of the final monograph is primary data. Secondary sources are about twenty percent. My conclusions were mostly drawn from primary sources.

5. What criteria did you use to evaluate your data for inclusion in the final monograph? Or how did you decide to exclude certain data?

I excluded data mostly based on what I chose to focus on to support the thesis of my paper. I ended up gathering data on a lot of things that didn't directly relate to my thesis just because of what people wanted to talk about a lot of the time. I also excluded data I felt was not very complete—for instance, a very brief interview in which I couldn't feel confident about the information I received.

6. How did the “drop-offs” or field exercises contribute to the process and completion of the ISP?

One big way they contributed was by giving me confidence about my ability to get around an unknown place and talk to people I didn't know. It also helped me to improve my data collections skills especially my interview skills as it was a time to learn what worked and didn't work best for me. They also help to give me a sense of how different organizations worked and how I would be able to interact with organizations and people.

7. What part of the FSS most significantly influenced the ISP process?

The ISP process for me was most significantly influenced by the community project time because it was a time to practice journal writing and to understand more completely the challenges and rewards of working in the field. It also helped me to better understand how to narrow down my topic and to understand what exactly I could accomplish during the ISP time.

8. What were the principal problems you encountered while doing the ISP? Were you able to resolve these and how?

The principal problem I encountered was that everyone at the organization I studied was very busy. It was difficult to balance needing to insert myself into the activities to make sure I finished my research and knowing when I needed to hang back and wait for another opportunity. I resolved these by making sure to communicate with the coordinators of the organization so that both sides understood what was going on with the other side.

9. Did you experience any time constraints? How could these have been resolved?

The biggest time constraint was simply that the ISP period is three weeks. There is only so much you can do in three weeks and you have to work with that constantly as you do your project. You have to constantly focus on what you can feasibly get done in three weeks because there always so much more that could be done or experienced. It did help to have a specific idea of the events I wanted to see in those three weeks so that you can try to schedule them from the beginning in hopes of reducing the number of things you miss out on that won't happen again in those three weeks.

10. Did your original topic change and evolve as you discovered or did not discover new and different resources?

My topic changed and evolved more due to me learning more about the organization and the community. As I learned more about the specific challenges they were facing and the problems they are working with I then found different secondary sources that better addressed these things.

11. How did you go about finding resources: institutions, interviews, publications, etc.?

I used my school's library website to find publications as well as some of the readers we received for our Culture, Development and Social Justice

class. I found institutions through the advice of our program's academic director and assistants. I got all my interviews at the actual organization.

12. What method(s) did you use? How did you decide to use such methods?

I mostly did interviews but also did a lot of observation and participation. I did these three things because they seemed most likely to give me a well-rounded view of the organization and get me the most chances to see the subjects I was studying in many different ways.

13. Comment on your relationship with your advisor: indispensable? Occasionally helpful? Not very helpful? At what point was he/she most helpful? Were there cultural differences which influenced your relationship? A different understanding of educational processes and goals? Was working with the advisor instructional?

My relationship with my advisor was very important because she was very respected in the organization and the community so the introduction she gave me to the community meant that everyone was happy to talk to me and respected me. She was most helpful in making sure I knew the mission and goals of the organization and showing me the different ways I could learn about these things. The only cultural difference I really experienced with her was that she was very quiet at first and did not really start talking until we had a few conversations. My advisor also had very high expectations of me so this motivated me to do my best.

14. Did you reach any dead ends? Hypotheses which turned out to be not useful?

Interviews or visits that had no application?

The only dead ends I reached were during craft classes when I wanted to talk to the students but the teachers of the classes would only have me talk to the class as a whole. There were no interviews or visits that had absolutely no application but often I learned really interesting things that had no application to my project.

15. What insights did you gain into the culture as a result of doing the ISP, which you might not otherwise have gained?

I understood the reality of living in a poor periphery community in a way that I never could had I not been in the community myself. I learned more fully how the women in my organization experienced the world because I saw first hand what their world was like and this was a crucial element to understanding how they experience the world. I never would have been able to enter the community in the way that I did if I had done the ISP either because I was brought into the community right away as a valued member because I was doing academic work, which my organization really values. I also learned the importance of being flexible and open to change as you learn new information in the course of your project.

16. Did the ISP process assist your adjustment to the culture? Integration?

The ISP was another step in helping me to integrate into the culture because it forced me to function in the culture on my own more than I had before. Because it is so close to the end of the program, I don't think it really helped me to adjust but it did help me to continue integrating and learning about the culture.

17. What were the principal lessons you learned from the ISP process?

One of the main lessons I learned was that I am capable of more than I thought I was. Being on your own in a foreign country and realizing all the skills you have developed in the past two months there was very important. I also learned how to better conduct field research and how to more efficiently complete a project because the three week limit forces you to be well-organized and focused.

18. If you met a future student who wanted to do this same project, what would be your recommendations to him/her?

I would definitely recommend the project to them because everyone who works at the organization I worked if is so positive and kind and the organization is working with so many different issues. I would recommend that they be prepared for the fact that organization is officially run by the Catholic Church, although they are trying to become an independent non-governmental organization. If you are not religious it doesn't mean you couldn't do this project, it just means you would need to be prepared for a lot of praying and for the fact that organization has a strong sense of moral derived from the Catholic Church's teachings.

19. Given what you know now, would you undertake this, or a similar project again?

I would undertake this again but I would try to more fully develop my own expectations and goals before I started the project. That way I could have more efficiently completed the project and gone into more depth on some issues that I didn't have to go into.