

Entitlements and Capabilities of Young “Citizens”: Participatory Community Involvement of At-Risk Youth in Argentine Cities

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Photo Source: <http://www.hardrainproject.com/hrpl.php?n=8569>

Prepared for *Climate Change, Youth, and Land Markets in Urban Areas: A Policy Workshop* at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars
Friday, November 2, 2012 in Washington, D.C.

Outline

- Introduction: Youth as Members and Producers of Their Spaces
 - Youth Citizenship, Research Questions and Theoretical Framework
- Urban Youth in Latin America and Argentina
- Argentine Schools as Simultaneous Spaces of Civic Engagement and Exclusion
- Participatory Planning: Tools to Engage Youth out of Violent or Risky Behavior
- From Participatory Budgeting in Rosario to Inclusive Programming in Buenos Aires
- Research Gaps
- Conclusion: The Importance of Participatory Belonging

Introduction: Youth Citizenship

- 2 definitions:
 - “A social practice that is embedded within the day-to-day reality of (young) people’s lives, instead of a fixed outcome of a linear socialization trajectory” (Lawy & Biesta).
 - “Citizenship-as-practice suggests that young people learn to be citizens as a consequence of their participation in the actual practices that make up their lives” (DeVisscher and Bouverne-De Bie, both cited in Hardoy et al. 2010, 379).

Youth Citizenship

- Highly active: process AND product
- Rooted in tangible (inter)action
- Present-day context strongly shapes and implicates future of youth as adult contributors to their communities



Photo Source:

http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3144/2825704025_0f62d904fe.jpg, Accessed 2012

Research Questions

- Do policy measures or programs that ultimately build a more comprehensive meaning of citizenship for youth in urban areas of Argentina aid in decreasing deviance and violence among such groups?
- Do subsequent outcomes represent larger strides toward improving the general livelihoods of young people within their respective communities?
- Monetary and infrastructural resources can be provided, but at what point can we empower youth and foster a sense of belonging that generates the same sentiments-and, as a result, *stake and responsibility*- that come along with citizenship?

Theoretical Framework



Photo Source: <http://www.lujanhoy.com/>, Accessed 2012

- Entitlements v. Capabilities (Amartya Sen, 1987)
 - Entitlements: the publicly administered tools and resources that sustain livelihoods
 - Capabilities: a community's individual, familial, and ties and abilities to contribute to and build upon collective spaces (in order to forge cohesive places)

Youth in Latin America

- Roughly 50% of population in LA is under the age of 25
- Globalized workforce in Latin American cities ➡ rise in single-parent households and increased need for informal employment
- 30 ml young people ages 15-24 informally employed (more than half of region's employed youth)

Youth in Argentina

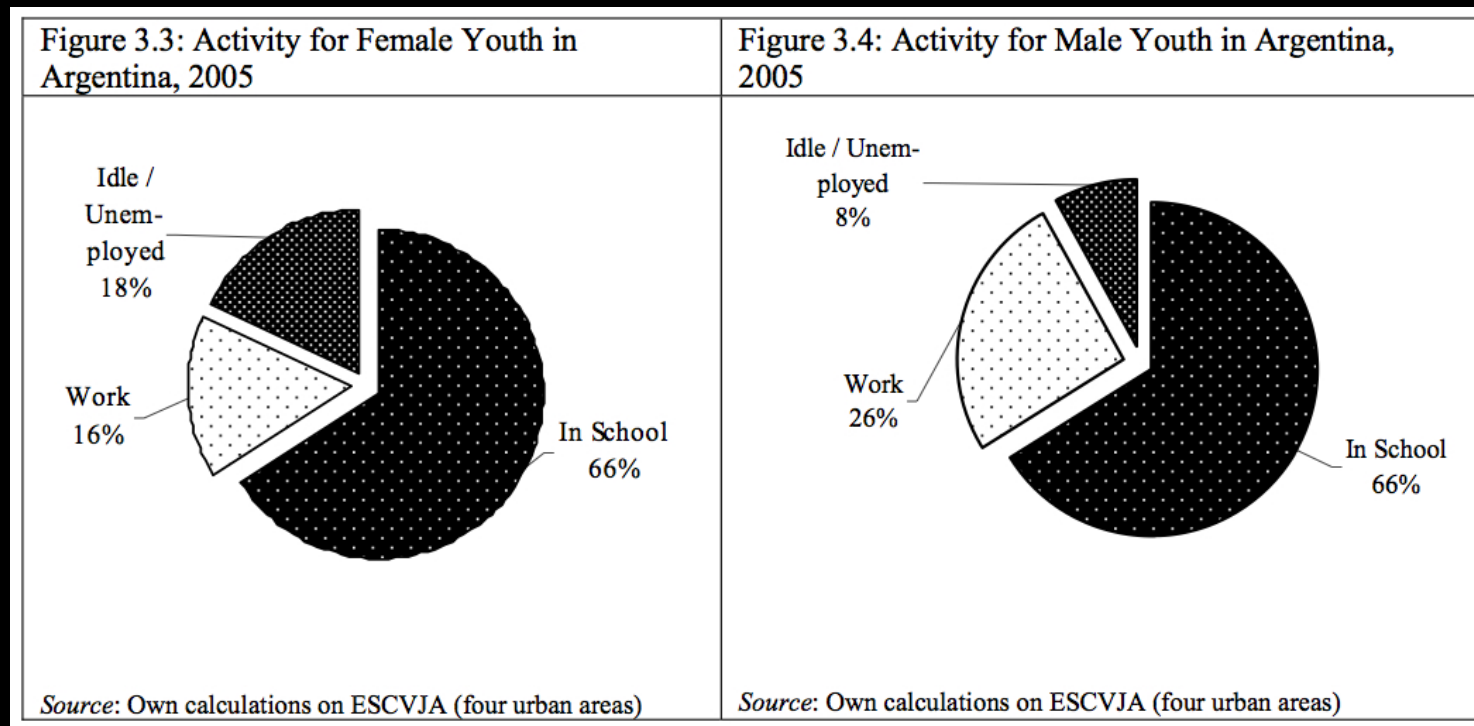


Figure Source: Justesen, 2008

- 25% females and 28% males live in dual-parent households
- 66% of both males and females are in school, 34% working, idle or unemployed; strong correlations with social status and heightened risk factors (Justesen, 2008)

Argentine Schools: Spaces of Civic Engagement and Exclusion

- Article 6 of Argentine Constitution: education system promotes national identity- regional, continental, and universal worldviews (cited by Astiz and Mendez 2006, 183).
- The young urban poor, “love and hate schools, that privileged place they have been excluded from” (Torres and Puiggrós, 1995, 17-18).
- Implicates not only skill development, but, self-esteem, worth, and belonging
- Future v. present citizens, and civic engagement tied closely to classroom

Participatory Planning: Tools to Engage Youth out of Violent or Risky Behavior

- To forge new notion of citizenship, combining agency (goal-oriented plans) with pathways (ways to achieve stated goals) (McWhirter and McWhirter, 2008).
 - Even “imaginary” of social advancement important
- Youth playing role in planning spaces they use- valuable inclusive tool and yields alternate perspective
- Capital entitlements and human resources; program implementers and among youth
 - Lack of participation yields structural violence- modality of thought where participatory practices critical (Del Felice & Wisler, 2007)



Image Source: <http://www.openideo.com/open/vibrant-cities/concepting/lego-rapid-prototyping-tool-for-participatory-urban-neighborhood-design>, Accessed 2012

Case Studies: Participatory Budgeting in Rosario and Inclusive Programming in Buenos Aires

- Participatory Budgeting- adults in Rosario, city of 1 ml inhabitants- forges new “school of citizenship” for adults
 - Consider participatory budgeting as not an entitlement, but a capability of forging a collective voice, translates to youth
- PYB Center in Rosario: “focuses on rights of young people; youth as protagonists and partners of policymakers; actors here and now, programs for present; youth consulted and mobilized” (Del Felice and Wisler 2007, 18).
- Barrio San Jorge in greater BA: squatter settlement supported by IIED since 1980s; community library, mother and child center, meeting space, physical improvements to decrease deviance (broken windows theory)
- Distinction: Barrio San Jorge plays to entitlements while the PYB center plays to capabilities of youth

Research Gaps and Flaws

- Case studies over field research: critical to track progress at PYB and in Barrio San Jorge (funding, anyone?)
- Deviance v. societal status v. violence: important to draw stronger distinction
- Advance beyond policy concepts ideologies into more formalized implementation plan

Conclusions



Image Source: <http://faslanyc.blogspot.com/2010/05/design-dies-too.html> , Accessed 2012

- Entitlements through adequate assessment of necessary resources, and capabilities through participatory practices
 - Embeds belonging into collective memories, sustaining through present realities and into projected futures
- Balance local knowledge with guided expertise
 - Compliment policies, not blindly replace them
- Innovative policy through tight financial times to produce enduring belonging for at-risk youth

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Further Questions?

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