A study of the strengths and weaknesses of the Brazilian Bolsa Escola Educational Program

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International Education PIM 63

A Capstone paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of International Education at the School for International Training (SIT)
Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.
July 2006

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DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated for those who have encouraged me in my academic field of study including Dr. Richard Rodman, Dr. Martha Merrill, and Dr. William Hoffa at the School for International Training; Dr. Marv Williamsen, Nancy Wells, and Prof. Pete Rychle at Appalachian State University; Carlyle Harvard, and Lisa Gyragosian at Duke University, and Prof. Gunter from the Pädagogische Hochschule in Karlsruhe. This paper is especially dedicated to my first teacher, my father, Robert R. Dockery.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special Thanks to all who assisted in the process, namely: my patient advisor Dr. Marla Solomon, my research assistant Larissa Araujo, from the Universidade Católica de Brasília, Beatriz Vieira Brandão for her connections within the Brazilian government ministries, and Rosa Meire da Silva Olivera an inspiring teacher working in the field.
ABSTRACT

There is a unique educational program that is being implemented in various countries which targets extremely poor children who have little opportunity to education. Called Bolsa Escola in Brazil, it has been heralded as a success in breaking the poverty cycle and increasing educational access and opportunities. This educational program has also been professed to do a variety of things such as decreasing child labor violations, and promoting health. This paper thus identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the Bolsa Escola program within the Federal District in Brazil where it was first piloted.

The paper does this by using a mixed method evaluation to assess the program. First statistical data was gathered from both government and outside sources monitoring the program. Then additional independent studies were collected for further verification or to identify discrepancies. All of this quantitative data was combined to formulate questions for further research in the form of personal interviews with those closely working with the Bolsa Escola program at a variety of levels. This was then compared with my own observations within one school to see first hand how the program was affecting the students there. Additional interviews from teachers in the field were combined with my qualitative data with some interesting findings.

The paper concludes that while the program has strayed from the original mission and became a behemoth of discombobulated befuddlement at times with political restructuring, and additional social programs attached, the program has had a positive effect on the lives of the children that are involved. Bolsa Escola has kept children in school and while it does not guarantee a way out of poverty it does indeed give those involved in the program an opportunity to improve their condition that they did not possess before.
INTRODUCTION

“If you are totally illiterate and living on one dollar a day, the benefits of globalization never come to you.”

- Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter

“O acesso a informação é por isó uma direito humano universal.”
“Gaining access to education is in itself one of the fundamental human rights”

- Brazilian Senator Cristovem Buarque

This paper examines a Brazilian educational program known as “Bolsa Escola”, to see if it could be a useful model for programs combining poverty alleviation and primary education in other countries. I collected the data for this study through document review, research from non-governmental sources, Brazilian government data, interviews, and observations at one public school.

Currently an estimated 250 million children in the world are working instead of attending school. In her study, Why Inequality Matters in a Globalizing World, Birdsall noted how intergenerational poverty has increased and said that “globalization is asymmetric, i.e. that it benefits the rich more than the poor, both within and across countries” (Birdsall, 2005, pg. 3). Lack of education means that entire populations cannot keep up with advancing technologies or do the jobs associated with those technologies. Only a small portion of some countries are able to keep up with the needs of the global job market.
It is easy to find the connection between poverty and the lack of education anywhere in the world. Students who fail to graduate from primary are often relegated to low wage jobs, which provide little or no hope for a future. The cycle perpetuates itself when circumstances force their children to enter the work force early, they also fail to finish school, and they continue the cycle. This cycle can go on for generations. 2/3rds World Countries often have the additional problem of child labor. Children are often required to work because of economic necessity at a very young age. This traps them in the cycle of continuous poverty, and often causes these children to resort to crime, prostitution, or begging. The children pass the cycle of poverty on to their own children. This has resulted in entire populations of people being socially and economically excluded worldwide. This program attempts to break the cycle of social exclusion.

The United Nations (UN) pledged to meet eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Two of those goals are the reduction of the world’s poverty by half, and provision of primary education for all. Several ways of addressing these issues have developed around the world in recent years. Kailash Satyarthi, founder of the Global March Against Child Labor, has argued for a more coordinated effort in at least three areas in this cycle, “poverty alleviation, education for all, and eliminating child labor” (Ungerleider, 2004, p. 38).

Bolsa Escola is an educational promoting program that assists mothers in extreme poverty to break the poverty cycle for their children by giving them the opportunity to study instead of work. Now over 10-years-old, this educational program attempts to alleviate poverty and encourage education for Brazil’s poorest populations. The program focuses on giving financial incentives for Brazil’s poorest mothers on the condition that
they keep their children in school and out of the workforce, and maintain their attendance until graduation. The program claims to be unique in that it tackles the poverty cycle at its core by targeting child labor, and the right to an education.

“Chorei no passado, Choro no presente, Se não fosse a bolsa escola, Choraria eternamente” Aluna bolsista no Paranoá 8th

“I cried in the past, cry in the present, without bolsa escola, I would have cried forever” Poem from an 8th grader under the program in Paranoá

The program alleviates the immediate poverty level by providing conditional cash transfers with the stipulation that children remain in school. Similar programs based on this idea have now been developed in Mexico (Salud y Alimentacion in Mexico) and in Bangladesh (Food for Education) amongst others. Bolsa Escola is said to give an opportunity to improve the conditions for the extreme poor who are socially excluded and did not have an opportunity before. Access to education is a fundamental right for Brazilians and according to one founder this program guarantees it:

“It does this by ensuring that every boy and girl irrespective of his/her social condition will fulfill his/her right to education. The Bolsa Escola programs therefore provide a practical guarantee that this right is protected, independently of one’s rank in society” (Buarque, 2001, Pg. 23).

As of August 2005, the number of families receiving assistance from the Bolsa Escola program within the Federal District and Brasília in Brazil was 41,341, targeting 64,749 extremely poor children at a total of R$ 971,235 ($1 US = R$2.33 in August of 2005). Those receiving assistance under some form of the Bolsa Escola program (i.e. Bolsa Família, Missão Criança, etc) was just over 40 million children in 2006.

Bolsa Escola is not a welfare program, nor is it a stipend to poor people. The mothers must prove that their children are attending school and not working, and the
children are required to complete basic education. According to the International Educational Journal:

“The Bolsa Escola program in Brazil presents a clear break from the economic growth models and supply-side based strategies of the past. Founded on the assumption that the supplemental income generated by child labor outweighs the potential benefits of primary education, Bolsa Escola attempts to address the demand-side component of high drop out rates by providing conditional income subsidies to families with school-aged children” (Denes, 2003).

Reason for the study

The UN, and NGOs have considered using the Bolsa Escola program as a model for other educational/poverty alleviation programs. While the Bolsa Escola program has been effective in many ways, it is certainly not perfect. It is important that for the program’s strengths and weaknesses be identified in order to make future applications of this model more effective.

In light of the previous discussion, I established the following primary research question:

**What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Bolsa Escola educational program and is it still the same 10 years since it was piloted in the Federal District of Brazil?**

Knowing what has been said of the program, these secondary questions will help to answer the primary research question:

- **What needs does Bolsa Escola serve?**
- **What is the organizational structure of the program?**
- **Is Bolsa Escola an educational program or a social one?**
- **How are funds acquired and allocated?**
- **What are the requirements of participants and the issues?**
- **How do people cheat the system?**
- **What are the issues in monitoring the program?**
- **How do the overall findings compare to the primary data from one school that I studied on a micro level?**
• What about the issue of Quality?
• How has the program been found to promote health?
• Has the program reduced child labor?
• How has the program increased female empowerment and can this be measured?
• Has Bolsa Escola significantly increased female enrollment in school?

Social exclusion is the result of an intergenerational cycle of child labor, political poverty, and educational segregation that has led to the disempowerment and isolation of those living in extreme poverty. The leap in development, communications, and globalization has left many people behind and in some countries this gap continues to grow as the pace of globalization increases. Most advances in technology, especially in communications, computers, and information technologies, medicines and medical equipment have taken place rapidly in only one third of the world’s countries. “A steady increase in social inequalities, such as extreme poverty created a new phenomenon called social exclusion….A growing gap between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’ (Aguiar, Araujo 2002. pg. 13). This Bolsa Escola program attempts to stop this cycle.

Within Brazil, there is a social distinction even in education with those in the upper and middle classes receiving top education, and a large lower class kept out by not having the tools to empower themselves. “This means the poor will always be poor in this social hierarchy, and we have to break this concept” stated one interviewee from the National Education Council (Lopes, 2005). This principle of education being available only to people who can afford it is creating a global underclass. It is happening everywhere in the world, including in the U.S. However, the problem is much more dangerous in the 2/3rd World, where the lack of an education can often mean the difference between life and death. Bolsa Escola is said to give an opportunity to improve
the conditions for the extreme poor who are socially excluded and did not have an opportunity. “It does this by ensuring that every student irrespective of his/her social condition will fulfill his/her right to an education.

The Bolsa Escola programs therefore provides a practical guarantee that this right is protected, independently of ones rank in society” (Buarque, 2001). The conceptual framework of this study is that if children stay in school, they have better access to education, and they have a chance to create better futures for themselves and for their families.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the World Bank: “There is a growing consensus that educational attainment is one of the strongest correlates for poverty levels among lesser-developed countries” (Denes, 2003. pg 137; Psacharopoulos, and Nguyen, 1997). Access to education for those in extreme poverty is even more critical among severely impoverished people because opportunities are especially limited in places where there is extreme poverty.

Education is seen as an opportunity and as an asset that “enables its owner to earn more and to communicate and obtain information more successfully” (Bridsall, Levine & Ibrahim, 2005, speech). “In turn, a more equitable sharing of economic and political power will prevent the concentration of wealth and power that in some societies is still associated with limited access to education for the poor” (Birdsall 1999; Birdsall and Londoño 1997, Pg. 334).
This cycle of poverty continues, as uneducated kids become adults with little access to society because they are illiterate. As they become poorer, their children are forced to go to work to support their families. This is intergenerational poverty.

“Geography and economic policies in Latin America have generated high income inequality; high income inequality has contributed to low and unequal accumulation of education; and low and unequal accumulation of this asset has reduced growth and exacerbated income inequality. Despite adequate public spending in much of Latin America, education levels are low, reflecting an average of high levels of schooling for a small minority and very low levels for the large majority” (Birdsall, 1999).

**Child Labor, Education, and Poverty**

A primary cause of poverty is the need to subsidize the family income by making the children work at the earliest ages. They work to support their families because they know nothing else. Sometimes, school is too far away from where the children live. Sometimes the child is a girl, and that girl is automatically excluded from getting an education because of her sex. In some instances, school is available, but the family risks starvation if the child goes to school.

According to the International Child Labor Program, “Children who must begin work at an early age often compromise their future earning potential” (DOL, 1998. pg. 111). An article in the International Journal of School Disaffection stated, “With levels of school enrollment lowest among the poor, a vicious circle exists where the opportunity
for immediate supplemental family income from child labor leads to children being taken out of school” (Denes, 2004, p. 38). Child labor around the world seems to be growing rather than shrinking. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), there are currently an estimated 250 million children working as laborers. UNICEF puts the number at 246 million children around the world, with nearly 171 million working in hazardous conditions (UNICEF, 2005). The International Labor Organization and the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) found around the world that “children who have never attended school, or have dropped out subsequently, form a high proportion of child workers” (Mehra-Kerpelman, 1996).


“Knowing the future of the family lies in the next generation, and knowing that that generation, without education, has limited access to improving the conditions of their lives, then the need for universal primary education must also include addressing child labor. A basic fact promoting child labor is that it is cheaper to use children in the work place because they are powerless and easier to exploit” (UNICEF, 2006).

Studies show that reducing the need for child labor increases student enrollment in school. This link is not new, a proponent of the need to establish the correlation said in 1991 that, “the best way to eradicate all forms of exploitation of working children is to induct them into a school system” (Weiner, 1991). The fact that child labor is a major reason for the high drop out rates in poorer regions was substantiated by an independent nongovernmental organization (NGO) working in Brazil; “63% of Brazilian’s poor children drop out of primary school, mainly to help support their families through working” (Missão Criança, 2006, webpage).
The Situation in Brazil

Brazil is just one example of a country where the connection between lack of education, child labor, and poverty is apparent. Children in extreme poverty in Brazil face street violence, a lack of infrastructure, inadequate housing, and limited education. The poor also face hunger, overcrowded buses, drugs, police raids, and a lack of water.

Brazil is a country of extremes. Often within a few meters there are rich houses and poor shanties. Within Brazil especially, a social distinction exists with those in the upper and middle classes receiving a very high standard of education, and a large lower class kept out by not having the tools to empower themselves. “This means the poor will always be poor in this social hierarchy, and we have to break this concept,” stated one of my interviewees from the National Education Council (Lopes, 2005).

Education is also seen as a right. There seems to be a correlation between the number of educated people in a society and the economic success of that society. “When actual learning is measured, performance by secondary students on internationally comparable math and science tests is positively correlated with economic growth” (Hanushek & Kimko, 2000). According to Buarque “A workforce that has more educated skilled labor has been documented to contribute to higher economic growth” (Buarque 2004, pg1). Brazilian President Lula da Silva has stated on several occasions that education is a “fundamental right of all Brazilians,” and that the government should be working to guarantee that right. “It is hunger, poverty, and social exclusion,” stated Lula, “those are the real barriers we must overcome to achieve long lasting development” (ASWAD, 2004, recorded speech).
Laws exist that try to enforce regulations against child labor, such as the Brazilian Statute on Child and Adolescent Labor promulgated by Law No 809, dated July 13th 1990, but wide scale enforcement of these laws are not always easy, or possible. Part of the reason they can not be enforced is due to the sheer size of the problem in some states, the size of the country pose logistical problems, the difficulty in detection of offenses, the inadequate number of enforcement officers, and the ease in which this issue can be ‘overlooked’ are some factors. Brazil has ratified some of the UN policies on child labor, including, Minimum Age for Industry Sector, ratified in 1934; Forced Labor UN no. 29, ratified in 1957; UN no. 105 Calling for the Abolition of Forced Labor in 1965; UN no.123 Setting a Minimum Age for Underground Work, in 1965; and UN no. 138 Setting a Minimum Age in 1973 (International Child Labor Program, 1998). Reality however, sometimes dictates that excluded individuals break these laws, and enforcement of the law for those already “not seen,” or not in the system, is difficult. Additionally laws to protect children, and enforce labor regulations are not always followed in distant areas when the need for additional income outweighs the risk of getting caught breaking the law.

Bolsa Escola operates on the premise that education and poverty are closely intertwined and must be addressed together. The program maintains that the best opportunity to improve ones economic and social condition is through education. In 1986-87, a group of professors at the University of Brasília, Brazil, led by the then Rector of the University was researching solutions to social problems in Brazil. There
studies were collected and debated before being published in a manifesto of sorts. They found that:

“The exclusion from school because of extra income requirements of the family had increasingly become a serious national problem and a policy response was needed to tackle it” (Buarque, 2001. p. 6).

In the late 1980’s, the group formed some ideas and published them in a manifesto, *Revolution Through Priorities*. The manifesto included ideas about social change, the right to education, and poverty issues. It soon grew in popularity and other countries started adopting similar manifestos with great success.

Cristovam Buarque, soon became Senator for the Federal District under the Workers Party (PT), and was able to promote the plan as a pilot. The program was first piloted within the Federal District in 1995, which included about 19 cities of various economic classes. The rural cities of Taguatinga, Paranoá, and Samambia, make up some of the poorest cities in the Federal District. Paranoá was the first city to implement the Bolsa Escola program. The program was then extended to the municipal county of Campinas. These were the first areas “to adhere to the same concept of the Bolsa Escola program as defined in the text of *Revolution Through Priorities*” (Buarque, 2001. p. 8). The Bolsa Escola program was nationalized less than five years later.

During this time, the program was also adopted in other countries under different names: In 1997, Mexico adopted the program (first called “Progressa,” then “Oportunidades”), in specific states: Guerrero, Hidalgo, Michoacán, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis, Potosí, and Veracruz. Variations of the Bolsa Escola program have been implemented in Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, and Colombia” (Canadian
International Development Research Centre (IRDC), 2005), and later in similar forms in Honduras, Jamaica, and Turkey (Morley and Coady, 2003). Egypt began studying the program in 2006. The Bolsa Escola program was also presented to the United Nations at around the same time.

The success of the Bolsa Escola program encouraged copycat programs as Brazil initiated similarly structured programs such as the Child Labor Eradication Program (PETI) in very rural areas of the country. PETI gave stipends of approximately R$25 per month and copied Bolsa Escola in giving the allocated funds to the mothers with the requirement that the child stay in school, participate in after school activities, and agree not to work. By 1999, PETI had reached 166 municipalities in eight states covering an estimated 131,000 children (UNESCO, 2003).

The Ministry of Education at this time also produced a similar program called the Funda Garantia da Renda Minima (FGRM) (Minimum Income Assurance Program). This program provided aid to municipalities having a per capita income and tax revenue less than the state average. Child school attendance was a requirement between the ages of 6 and 15 and this program assisted roughly 500,000 families. These numbers increased in 2000-2001, to cover nearly 11 million children with an additional funding of US$850 million (UNESCO, 2003).

During the pilot stages of the Bolsa Escola program, “a realization was made that the child does not make up the entire family and to improve conditions, the parents should also be informed” thus, later on, the program developed an extension to assist adult education and expand reading (Aguiar, 2002. p. 63). At this point, Bolsa Escola was
reaching 2 million beneficiaries and was under an umbrella program known as the Alvorada Program.

It was under this Alvorada Program that an additional program was attached to target child prostitution, called Sentinela. Sentinela targeted at-risk children between the ages of 7 and 14 from families with an income of less than half of the minimum wage. This program placed importance on after school activities and provided US$20 to each child in school, with an additional US$12 for after school activities (UNESCO, 2003). In September of 2000, the new government merged PETI and FGRM into a new package with Alvorada and Bolsa Escola being added in 2003.

Specifically in Brasilia, another program exists which mirrors the Bolsa Familia program but only within the Federal District. Politics intervened in the Bolsa Familia program even at the local level where it originated. Senator Cristovam Buarque and the Workers Party (PT) lost the local elections in 2000 in Brasilia to the PSDP party, to Governor Joaquim Roriz. The new right wing conservative party wanted to clean house and its customary that everyone in the local government is replaced with the new party, yet because of the huge notoriety of the Bolsa Escola program, it could not deleted by the new administration. So, not to be outdone, the PSDP set up its own program within the Federal District, and called it Renda Minha.

To add to the continuation of various programs, Lula da Silva started pushing a hunger assistance program for schools in order to alleviate one of the symptoms of the poverty cycle. Fome Zero is a public policy to combat hunger and social exclusion by ensuring that all Brazilians have access to quality food at school. Several programs are used to guarantee the sale of harvest for poor farmers, food baskets for emergencies, such
as drought, milk programs for young children, and food cost programs to keep items affordable, as well as training programs for healthier diets and nutrition.

Fome Zero has a family development policy called the Program of Integrated Attention to the Family (PAIF). Functioning in local Social Assistance centers within municipalities, PAIF promotes programs that strengthen family and community ties, develop local projects that stabilize and serve families and family members and foster socialization, and initiatives for inclusion programs. PAIF targets the elderly of the villages, as well as adolescents and the handicapped, with wages acting as an incentive.

The result from this program has not been overly positive. President da Silva, imitating the success of Bolsa Escola, took “his” program to the UN as Buarque had done but the offshoot program was not met with the same enthusiasm: “He (da Silva) was received with polite silence and blank stares” (‘Brazil Magazine’, 2006). Others have criticized it as a semi-good idea, poorly structured program, and no evidence of positive results as a great campaign strategy that looks to reach out to his poor political base. Still others have noted how school lunch programs have indeed improved and raised the awareness of what was needed.

Da Silva also created two anti-poverty ministries, and two other programs that were similar in targeting the poor. Under a political storm and popular criticism, these short-lived programs were all combined into Bolsa Família with Mr. Ananias (Minister of Social Development) running it. The transition during this time was described as “unsurprisingly chaotic” and an important aspects for the program, the issue of quality, was dropped (Economist, 2005). After some wrangling and political discussion, Bolsa Escola returned somewhat to being an educational program under the Ministry of
Education. Still under the umbrella projects of Bolsa Família run by the Ministry of Social Development, Bolsa Escola / Bolsa Família were returning to their original focus. The Ministry of Social Development still runs programs like Fome Zero, with the Ministry of Education running programs like Merenda Escolar, a school lunch program.

Many other programs have connections to the Bolsa Família program. Other programs not connected to Bolsa Família also affect the results for the Federal District. Other programs that work with similar objectives in Brazil that need to be mentioned here include the Fôrum Nacional de Prevenção e Eradicação do Trabalho Infantil (National Forum for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor), Fundação Orsa (The Orsa Foundation), Fundação Abrinq (The Abrinq Foundation), World Vision, and the Comite Nacional de Enfrentamento a Violência Sexual Contra Crianças e Adolescentes (The National Committee Against Child Molestion and Sexual Violence of Young Children). Many of these programs work in partnership with President da Silva’s Amiga da Criança program, or The Child Friendly Monitoring Network (Rede de Monitoramento Amiga da Criança). This body monitors and assesses programs for children in Brazil, comprised of various organizations in partnership with some international groups such as Save the Children, UNESCO, and UNICEF, whose efforts target the improvement of children and young people’s living conditions. This latest program is yet another activity towards assisting children.

President Lula da Silva stated that Amiga da Criança was organized with the objectives of fulfilling the goals set in the United Nation’s General Assembly’s Special Session on Children in May of 2002. Together with the Conventions on the Rights of the Child, these documents according to the Executive Director of UNICEF at that time,
Carol Bellamy, “Constitute an essential guidebook for all those working to improve the lives of children and young people throughout the world” (UNICEF, 2002). These agendas were adopted by the administration in Brazil, with a campaign called Presidente Amigo da Criança, or friend of the children. The objective of this umbrella organization is compliance with its new international commitments including the “World Fit for Children” (WFFC) plan. The program is also designed to develop its monitoring indicators related to the WFFC goals in health, education, protection, and HIV/AIDS for children.

In recent years, various entities have worked together, and separately to create similar programs to Bolsa Escola that target different needs. This has resulted in the Bolsa Escola program attempting to be all things to all people, something no organization could do successfully. The result has been that the program has spread itself out too thinly, opening the door for corruption and poor quality service.

The reason this paper elaborates the history and development of the program over the ten year period of time is mainly to explain why there is so much conflicting data as to what the program is and does. The history of the program has led some to call it Bolsa Escola, others Bolsa Família, and still others say the original concept exists today under Missão Criança, thus this paper will sometimes refer to the program as Bolsa Escola / Bolsa Família as they are sometimes refered to in different documents as being the same thing. Conflicting reports show Bolsa Escola as being an educational program yet in different periods the program is clearly documented as a poverty reduction plan. One of the original creators of the program stated that when this change occurred, the program
ceased to have an educational agenda, but rather a social one: “Brazil’s school stipend became a vote buying scheme” (Buarque. 2006b).

Data from the Government seemed to be on target with independent findings for a period and then are not congruent with outside sources for another. It was due to these conflicting reports over a period of time which led to the need elaborate on the history behind the program and how it interrelated with other similar programs. Additionally it will be these similar programs that will skew the data as to the performance of the original Bolsa Escola program.

The points that make up the frame of my study include the link between child labor and the lack of education to social exclusion and poverty. Additional points are the disparity in Brazil between the educated and those stuck in intergenerational poverty, as well as a program that professes to alleviate child labor, reduce poverty, empower women, improve health, increase enrollment, and give children the tools and possibility to improve their lives. The following chapter discusses the methodology involved in this research.

**METHODOLOGY**

This section describes the mixed method evaluation this inquiry used to study the Bolsa Escola program and to assess the performance of the program. The research looked at the program from a variety of macro and micro levels in four ways. First, statistical data involving the program within the Federal District was gathered from government agencies and outside sources. Secondly, additional research was collected from previous reports and studies done from a variety of nongovernmental sources. Third, primary data
collected from one school specifically was also correlated with the overall data. Fourth, analysis of the combined data was used to formulate questions that were used in an interview process with those closely working with the program as well as teachers in the field to substantiate or clarify reports as well as answer lingering questions and verify findings.

1. Government data.

This paper searched statistics that charted the progress and performance of the Bolsa Escola programs, as well as financial data, governmental monitoring and previous evaluation information. Data was collected from the Ministries of Education and the Ministry of Health, Department of Labor, as well as other government sources in Brazil. Analysis of child labor reduction, attendance, and poverty indicators from the ministries of Labor, Education, and the Department of Education for the Federal District were of particular interest to me.

2. Outside sources.

I supplemented the government data by independent studies and performance indicators from such organizations as the World Bank, United Nations, and UNESCO. The triangulation was necessary to test the consistency of the findings through different methodologies as there were multiple anomalies and influences that affected the results. Most of the outside source data comes from NGOs like Missão Criança and material at the University of Brasilia’s Research Library. These independent reports collected at the University Research Center were used to compare information gathered from government sources.
All of the additional add-on programs and extensions, copycats, and similarly targeted programs made evaluating just the one program difficult. The difficulty was in getting the best and manageable control group for qualitative data (the one school), while using various sources of quantitative data (Federal District) to note the similarities and problems in the findings. Using personal interviews of various people involved with the program at various levels from different parties proved important in identifying discrepancies with the overall findings of the Bolsa Escola/ Bolsa Família program.

3. Primary Research at one school.

In addition to government and outside sources, I also focused on one primary school within the Federal District. The school will remain unnamed in this study. The purpose of conducting research at one school was to examine the effects of the Bolsa Escola program first hand. This micro level approach allowed me to see if specific individuals were affected positively or negatively by the program.

4. Interviews with those in the field.

All of the above data analyzed and questions were developed to ask those directly involved with the Bolsa Escola program in the field. These interviews were designed to substantiate or clarify current reports, answer questions, and verify previous findings with those who are currently working with the children and the program first hand.

To get the best variety of responses from these interviews, I decided to contact not only administrators within the district, but professionals working with the program, those currently in the government, and teachers working with the children. I did this because I felt that those with direct contact with the children could better see first hand whether the results from the program were positive or negative.
Those in the field included a primary teacher at the school I researched, the regional social coordinator for Bolsa Escola, an accessory for the Brazilian Parliament dealing with education, the coordinator for the regional director for Renda Minha, the social assistant for the National Council on Education under the Brazilian Ministry of Education, a professor at the University of Brasilia in Cultural Anthropology (because my research is from an American perspective), a local Catholic priest involved in poverty issues and the local community, a World Bank member focusing on Bolsa Escola in Brazil, and the coordinator for Missão Criança. Although I speak Portuguese, I used an interpreter during the interview process for nearly all interviews except two.

The triangulation was necessary to test the consistency of the findings through different methodologies, as there are multiple influences that affect results. By comparing data from the government of Brazil at different administrations with outside studies, for example, one can check anomalies or validate reports. This method also provided new insights, new research questions and challenged previous reports. The overall objective to this approach is to view the current program more clearly from all angles and to assess its levels of performance in as valid a qualitative a manner as possible given the varied successes the program is reported to have had.

**PRESENTATION OF DATA**

The Brazilian Bolsa Escola program has reached more than the 44 million people since 2006. Mexico, Angola, Bangladesh and several other countries have similar programs like it with Egypt adopting it in near future. Bolsa Escola is a program that could have a substantial effect on international education. Nancy Birdsall, President of
the Center for Global Development said: “Every decade or so we see something that can really make a difference, and this is one of those things” (Dugger, 2004). Bolsa Escola could be an additional tool in the recovery plan for Africa under the UN. Cristovem Buarque has called for the program to be used as a “World Social Marshal Plan”; a social directive like the economic plan that was implemented to bring Europe out of the ashes of war in 1945. Richer countries could contribute funds to assist educational opportunities in 2/3rd World Countries. Recent immigration issues in Europe and the US has already demonstrated why it would be in their interest to improve conditions in other areas. This paper on the development of Bolsa Escola would be beneficial for others in International Education to study.

Much information could be gleaned from the trials and tribulations, as well as the successes and achievements that have occurred in the ten years the program has been running in Brazil. This paper notes the strengths and weaknesses of the program in order to get a better understanding of it without the political infighting that has disrupted the data. Getting into details such as the problems of implementation, the organizational structure, the ways the program was abused, various issues in managing and monitoring, allocation of funds, as well as other issues that have arisen since it was first piloted in the Federal District are of interests. Each major aspect of the program that is at issue is listed and discussed in further detail below with brief suggestions and recommendations. These are the first questions I started asking to get to the heart of the program and to better understand Bolsa Escola. Much of the information gathered from these questions came from interviews with teachers and administrators in the field and with the Ministry of
Education, Ministry of Social Development, the Brazilian Parliament and with the individual school that I was able to observe.

**WHAT NEEDS DOES THE BOLSA ESCOLA PROGRAM SERVE?**

The Bolsa Escola program serves poor families in a variety of programs. The original program started 10 years ago providing incentives for poor women to keep their children in school and out of the work force. The program pays the equivalent of what the child would earn in an average day of work. The program also provides other incentives such as discounts on food, school supplies, and assorted other items. The goal of the program is to reduce both poverty and child labor by encouraging children to stay in school. It is believed that if children stay in school and complete their educations, they are less likely to continue the cycle of poverty for future generations.

**WHAT IS THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM?**

The Bolsa Escola program was managed by the Department of Education of the Government through an executive board in charge of operations. This board was composed of representatives of the Department of Child Welfare and Social Assistance, the Department of Labor, the Governor’s Office, the Council on the Rights of Children and Youth, and the movement of street children. Each administrative region has its own local boards made up of government and representative members of the community. Under the Bolsa Família program, local officials and representatives of NGO’s were also included in “social councils.” This was designed to give more leeway in blocking and unblocking benefits. Local social councils are seen as more fair and accurate in distributing and monitoring the program: “Participation by community organizations
ensures transparency and avoids electoral misuse,” stated a Canadian independent study on the program. “Neutrality is essential in preventing favoritism in allocation of the benefit (Canadian International Development Research Centre, 2005).

**HOW ARE FUNDS FOR THE PROGRAM ACQUIRED AND ALLOCATED?**

Most of the funding for the Bolsa Escola program, and programs like it, come from a 1% tax levied on financial transactions coming in and out of the country. A proposal to raise funds for global priorities through a tax on cross-border currency transactions, the Brazilian government generates funds for the Bolsa Escola program (UN Development Program, 2002). According to Werthein, “This is the Robin Hood principle put into practice” (Werthein, 2004). An additional estimated US$3 billion in loans for the program come from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and others.

“In 1998, the target was to cover as many as 25,000 families with each family averaging two children per household” (Buarque, 2001, p. 16). In fact, the program covered 25,680 families, or 50,673 children in 2001. At R$136 per family (December 1998), this totaled about R$3.4 million per month and 40.8 million for the year (at the time US$1 = R$1). Currently the estimated costs for the programs are roughly $1.75 Billion per year, or one third of one percent of Brazil’s gross domestic product, according to the World Bank’s economist Joachim Von Amsberg (Dugger, 2004). Another article put the costs at .36% of the Brazilian GDP (Economist, 2005).
The banks and the cash transfer program have been shown to be the most successful way in managing and dispersing the allocated funds. “Internationally too, conditional cash transfers have been shown to be operationally feasible and politically acceptable as an approach to social assistance” (Lindert, 2005). The program distributed ATM cards in 2002 to eligible mothers (UN Development Program, 2002) who could use it monthly in any manner they wanted to meet family needs. In 2002, the Bolsa Escola program was allocating funds electronically to nearly 5 million mothers per month, according to the Education Minister at that time, Paulo Renato (UN Development Program, 2002). Designated centers were set up where there were no ATM machines, banks, or electricity.

My collected information could not find any data or evaluations regarding the coverage or distribution of funds under the Cadastro Único single registry system, to determine who was being excluded or included with regard to the coverage of this program and its targeted recipients. Thus, the issue of whether or not this single registry works in reaching to those who need the program cannot be definitively verified. The lack of transparency also raises alarm bells to corruption possibilities.

The program tripled the monthly benefit in 2004 to about US$24 or US$26 per person. Additional benefits were set up for pregnant women, small children not yet old enough to go to school and food and gas subsidies which were all previously under different programs. At that time, roughly 5.3 million families were receiving the new benefits with a total budget in 2004 of R$5.8 billion Reais (little more than US$2 billion dollars) (Swartzman, 2005). It is estimated that by the end of 2006, Bolsa Família will
reach 11.4 million families or nearly 40 million children. R$500,300,000,000 for children between 5 to 17 living in families that earn less than a dollar per person per day, in 2004 that equaled = 12,000,000 children. The Federal government budget in Reais in 2004 was more than R$17.3 billion with R$13.3 billion for higher education (Swartzman, 2005. Pg.3).

**WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION?**

The basic criteria for qualification for the program are that the family has been living within the municipality for five or more years and has a monthly income of not more than half the minimum salary of Brazil. The condition of five year residence is to limit mass migration of poor families, and to promote and encourage development in areas in which the poor are actually from. Half of the monthly income of the minimum salary in Brazil is a requirement that takes into account the adult population within the family that would qualify for work. Every unemployed adult member would additionally have to register with the National Employment System (SINE) (IRDC. 2005, p.1).

To be eligible to receive benefits, all children in the household between the ages of 7 to 14 must not be working, and they must be registered in school. The family, usually the mother, must formally agree to keep the children in school until the age of 14, and none can be truant for more than two days per month without justification. Families with children who do miss more than the allotted days without any justification could have their entitlements dropped for that month. In 2001, efforts were made to improve the income situations of families while the students were in school from ages 7 to 14. Efforts
included assistance in “obtaining employment that pays more than or equal to minimum wage so that they are in a position to leave the program even though the children are still at school. To that end families participating in the program should be evaluated on a yearly basis” (Buarque, 2001, p.11).

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES IN HOW PARTICIPANTS ARE CHOSEN?

Under the original Bolsa Escola program, the local state and municipal governments defined the program goals and set the criteria for selecting the families that are eligible to participate. They select locations, identify families in those locations that would clearly qualify, list family and beneficiaries with the greatest concentration around schools and transfers of funds: “This is designed with the best magnitude of potential impact” (Aguiar, 2002. Pg. 69). Currently under the Bolsa Família program, potential beneficiaries enroll in the Cadastro Único or Single Registry, which combines several applications for various programs into one.

The program in its initial stage, used data from the Human Development Atlas for Brazil developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Brazilian partners to target areas with the highest numbers of extreme poor, for maximum results. The UNDP information provided social data for all of Brazil’s 5,500 municipalities, with US$1.2 million dollars from the Brazilian government to monitor the programs effectiveness and impact on families, local schools, and communities (UN Development Program, 2002).
The Secretary of Education then sends invitations to potential participants to register for the program:

explaining clearly the criteria to be applied, the timing, and where the selection will take place. The families wishing to take part in the program then register and make themselves available for eligibility testing in accordance with the pre-established criteria” (Buarque, 2001, p.9).

An additional benefit from the registration was that poor families, which are usually migratory, became nationally registered within the government of Brazil and in the system as a whole, a project that the United Nations Development Program was also supporting (UN Development Program, 2002). This unfortunately would be more difficult under Bolsa Família program as the pre-established criteria included documentation that most did not possess.

After the registrations are received, officially trained teams within the Bolsa Escola program are responsible for visiting the families at their homes to ensure that the information provided in the registration is accurate; these were usually workers within the school system or sometimes high school volunteers. This was designed to discourage non-eligible families from taking advantage of the system. These workers often complete the required forms, as the families usually cannot. To see examples of both the Bolsa Escola form for the Federal District, and the form from Missão Criança within the Federal District, see Appendix 1 and 2. The tables to “add up” which family was in a greater “need” for the program are also included in the Appendix.

Additional points are given if the family does not have running water, a refrigerator, or sanitation. Points are added if the child does not have both parents. Knowing that the purpose of the survey is to verify qualified applicants there is often
abuse in under-representing household income; an issue that this paper brings up towards improving the program.

Once these applications for the program are completed, the secretary of education finalizes the lists and gives them to the area schools. Lists of “new” students are then sent to the area schools. School officials usually meet with the mother of the household concerning disbursement income details and responsibilities. Afterwards, the school sends attendance reports to the Secretary of Education. Upon approval, they are then sent to the Ministry of Finance, which transfers the funds to the various banks. The banks, or institution in charge of disbursing the funds, routes the money to the various accounts. In Brasília, where the program was piloted, “the bank in charge of disbursing the monthly payments upon presentation of a card issued by the program’s coordinating office was the Banco de Brasília (BRB)” (IRDC. 2005, p.1).

**HOW DO SOME CHEAT THE SYSTEM AND WHAT’S BEING DONE TO CORRECT IT?**

Applicants often know how to answer the survey in order to receive benefits. Aware that the purpose for the information being collected is to determine eligibility, and knowing that those with the greatest need will be accepted, some households have an added incentive to under report their assets and income. Knowing too that it is difficult to check on every family that registers for the Bolsa Família program under the new umbrella, some who are registered who have working children have been found to be benefiting from this program. This was corrected somewhat in recent years as data from the Cadastro Único dos Programas Sociais (Single Registry) has been used to crosscheck applicants with those working. However my research found that this cross-check is not
done on a regular basis, nor is it matched with reported incomes, nor other databases currently run by the Brazilian government such as recorded deaths and statistics.

Cadastro Único’s questionnaire, the Cadúncico, like the original survey, still makes it possible for candidates to under represent their situations in order to qualify for benefits. What makes matters more difficult is that there are no verifications set for the self-reported data. A system for regularly auditing the Cadúncico and the Bolsa Família program would help in reducing misuse. There is a one-time audit by the Tribunal de Contas da União (started in 2003), but not more than that and not in terms of dealing with auditing the quality and later cross-referencing the data with updated material. This is likely the single most important aspect against the program at present is that the methods for evaluating, auditing, and measuring quality control are extremely limited. Finally, under the single registry, there are no penalties for fraud or abuse, thus no incentives against under-reporting or abuse.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES OF MONITORING THE PROGRAM?

Media reports of abuse within the Bolsa Escola program in various regions did much to sour the national attitude of the program in 2004. Some have criticized the program, citing specific instances of mismanagement at the local level. Brazilian National Television/media network Globo reported that they found scattered cases of discrepancies in which some families were receiving money, while more qualified families were not. Globo also reported in 2004, on cases where families were receiving Bolsa Família funds, whose children were not actually attending school (Swartzman, 2005; Kamel, 2004).
The idea of wide spread mismanagement or easy abuse was not evident in this study nor in detailed reports on the specific issues. The reported abuses in the television program Globo, were isolated cases where abusers of the program had gotten around the regulations. It did note that there were some loopholes and taking action against these loopholes eventually did lead to the creation of the Cadastro Único (Single Registry).

A research paper also reiterated that “Brazil has a long history of clientelistic practices and patronage, thus it is perhaps not too surprising that in some municipalities, local politicians used Bolsa Escola as a political instrument” (Finan, 2004). The report noted how easy it was to select families based on political support or threaten those who do not politically support them, and in one municipality in which local politicians were actually enrolled in the program.

The diversity of governmental structure was also an issue in hiding discrepancies. Brazil historically developed and inherited a complex federal system encompassing 5,561 autonomous and semi-autonomous municipal districts. Some of these resemble rural outposts in the plains while others are vast urban centers. Add a system infamous for bureaucracy and the ability to monitor becomes quite a challenge.

Monitoring risks and entitlement issues were acknowledged early on. Developing a monitoring mechanism was important to ensuring that funds were being spent correctly, and that those in need were benefiting from the program. This is a challenge, since the local regions had a large share in the decision making process of who was to benefit. Currently under the Bolsa Família program, using the Cadastro Único, or national registry, cross-referencing that registry with national data on employees, the program is finding some participants who were receiving benefits who were not eligible for them.
The first time this was done in 2005, nearly 50,000 lost their benefits according to Rosani Cunha, which manages the program. Additionally district quotas for beneficiaries, which were known to foster favoritism were dropped. As of 2006, under the new Federal guidelines, municipalities must establish social councils composed of local officials and representatives of NGOs to monitor implementation.

In regards to monitoring the program, an additional issue brought up by one of the people that I interviewed noted that the single registry cannot be accessed by municipalities and states at the local level, thus access to the database is restricted. The database itself has reported problems, including deleting families, inability to merge files, and an inability to cross check individual variables at times such as household expenses against reported income. The program reportedly also has difficulties in checking the information with other databases for discrepancies (Lindert & la Briere, 2005).

**ADDING PROGRAMS SKews RESULTS**

Within Brasília and the Federal District, two complementary programs were implemented. The “Art & School” program which brings local artist to visit schools and participate in the learning experience, and the “Popular Season Program,” which allows regional and national actors to act in low-income communities. Additional complementary activities and programs, which had been structured around Bolsa Escola programs included the “Social Saving System,” the “Preschool Basket,” and the “Book Case Initiative” were also added. These would later have an effect on measuring poverty rates, education, and attendance for the Bolsa Escola program.

A system to promote the understanding of savings and banking has been beneficial but it is not in every area that the Bolsa Escola program is in. The School
Saving System provides poor kids with a “savings book” open “at the initiation of the school year for every Bolsa Escola student. It will be kept as long as the children advance in their grade levels.” Each year an amount is deposited into the child’s created bank account when he/she is approved to the next grade year. They are not allowed access to the funds until at least 8th grade. If they leave school before then, they automatically loose all the money in the bank account. When they reach high school, they are authorized to withdraw only half of the savings. “The remaining half of the funds can be withdrawn only if and when the child has concluded their secondary level, together with what has accumulated on this latter stage. If they drop out, they loose the whole deposit.”

This was promoted in part by an American bank, known as Banco do Boston. This program, when enlarged with the Bolsa Familia program has been beneficial for poor families who have never started a bank account or even used a bank before (World Bank, 2005).

An additional program was known as “The Pre-school Basket” which supplied food, baby formula, and pedagogical tools, for those families that have children that have not yet reached the school age. Still another related program was the Book Case initiative, which provided additional books to students. Every shared “bookcase,” was an integral part of a family library that taken together represented a large public library serving the community as a whole. “The “bookcases” have a multiplier effect in information and cultural dissemination within the poorest segments of the population.” (Buarque, 2001, p. 34).

An additional program added was a subsidized program for poor families to buy cooking gas (Gas canisters are often primarily used for cooking and heating in Brazil).
This program “Vale Gás,” was incorporated along with Bolsa-Alimentação, a food subsidy program (Buarque, 2004). Slowly smaller programs that had different goals to the educational programs were being tacked on until Bolsa Família became a behemoth of discombobulated befuddlement.

**SHOULD THE PROGRAM BE EDUCATIONAL OR SOCIAL?**

Buarque (2004) maintained that the assistance programs could not help forever while, in time, Bolsa Escola would be able to leave poverty behind. “That difference was wiped out when we unified different programs with different goals” stated Buarque; “Bolsa Escola is an educational one”. There is also criticism that social programs foster a culture of dependency, thus reducing the incentive for the poor to take it upon themselves to improve their conditions. “They should not have been mixed together. When we mixed them, we created the basis for setting the assistance programs in stone, and annihilating the educational program” (Buarque, 2004. P1).

The disoriented entanglement of programs continued to accumulate with the concentration of all programs being run now by the Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome, or the Ministry of Social Development and Hunger Alleviation. The minister for Social Development in 2004, Patrus Ananias, stated that he would not let any family go hungry simply because the children were not attending school, and canceled the requirement of student enrollment as a condition for the
program. Buarque stated, “Seen from the perspective of his ministry, he is right.”

However Bolsa Familia was never supposed to be a social assistance program and according to many, should have remained under the Ministry of Education. Buarque (2004) stated:

> Brazil needs assistance programs, whether they be unified or not, and Brazil also needs an educational program functioning under any name whatsoever so long as it maintains the concept of the Bolsa Escola as it is utilized today in diverse parts of the world. By simply supporting them in poverty, the assistance program meets poor families’ needs without imposing conditions with the conviction that educating children will break the vicious circle of poverty.

Many concluded that the assistance programs should be managed by the Ministry of Social Assistance, and the educational programs by the Ministry of Education. At that time, Bolsa Escola ceased to be a multi-objective educational program.

**IS MISSÃO CRIANÇA THE CLOSEST TO THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT?**

Missão Criança, an NGO based on the original Bolsa Escola program started working within the Federal District in 1998. The program operates outside of the scope of the government programs. Missão Criança contributes funding in many of the same areas that Bolsa Escola did. In addition, it promotes and implements the Bolsa Escola program in areas where the program is not currently available. This program is likely the truest form of the original idea that was designed at the University of Brasília. Private Brazilian resources and donations make up Missão Criança’s funding. Additional support comes from the Brazilian Agency for Children’s Rights, The Brazilian Committee for Democracy in Information Technology, USAID, the European Union, the International Labor Organization, EEC, and The Brazilian Cooperation Agency under the Ministry of
To date, Missão Criança states that there are different Bolsa Escola programs, one institutional, funded by the state, and one citizenry, supported by this program. There are about 17 additional programs run by the NGO. Missão Criança also operates in São Tomé, Tanzania, Chile and Argentina. In 2006, Missão Criança was in several capital states in Brazil including Belém, Brasília, Fortaleza, João Pessoa, Maceió, Manaus, Natal, Porto Alegre, Recife, Salvador e São Luís. This duplication of sorts, is also a factor in measuring the success of the Bolsa Escola program within the Federal District.

**HOW IS AFFORDABILITY A STRENGTH?**

Most of the funding for the Bolsa Escola program come from a tax levied on all cross-border financial transactions (UN Development Program, 2002). “This is the Robin Hood principle put into practice” (Werthein, 2004). An additional estimated US$3 billion in loans for the program comes from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and others. Currently the estimated costs for the programs are roughly 1.75 Billion a year, or a third of one percent of Brazil’s gross domestic product according to the World Bank’s economist Joachim Von Amsberg (Dugger, 2004), another article put the costs at .36% of the GDP (Economist, 2005).

It is estimated that by the end of 2006, Bolsa Família will reach 11.4 million families or nearly 40 million children. R$500,300,000,000 for children between 5 to 17 living in families that earn less than a dollar per person per day, in 2004 that equaled =
12,000,000 children. The Federal government budget in Reais in 2004 was R$17.3 billion with R$13.3 billion for higher education (Swartzman, 2005. Pg.3).

Interviews and resources within the Federal District noted that the overall stipend is about the average wage a child makes per day. However this is slightly lower than average for older boys. Noting how the drop out rate for boys at an older age is still higher than girls, and noting that the wage for boys is more than girls, it would be of benefit to increase the rate within the Federal District to meet demand. This has been done in other regions in Brazil and in other countries. The stipend in Ecuador for example is only US$10, where most of Brazil is estimated at around US$40 (Buarque, 2001).

UNESCO stated in its evaluation of the program in 2002 that “Bolsa Escola is feasible and affordable” (UNESCO, 2002). “The efficiency of the Bolsa Escola program lies not only in the fact that the costs are small but also in that it is relatively simple to estimate. One simply has to multiply the monthly value to be paid by the number of families that one wishes to cover.” (Buarque. Pg.16).

Issues raised that the funds are not “large enough to impact the country’s high levels of deprivation” and thus will not “dramatically reduce poverty” seem to miss the overall point (Bourguignon, 2003). The point being that the program is targeting the future by giving the children an opportunity to get out of poverty rather than a welfare stipend. The money given is not to address the immediate needs, rather to reduce the need for child labor, and thus end the poverty cycle that keeps extremely poor individuals from participating in society.

In calculating the costs of continuing social services and dependency programs, the opportunity to break the poverty cycle all together becomes quite valuable. This is
what the Brazilian government saw and why Bolsa Escola is a national program. They see it as an investment in the future of the country that does not cost much per student and seems to work well. “We have proved this in Brazil, and we have proved that it doesn’t cost much,” Buarque stated in his speech to the United Nations Educational Forum in Japan.

The cost of the program is one of the major selling points. Estimates for the cost to educate all children under programs similar to Bolsa Escola would cost the world about $40 billion dollars; when in comparison to the world’s over all economy and income of more than 40 trillion dollars, this is indeed a small amount.

HOW DOES ALL OF THIS COMPARE TO THE FINDINGS ON THE SCHOOL THAT I PERSONALLY STUDIED ON A MICRO LEVEL?

The data collected within the one school that was studied in Samambia, an area within the Federal District, showed the program at the local level on a real one-to-one basis. About 420 students in the school received benefits from the program at R$45 per month per student. The individual teacher I interviewed showed that in one class of 21 students, more than 10 were receiving this aid. “These students would not be here if there was no program to assist them,” said the teacher. She noted how many students receive the student kit; a backpack that comes with books, pens, paper, and the sneakers that many of the kids I saw were wearing. The overall data collected on the program at the Federal District, and at the local level both confirm that the program assists those who need it the most, although there are still so many more who could also qualify. The school had 914 students with 30 teachers, 15 in the morning, 15 in the afternoon. First
and second grade students held roughly 35 students per class while the 3rd and 4th held 40 students. If there were students with special needs, the number of total students was 23. 420 students in that school received Bolsa Escola funding.

My small qualitative data at the school also mirrored the findings of several outside sources. UNESCO and UNICEF performed outside studies and evaluations of the Bolsa Escola over an extended period of time, all with positive results. These evaluations noted that all students within the program stayed in school with almost no dropouts and all students displayed significant improvements in performance. The school I studied had three dropouts, but none were under the Bolsa Escola program. Additional large-scale studies by the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank were also favorable. The International Labor Organization concurred in its evaluations that:

> The program affects both on education by ensuring school attendance of all children, reduced dropout rates, and improving quality and involvement of parents in schools. It has an additional social and economic impact as it reduces child labour, leads to women empowerment, improves the quality of life of families in extreme poverty, and promotes employment among the involved families. (UNESCO & MINEDAF, 2002).

Large scale evaluations were easier to produce in the early part of the program (2001-2003) than the current atmosphere due to the recent duplication, copying, and merging of similar programs that work within the same area on many of the same issues.

**WHAT ABOUT THE ISSUE OF QUALITY?**

The program has also been criticized for neglecting the issue of “quality education,” as well as teaching salaries, and school improvements and infrastructure. While the Bolsa Escola program has done so much in so many different was, the program has been
criticized for not addressing the issue of quality. Critics have argued that it is not enough to require everyone to attend school when that school lacks much of the necessities and where issues of quality education are a concern. The Catholic Priest I interviewed for this research paper said “getting more children to attend school is only as affective as the schools themselves” Several reports have cited schools in rural regions such as in the municipality of Mocajuba where there are three teachers for 107 students. Those who I interviewed for this report maintain that they have adequate teacher/student ratios and Bolsa Escola does what it does, and the issue of quality education is something being addressed by another program. “When you have one great program that does a lot, then it opens the window to everything else about the educational system,” said an advisor to the Brazilian Parliament that I talked with.

There is a separate project to tackle the issue of quality, in its third design called Fundescola III, and its development objectives are to assist targeted areas and regions to reduce the disparities across their primary schools, as well as to increase the effectiveness of these schools within each local government’s financial capacity. In addition to the quality issue, another program is being developed that copies a variation of Bolsa Escola running successfully in Chile. This addition to the program shepherds people into productive employment after their schooling is finished. In Mexico, a variation allows teenagers to receive a bonus if they go to college.

In regards to quality and curriculum, several recent programs have been instituted to address this issue. The teacher I interviewed noted a national guideline and curriculum set all schools to improve what is taught in the school system. Called the PCN (Parametros Corriculares Nacional, National Curriculum Parameters), the intent of this program is to
set guidelines for what the average student in that grade should be able to do before he or she moves on to the next level.

In regards to quality and teaching, additional work is being done by the government. The teacher interviewed, also informed me of how one used to be able to be a teacher with just a three-year course after the eighth grade. Teachers are now required to have university degrees. However, the government failed to address the issue of the large number of inadequately prepared teachers in the system and few replacements as salaries do not make the profession attractive for college students. A program has recently instituted a requirement to give unqualified teachers two years to achieve their certification. The teacher I interviewed stated that currently she was finishing this program because she was one of those teachers who started working right out of school herself.

Recommendations for improving quality in the schools for the future include a continuation and massive investment increase in the school infrastructure, something that has been neglected for several decades. Schools, teacher training, salaries, supplies, and priorities all need to be evaluated, and in some cases an infrastructure needs to be created to support a public educational system that can educate the students that are being enrolled for the future of the country. An evaluation system of schools based on a variety of points would also need to be introduced to try to measure the successes and failures of regions or states as all school are on the state level.

ONE WEAKNESS IS NOT KNOWING JUST HOW MANY LIVE IN POVERTY

A paper submitted to the Global Conference on Education Research in Developing Countries in 2005, reported that a weakness in analyzing the program in
Brazil is that there is not a national registry of the poor, to document those outside of society, thus there is no real way of knowing or measuring the impact of the Bolsa Familia program properly. Those within the field that I talked with agree with this statement. There are a large number of uncountables, or undocumented people socially excluded from society. Sometimes migratory, sometimes not wanting to be counted and they exist predominately within the group that this program is trying to assist.

DIFFICULTIES IN MEASURING POVERTY REDUCTION

There is a difficulty in defining poverty and thus measuring the success of poverty reduction. There are also too many variables that are not factored in as to why poverty rates may have changed in the area that I studied. Variables may include increased immigration of poorer settlers to the area, loss of major business and employment, and seasonal agricultural problems to name but just a few. This is not to say that the program did not increase the conditions of the participants, simply that it was difficult to effectively measure poverty in my study or evaluate the performance of the program.

“Poverty expresses itself in multi-dimensional outcomes, being conditioned by the socio-economic, cultural, institutional, and political environment” (Zeller, Sharma, Henry, & Lapenu. 2005). In regards to measuring poverty, a past report said: “Human life depends on elements that are not monetary or measurable from an economic standpoint, thus they are not quantitative” (Waiselfisz; Abramovay; Andrade. 1998. Pg. 17).

Additional difficulties in measuring poverty and how the Bolsa Escola program was addressing it, involved other programs which also target the same goals and operate
in the same area. For example, the Pastoral da Criança, or Pastors for Children, attend to very young poor children and also worked within the Federal District. Other similar programs with similar demographics include Bolsa Alimentação (food allowance), Cartão Alimentação (food card), Auxílio-Gás (cooking gas allowance), and Fome Zero (Zero Hunger). Programs such the Child Labor Eradication Program (PETI) also assist the extreme poor.

**HOW DOES THE PROGRAM PROMOTE HEALTH?**

In regards to health issues, studies show basic over all improvements in health where the Bolsa Escola program is located. “*Family health issues have systematically improved within the families benefiting from the Bolsa Escola program. The impact has been almost immediate and essentially due to the ability to purchase food and items essential for personal hygiene. In addition, health education given at the school premises has had noticeable impact on the children as well as the parents.*” (Buarque, 2001. Pg.26).

Under the Bolsa Escola program, various doctors visit the school and perform check-ups and general inoculations. Since the installment of this aspect of the program, regional health issues have been reported to improve somewhat in Brazil as access to doctors becomes readily available for those who are in school. Within the school that I personal studied and interviewed with some of the teachers, there were several health programs working with the students there. This included visits from the eye doctor, dentist, nutritionist, and other after school activities sometimes additionally held during
the weekend. Classes on nutrition are also taught in school, information that more children are receiving as they attend. Bolsa Escola is likely to continue to increase health within the area it is operating in for the future. Global studies have shown that young girls who are in school now, who will grow up to be educated mothers in the near future, will have healthier families. It has been documented by the World Bank that educated mothers have better nourished children, who are less likely to die in infancy. “On average, one additional year of schooling for a mother results in a reduction in child or infant mortality of 9 per 1,000 infants (World Bank, 1993). Additionally, young people “who have completed primary education are less than half as likely to contract HIV as those with little or no schooling” (Herz & Sperling, 2003). Statistics from 2003 show Brazil with an AIDS rate of 0.7% of the population; better than its neighbors Argentina and Venezuela (the United States rate was 0.6%).

While general statistics show the importance and the link with better health to better education, again the results within the Federal District cannot be qualitatively confirmed as the number of undocumented poor are still unknown. Other issues that may skew the data include advances in health care access for the poor, improvement of regional facilities, and an increase in other programs that promote health issues such as AID’s awareness, a contraception campaign, and recent inoculations for infants against diseases. All of these programs are also involved within the Federal District of Brazil.

Currently Bolsa Escola works in relation to the National School Nutrition Program, the largest school lunch program possibly in the world. Recently Merenda Escolar under the Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar and the Fundo Nacional de
Desenvolvimento Escolar, raised the value of the student lunches per student/per day some 38.5% in 2005. Day care centers have also received lunch allowance increases as well as indigenous schools which had not been changed in over a decade.

“It is a well known fact that when children are better fed and well looked after, they show better records at school. Evaluations of the Bolsa Escola initiative in Brasilia have shown that the level of academic success is proportionally higher in those children in the program than those who do not benefit from it” (Buarque, 2001. Pg. 29). The governments food program is unlike any other, providing lunch nearly every day for 22% of the Brazilian population, (more than 37.8 million people) with school lunches. The budgetary appropriation is about R$1,140 billion Reais in 2005.

Bolsa Escola and the Ministry of Education found that Indigenous populations needed special assistance from the Education Ministry to indigenous communities “given the high incidence of food and nutritional insecurity that population faces”. This problem required particular attention with an emphasis on the native diet, and “distinctive food and eating habits of each ethnic group” (Ministério da Educação, 2005). A member of the tribe or group from the indigenous school, usually a parent or leader, is also represented on the School Nutrition Council for their area as well as Bolsa Escola.

HAS BOLSA ESCOLA REDUCED CHILD LABOR?

My own personal data showed that child enrollment was up in the school that I studied, and the link was made by some of the school members that many used to work during the day. One administrator confided regrettably that it doesn’t mean they aren’t working at night. Monitors of the program do not always discover night time child labor
and it is often the teachers who notice and report whether a child has been working at night; signs include lack of sleep, hasn’t finished homework, etc. Still in this school, Bolsa Escola can measure the estimated number of children working in child labor and can note that there is a distinct reduction of child labor over the years that the program has been in existence, both nationally and in the Federal District. A Canadian study also documented that in the year Bolsa Escola first expanded nationally, “the employment rate of children between the ages of 10 to 14 years of age, decreased by 31.2%. (Canadian International Development Research Centre IRDC, 2005). The program’s findings also noted that “Bolsa Escola has had the effect of increasing the income of the poorest 10% of the population and of taking children out of the labor market. A 36% decrease in the number of street children in Brasilia was noted in the period from September 1996 to September 1997 (i.e. 574 in 1997, compared with 892 in 1996)” (IRDC, 2005).

As mentioned, government data has been skewed and is sometimes contradictory. Studies during certain administrations have been quite detailed while other periods show extreme variances or no available data at all. The number of children between the ages of 5 to 17 within the Federal District in 2001 numbered 515,846: 246,308 being boys, and 269,538 being girls. Of this number, children not enrolled in school totaled 43,711. According to the Brazilian government 23,040 were documented as working in child labor in 2001 (IBGE, 2001). Again in 2002, data showed that only 412 children between the ages of 5 and 9 were working in an agricultural job and all of them were girls.

Government data does show a reduction in child labor. In 2002, there were 618 documented children between the ages of 5 and 9 working within the Federal District.
instead of being in school. In 2003, that number had dropped significantly to 212 children working in the district. By 2004, there were no documented children between the ages of 5 and 9 working within the Federal District according to the Brazilian government statistical data (IBGE, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004).

In Brazil, and reflective on a smaller scale in Brasília, areas in which young boys are likely to be working include: auto repair services, construction, drug trafficking, delivery, parking garage attendants, shoe shines, street vendors, and wood delivery. (International Child Labor Program, 1998). Additionally in the surrounding areas of Brasília young boys are usually selling candy items, newspapers, and trash collecting and recycling.

Young girls tend to work in the informal service sector such as housekeeping, cooks, nannies, and must travel long distances/commutes “from the low income communities into more wealthy areas closer to the city center” (Oxfam, 2004. Pg.41). These over all findings mirrors the employment of children in Brasília as well. Girls also work at their own homes often cleaning, cooking, and taking care of younger siblings while the mother is working. Small young girls work at night selling candy or flowers around local outdoor restaurants and bars; while some young children work in prostitution. “After Thailand, Brazil is the second destination of choice for sex tourists” according to a report from the London Observer, with “something like a million child prostitutes in the country” (Observer, London. September 30th, 2005. Pg.7).

Additonal factors that may contribute to the reduction of child labor in Brasília and the Federal District at this time include the increase in the number of labor inspectors. The strengthening of the Brazilian enforcement was initiated in the late 90’s
along with improved training, and the implementing of new strategies (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

**IS THE CONDITIONAL STIPEND TOO LOW?**

Interviews and resources within the Federal District noted that the overall stipend is about the average wage a child makes per day. However this is slightly lower than average for older boys. Noting how the drop out rate for boys at an older age is still higher than the drop out rate for girls, and that boys generally receive more pay than girls do, it would be of benefit to increase the rate within the Federal District to meet demand. This has been done in other regions in Brazil and in other countries. The stipend in Ecuador for example is only US$10, where most of Brazil is estimated at around US$40 (Buarque, 2001). Others I have interviewed have also agreed to this suggestion.

**CHILD PROSTITUTION STATISTICS ARE DOWN**

Bolsa Escola has been reported to have reduced child labor and especially child prostitution, however while evidence from the government and outside monitoring agencies do seem to show a reduction in reported cases of child labor, reports on child prostitution are more difficult to research qualitatively. The government of Brazil has instated many other various programs at different levels to counter attack the child sex industry as well, thus influencing the results of any findings. Popular magazines such as Veja and Istoe, all had special articles raising awareness. In January of 2005 for example, the Brazilian government launched an action plan during the 5th Worlds Social Forum in Porte Alegre. The government also targeted the assistance of the hospitality industry with
new codes of conduct regulations and to promote awareness to employees at hotels and popular tourist sights to be able to recognize the warning signs and challenge suspected sex tourists.

In addition to these plans, special police units were formulated to catch suspected child sex offenders. Reports of working with hotel staff and additional police “has already led to many arrests in tourist cities such as Forteleza and Natal where foreign men were seen with young Brazilian children” (Observer, London. 2005. Pg. 7). In addition to these implemented programs, NGO’s such as ‘Casa da Passagem’ have worked a lot in getting street children out of prostitution. This NGO has assisted approximately 300 young girls and adolescents between the ages of 7 and 21 by offering educational and vocational activities, community work, assisting in reestablishing family links, and strengthening their self esteem. (US Department of Labor, 1998. Pg. 111). While results again seem positive, there is no clear number of how many children are involved in the sex trade, thus it is difficult to measure results.

**HOW HAS BOLSA ESCOLA CONTRIBUTED TO FEMALE EMPOWERMENT AND HOW CAN THIS BE MEASURED?**

Since the Bolsa Escola programs conception, the mother would play a key role in the development of the children by being the primary individual in the family to receive the funds. It was found that ‘mother knew best’ when it came to using the money; “the program underscores the findings from around the world showing that ‘poor women are far more effective and efficient in finding the best ways to provide for the basic needs of their families’” (UN Development Program, 2002. Pg.2). Other data showed that
“providing the transfers to mothers, decisions on the intra-household allocation of resources tend to favor children’s nutrition, health, and education” (Lindert, 2005).

Having mothers as the receiver of the funds has helped to assure that the money is spent more wisely. In the program, she is sometimes referred to as the Comissão Executiva, or Executive Commissioner.

This has given young women and mothers in these communities a power that they had not possessed before. The decision of allocating finances has been reported to be a great boost by one report, not only to self esteem but also in the empowerment of especially young women. An independent study showed that the mother “developed an importance in the economy of the family and rationally distributed the money as needed. The study found added respect for mothers had improved within families amongst the poor communities” (Aguiar, 2002. Pg.113). My personal interviews have also stressed that this was of importance as women did not always have the means of earning an income but now were considered important for the family economic health.

In similar regards, the importance of staying in school for the family has given more responsibility for young girls and a sense of importance. An eight-year-old student 50 km from Brasília reported in an UNESCO article: “I help my mother a lot because I go to school. Now we can pay the electricity bills and buy books, pens, and even toys and sandals” (Werthein, 2004).

Of families living in poverty, “Single mothers now head one in four households in Brazil (up from one in six in 1991), and they earn an average of US$246 per month according to Journal do Brasil, in March of 2002 (Oxfam, 2004. Pg. 37). Indeed women in general, usually represent nearly 70% of the world’s 1.3 billion people who live in
absolute poverty (UNIFEM, 2005). This educational program could be of benefit in terms of addressing this issue as well.

Studies have shown that the very fact of educating girls, who grow up to be women has limited the number living in poverty and increased their health and the health of the family. International studies have shown that educated young girls tend to get married when they are older and they tend to have fewer children. (Birdsall, 2005). World studies show that “an extra year of schooling for girls reduces fertility rates by 5 to 10 percent. In Brazil and Peru, women with no education have about six children, while women with a secondary education have about three” (Herz and Khandker, 1991).

Additionally, studies have also documented that educated mothers are 50% more likely to immunize their children than mothers with no schooling and that women who are more educated are more likely to seek prenatal care thus reducing the risks of maternal mortality rates (Herz & Sperling, 2003). In a 2005 census, the current infant mortality rate in Brazil was 29.61 deaths for every 1,000 live births. That result is better than many of Brazil’s neighbors including Peru, Bolivia, Guyana, Cape Verde, Guatemala, and others. The 2005 rate for the world was at 50.25.

Measuring female empowerment is difficult. While positive feedback has been noted, and those within the field have also mentioned success in this area, and my own personal interviews additionally supported the findings that Bolsa Escola does have a positive effect on the empowerment on young women, the paper can not measure this growth and note to what extent. It can make the connection that females receiving money are in a better status in the family in terms of assisting the family.
Perhaps to better measure this affect, future studies could formulate a survey to be given to mothers receiving funds under the program in a limited area. A survey or inquiry study of those who feel they have been empowered from it or not, could be used to try to measure those who said it was positive for them, and those who denoted no difference. However, as my personal interviews have stated from different sources, getting that population to reply to such a survey would be extremely difficult. Even the concept of ‘Female Empowerment’ would be difficult to describe and measure on any scale. Trying to go door to door would not be a worthwhile task as the population that receives the Bolsa Escola funds are constantly influx and moving around. Additionally permission to personally contact these individuals would not be easy.

**INCREASED EDUCATION FOR GIRLS**

Bolsa Escola does benefit young girls more than boys but the difference is not significantly high in the Federal District, and other issues contribute to the difference in numbers. A rise in the number of female students in school since the program started in Brasilia, shows the continued growth towards equality and education for all, however the over-all population between the sexes in Brazil is nearly even with slightly higher numbers of boys than girls according to a 2005 census.

Reasons for the higher rates of girls benefiting from the program have not been well documented. First, there are a higher estimated number of women in poverty in Brazil, and indeed throughout the world, than young men. Secondly girls do not make the same amount in the work force as boys. My findings noted that while the program does pay to keep children out of the labor force and in school, it still does not pay a great deal
more than if they were working more than full time. Knowing this and knowing that it is common knowledge that in Brasilia and other parts of the country, boys earn more money than girls on average and thus may stay in the labor force longer, this may explain for some of the discrepancy in attendance. Girls who do not make as much money as boys, [US$246 per month (Journal do Brasil; Oxfam, 2004. Pg. 37)] may have a better chance staying in school and receiving funds through Bolsa Escola, adding to the rational.

Additionally jobs such as working at home, or child prostitution, were also normally done at night suggesting that girls could sometimes try to attend school and work afterwards as long as they were not caught by the program’s inspectors. A Cultural Anthropologists from the University of Brasilia that I interviewed briefly, and an administrator for the Brazilian Parliament, confirmed this idea as a distinct possibility and also noted that the jobs that boys usually perform, involve physical labor during the day, while domestic work, typical for young girls, could be done after school. Without real accurate statistical data however, this is simply a theory.

One observed issue about the Bolsa Escola program comes from a research report on young girls and the specific jobs they have in child labor. This reported noted how most of the work in the domestic service sector was done by young women and suggested that the program consider the gender dimensions of child labor and intervention strategies especially in the domestic service sector where girls were over-represented (Gustafsson-Wright; Pyne, 2002).

PROGRAM DIMINISHES TRUENCY & INCREASES PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
Using the data collected from the government on those within the Federal District in the program versus those not enrolled in the program, the report found that children under Bolsa Escola stayed in school and were less frequent to drop out. Personal interviews with teachers at the school I studied, validated these results and showed documentation of higher attendance. According to the Department of Education for the Federal District, drop out rates in primary school stood at 7.4%. The drop out rate for primary school children under the Bolsa Escola program stood at 0.4% by as early as 1996 (DGFSE, 1996).

On the issue that teachers sometimes mark a student present in order that the student not be cut off from funding, my interviewees stated that it does not happen at the school that I studied, but concluded that it was likely in other areas. School principal Beatriz Sobrillo de Meio is quoted in 2004 as saying: “Before, children were enrolled in school but had no incentive to come. Now they are more motivated” (Werthein, 2004). Early studies by UNESCO on the program have noted higher parental involvement. Students under the program indicated in the study a 72% involvement of the parents in their education than 64% for students who were not enrolled in the program. My own interview with some of the teachers in the school that I observed said that active participation of the parents was not as high. They did note that the hall monitors, cooking staff, teacher assistants, and cleaning staff, were all members of the community and parents too.

CONCLUSIONS
The purpose for this study was to ascertain whether the Bolsa Escola program is successful and to assess the efficacy of the program in order to make decisions about its future expansion. A program like this one may be important in targeting issues of social exclusion, poverty reduction, and education on an international level in alignment with the Millennium Development goals of the UN.

Several studies involving the Bolsa Escola program over different periods seem to contradict what the Bolsa Escola program is and does. It is important to note the dates of these studies in ferreting discrepancies. It is also important to note the dates in order to see what the Bolsa Escola program looked like at the time of the evaluated and the overall design of Bolsa Escola. It is also important to check which political party was in power at the time and what is being said. Mostly due to politics and sometimes due to sincere attempts at improvement, Bolsa Escola’s goals have been diverted at some points over the years and have been reworked to look less like their original design. Copy-cat programs and countless additions and merges has been mostly detrimental in the success of the program and certainly in trying to ascertain its successes. At other times, the program has come back to its goals as an educational program for poverty reduction and social exclusion.

As mentioned, additional programs and NGOs such as Missão Criança influenced the results of higher levels of student enrollment, poverty reduction, and child labor reduction within the Federal District. However, within the next few years if the programs can survive the criticism and adjustments made, Bolsa Escola / Bolsa Família should be easier to evaluate under the current structure of homogenizing, streamlining, and outside monitoring at the local levels. The World Bank has also said that the Cadastro Único
(Single Registry) could improve the targeting of social transfers for education but this specific part of the program needs the most restructuring.

Researching one school within one town in the Federal District, specifically within the poorer community of Samambia, was helpful in getting the best qualitative data. Quantitative data involved the Federal District in its entirety, as it was the smallest breakdown district with large amounts government data. Despite this small district data, I found that the Federal District still made up of nearly three million people in 19 cities. This was a large number of people to study. Granted my quantitative data on the district proved to be too big, yet my own interviews at the school in the municipality of Samambia within the Federal District does show that the student population had grown, dropout rates were lower, the proportion of boys/girls were about the same, and the allocated bags, pens, books, shoes, and uniforms were all there being used.

An additional point that may be of importance concerns some government data from 2001 which researched why children were not in school. I could not find other sources to substantiate, but according to the Brazilian government, student ages 5 to 17, who do not attend school because of work were less than 2,000; that number is out of 43,711 students in the Federal District who were not enrolled in school in 2001 (see Appendix 3). This relatively small number may be due to who was doing the interviewing and how participants were aware of the legality of child labor. The government’s 2001 data quotes 6,694 children not in school because the parents did not want them attending school. If this is indeed the issue, then the focus of children and education should be readdressed. If child labor is not a main factor in low enrollment,
then a different program targeting the parents and the importance of education is thus needed in Brazil.

One thing is clear from this research. Bolsa Escola has addressed a significant issue concerning the relationship between lack of education and poverty. Themes from its model could be applied to programs in other countries. My research has posed still further questions to ask rather than concretely answering questions. However based on what has been learned there are some recommendations that could be made for the programs continued success. I also believe that the evidence found would be of value to those thinking of implementing or adapting this program elsewhere.

**Recommendations**

The Single Registry is of acute need of restructuring to allow the best way to target this program for the people that really need it. An ‘as needed registry’ would also contribute towards this inclusion of everyone in need. This is a registration application and interview that could be set up perhaps monthly as applicants came in to register. Applications could be continuously added over a period of time instead of a one time start that would exclude all others.

Developing a regular system of auditing and updating like the original design implemented would also improve access and improve the issue of quality control. This would also reduce political corruption. Mismanagement and similar abuses. Transparency at every level of the program is also important to avoid political corruption or mismanagement. Letting the program work on its own without additional social programs, yet under the single registry would be an improvement as well. Penalization
for false reporting and immediate termination of funds as punishment for those who continue to work without being in school are very necessary. I would also recommend the continued streamlining of the program with outside assistance from the World Bank, UNESCO, Missão Criança and other NGOs.

The program needs a lot of independent outside monitoring to make clear and important changes into improving the efficiency and design of the new revised program under Bolsa Família and the single registry that distributes the funds. Additional suggestion made by those that I interviewed regarding the program were to introduce better teacher training programs, and enhance schools in the frontier areas which are usually the most neglected. A coordinator for the Ministry to Combat Hunger also mentioned a better system to train those who review the applications and check on the families as they are currently poorly trained. An additional registry of all poor and undocumented people is needed as well.

Additional suggestions involve improving the data base system to handle cross-referencing of other government data sources to catch ghost registering, duplication, or false reports in an on-going process that is easily updated. Clear target goals and a better sense of the population in need are also needed. Counting the uncountable and better targeting of poor areas should also be phased into the program quickly in order to better judge performance quantitatively. The uncountable are those who migrate and/or are not registered with the government in any way and are thus not known to research data and government statistics except by some as estimated population numbers. These are the socially excluded people from society that this program is trying to assist. In the past regions that predominately voted along party lines would benefit from programs formed
by that party only later to be excluded from another party’s program. This would is officially not allowed but several teachers have reported that it happens. Better documentation and targeting of poor regions is thus in order. Additionally when there is a better understanding of how many people are in a given area, than the need and region can be better assessed as to which area is better for the Bolsa Escola program to be implemented.

An application that would limit under reporting would be ideal. Transparency is also necessary at all levels to avoid corruption especially political misuse. The World Bank, UN, and other programs have been working closely with the Bolsa Escola program and have made similar recommendations.

In recent years, it seems that Bolsa Escola has lost its primary focus and has sought to become all things to all people. This has happened for a variety of reasons: politicians and political parties have become involved, additional needs have been recognized that could not be answered by education alone such as quality. This expansion of focus has become problematic in that the program now seems to have difficulty keeping track of whether beneficiaries continue to be eligible, identifying new participants, and applying its program consistently throughout the country. If the program returns to its original design as an educational agenda that curbs poverty and tries to break the cycle of social exclusion than I would say that many of these problems would be alleviated.

Some NGOs in the area are already providing programs similar to those of Bolsa Escola. It would benefit the Brazilian government to collaborate with these NGOs to combine resources, knowledge of the people and area, and ideas so that the maximum
number of people can benefit from all the programs. It would also benefit the program if these NGOs were better funded and received support from the World Bank and the UN as well instead of just the governmental program. Missão Criança is the prime example of a program that does so much for so many for so little.

Applications of the Research

It is hoped that the Bolsa Escola program itself can benefit from this research, although I am sure that I have not identified any problems the program did not already know about. Perhaps this research will light a few fires in the right places to get the right entities involved in addressing the program’s problems. This research will also benefit NGOs and other government development agencies that are looking for solutions for addressing the problems of poverty and lack of education in other countries, including in developed countries like the U.S. This research will benefit those who are studying the issues and problems associated with poverty and education.

Suggestions for Future Research: The strengths and weaknesses of the Bolsa Escola program can be compared to similar models in other countries. It is hoped that studying a variety of existing programs will help the UN come up with the best solutions for addressing the problems of poverty and education.

“The idea is to accept the differences that separate people and strive to bring those outside of our modern social structure into the modern world. To give those socially excluded an opportunity to improve their condition and to give them a better future. Even if people are not equal, they should not be excluded. We need to bring everyone inside modernity and that means everybody eating, everybody studying, everybody with health care, transportation systems, to be apart of the modern society in the world.” (Buarque, 2004)
**Appendix 1: Questionnaire sheet surveying candidate’s level of poverty.**

### Bloco 1 - Dados Cadastrais da Requerente e do Cônjuge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N.º de Inscricção</th>
<th>N.º de Inscrição</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FN:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Espaço para etiqueta**

### Bloco 2 - Informações Financeiras da Família (Não Informações Carentes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12 Gastos mensais da família</th>
<th>33 Composição da renda familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Moradia</td>
<td>1. Rendimento do(a) requerente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Aluguel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Prestação morada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Alimentação</td>
<td>2. Rendimento do cônjuge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Trabalho de outros membros da família</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Água</td>
<td>3. Outras rendas da família</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Presto alimentar ou do IRSS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Eletricidade</td>
<td>4. Apoio financeiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Presto alimentar ou do IRSS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gás</td>
<td>5. Outros gastos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Aluguel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Transporte</td>
<td>6. Gastos carros, telefones, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Título alimentação</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Outros gastos</td>
<td>7. Outros (aluguel, desemprego, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Total de gastos</td>
<td>8. Total da renda familiar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Bloco 3 - Documentos Comprovatórios de Moradia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>34 Documentos apresentados com registro ao CPF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Certidão de nascimento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Histórico escolar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cartão de desenvolvimento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Carteira de Identidade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Carteira Profissional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Declaração de empregador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Declaração do diretor da escola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Conta de água, luz ou telefone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APPENDIX

**GOVERNO DO DISTRITO FEDERAL**
**DESENTE DE EDUCAÇÃO**
**PROGRAMA BOLSA EScola**
**FORMULÁRIO DE PEDIDO DE INSCRIÇÃO**

**APPENDIX**

**Appendix 1. Questionnaire sheet surveying candidate’s level of poverty.**
Appendix 2. Similar questionnaire sheet surveying candidate’s level of poverty for the Missão Criança Program.
Appendix 3. Data showing that child labor may not be the main reason for low enrollment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of children in 2001 between the ages of 5 to 17 not attending school and the reasons given.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children working Either at home or in child labor</td>
<td>1,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents do not want them in school</td>
<td>6,694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other motives not given or unknown</td>
<td>23,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No schools nearby</td>
<td>11,225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brazilian government: IBGE, Diretoria de Pesquisas, Departamento de Emprego e Rendimento, Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios 2001. Total number of children in Brazil between the ages of 5 and 17 not enrolled in school = 4,429,306. Total number in 2001 working instead of attending school = 534,755

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Mauro Azeredo. World Bank in Brasília from emails: mazeredo@worldbank.org


Father João, Catholic Priest working in the local community of study on poverty issues. August 2005.

Anonymous: Professor of Cultural Anthropology at the University of Brasilia on cultural perspectives. August 2005.