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Measuring Empowerment: A Program Evaluation of the Youth Organization Sal y Luz in Medellin, Colombia

Ashley D. Fitzsimons

Western Kentucky University, Ashley.Fitzsimons550@topper.wku.edu

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MEASURING EMPOWERMENT: A PROGRAM EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH ORGANIZATION SAL Y LUZ IN MEDELLIN, COLOMBIA

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Bachelor of Arts with

Honors College Graduate Distinction at Western Kentucky University

By

Ashley Fitzsimons

*****

Western Kentucky University

2013

CE/T Committee:                      Approved by
Dr. Holli Drummond
Dr. John Dizgun
Dr. Courte Voorhees

Advisor
Department of Sociology
ABSTRACT

The concept of empowerment is critical to the development of youths' ability to recognize themselves as stakeholders in their community and as participants in civic engagement (Kohlfeldt, 2011; Langhout, 2010). However, programs or groups with goals to foster ideals of empowerment face myriad challenges, such as the social and environmental context of the youth, and the status that the youth maintain in their communities (Kohlfeldt, 2011; Langhout, 2010; Zimmerman, 2004). To measure empowerment, the current study draws observations from a focus-group affiliated with a youth-centered community group known as Sal y Luz located in a disadvantaged comuna of Medellin, Colombia. Using photo elicitation, the group took pictures in response to eleven different concepts associated with feelings of empowerment. Then, each participant attended a focus-group discussion of the photos to assist the researcher with photo interpretation. The input from both the photos and the focus group discussions reveal that this particular group displays the ideals of empowerment to a greater extent than anticipated; for example, in response to a prompt regarding the makeup of community, both the photos and related discussion centered on the idea that community is made up of multiple factors, including geographical location, borders, people, job availability and cultural context. The group was quick to note that these are all things that must be taken into consideration when they're planning their next projects, especially
the risks that are taken by crossing neighborhood borders. The final product aims to advise Sal y Luz administration regarding some limitations to empowerment identified by the study, as well as allow the author to learn more about youth empowerment associated with an organization that does look exclusively at youth-dedicated issues. Although the study took place in the span of only eight days, such an evaluation process brought on by the study lends support to Sal y Luz's efforts at establishing a more vocal and active youth in an historically violent and complex area of Medellin, Colombia.

Keywords: Empowerment, Youth, Photovoice, Program Evaluation, Community, Disadvantage
Dedicated to my friends and family
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VITA

April 4, 1991.................................................................Born – San Diego, California

2009..............................................................................Warren Central High School,
Bowling Green, Kentucky

2013..............................................................................Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

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FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Sociology

Minor Field: Social Work, Criminology
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Youth Empowerment in Disadvantaged Communities: The Theoretical Context</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Empirical Research on Youth Empowerment in Disadvantaged Communities</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Methodology</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Results</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Discussion</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Conclusion</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. References</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Photo Prompt</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Selection of Photo Responses</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>View of Comuna 13 from the Street</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Invisible Border</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>A General Model of Empowerment</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Safe Space</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>The Atmosphere in Medellin</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Emphasis on Art</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Peace Monument</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Medellin's Metrocable</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To understand the special interest in the youth of Medellin, one must first have an understanding of recent history. In particular, it is important to look at the evolution of gangs and youth violence within the context of the drug trade which sprung out of a truncated economy. Despite a general decrease in the overall levels of violence in Medellin since 2002, there has been a decrease in youth activism in the area (Hylton, 2010). The context also takes into account the challenging landscape; Medellin is situated in the Aburra Valley in the Andes, and much of the population is settled on the steep and inaccessible mountainsides. As a result, this is a population that is hindered not only by the physical space of the environment, but also by a distinct history of violence. These together make for a very interesting study into how grassroots organizations such as Sal y Luz overcome obstacles in their efforts to make a difference in their community by way of youth empowerment.

Figure 1.1: View of Comuna 13 from the Street
For much of the twentieth century, Medellin was Colombia's industrial leader. During that time, the city's population grew from 60,000 to 360,000 in the space of only about 50 years. Internal rural to urban migration -- poor farmers in search of employment -- accounted for much of the population growth (Drummond, Dizgun, & Keeling, 2012; Ceballos, 2001). At the same time, Medellin also led the nation in terms of prostitution, alcoholism, and imprisonment (Drummond, Dizgun, & Keeling, 2012). When a series of violent events known as "La Violencia" (1948-1958) began in Colombia, brought on by the assassination of populist presidential candidate Jorge Gaitan, economic progress as a priority took a step back. Although liberals and conservatives would eventually reach a power-sharing agreement known as the National Front in 1958, the violence would continue as landowners took up arms against the peasants who had settled in the countryside (Drummond, Dizgun, & Keeling, 2012). La Violencia would serve as a pretext for the ensuing civil war that occurred throughout Colombia, prompting even more rural to urban migration in Medellin.

The rise of violence and instability in Colombia greatly affected the pace of industrial development in Medellin going forward. Unemployment skyrocketed in the 1960s, yet the ongoing Colombian civil war did little to slow the pace of rural migration to the hillsides of Medellin. Slums appeared on either side of the Medellin River; by 1980, they would house half the city's population of now 2.2 million (Hylton, 2010). These slums were essentially undesirable neighborhoods that were haphazardly built on land not legally owned by the residents (squatters). In addition to being generally inaccessible due to the steep slopes, these neighborhoods also lacked running water,
electricity, and waste disposal (although sometimes local gangs or paramilitaries would assume responsibility for garbage collection and other basic services). Houses were built in such close proximity to each other that they appear to be sitting on top of each other, using whatever materials were on hand. For example, it was not (and is not) uncommon to see roofs being secured solely with bricks. The decline in industry, together with high unemployment and its geographic position, made Medellin ripe for the formation of internal and illegal economic initiatives, most notably the rise in 1980 of the Medellin Drug Cartel and its kingpin, Pablo Escobar. The introduction of cocaine completely changed the landscape -- Medellin had previously been a staunchly conservative city, but the money that the drug trade brought in led to a new crop of malls, discos, bars, clubs, and shops built all around the city (Roldan, 1999). Despite what one might think, cocaine was not consumed locally; Medellin was Escobar's hometown, and he took pride in ensuring that none of its citizens were addicts (Roldan, 1999). Because of Escobar's location in Medellin, and Medellin's location on the periphery (at the bottom of the valley, somewhat isolated from the rest of Colombia), the impact on the economy was such that the production and distribution of cocaine became the primary "industry" in the city.

It is worth noting that the Medellin Cartel was more violent (or perceived to be more violent) than their counterparts in other regions of Colombia. The Medellin Cartel, for instance, purposefully built its reputation around violence, perpetuating the image that it would do whatever it took to maintain its power and control over the trade, including directly attacking the Colombian government (Roldan, 1999). Youth gangs had existed before the arrival of the Medellin Cartel, but they did not operate on the same scale as
those that emerged as part of the Cartel. While these previous groups were often violent, the violence of these youth were perceived as unorganized and mostly the result of individuals. Primarily, these youth gangs formed as a "... response to the critical situation of unemployment, overcrowded housing, social exclusion, the obsolescence of school system, and consumer culture." (Ceballos, 2001, p. 117). When Escobar and other drug leaders (such as the Ochoa brothers) began to recruit troops for their narcotics trade, they found a ready pool of unemployed and alienated youths and youth gangs in the comunas of Medellin. The Cartel's ability to absorb youth gangs changed the way that young people socialized, in that they now veered increasingly toward criminal activity and drug addiction (as opposed to licit employment or school studies).

By the 1980s, "popular militia" groups also appeared across Medellin. These militias were formed by local residents in response to the dramatic rise in violence brought in by the drug trade. They were heavily influenced by left-leaning community activists and guerillas, and were initially under the supervision of leaders from the guerrilla groups ELN and M-19. The primary goal of these militia groups was to eradicate crime and violence from their comunas by force, and set up their own form of government in place of the largely absent Colombian State. At first, these executions of criminals in the comunas produced some level of calm amongst the people, and so they received a fair amount of popular support from the locals (Hylton, 2010; Ceballos, 2001; Roldan, 1999). “Militias were dedicated, at least in theory, to community empowerment, and their activities included improvement projects such as clean-up, paving, painting, sports and recreation, as well as night patrols and the resolution of domestic and neighborly disputes.” (Hylton, 2010, p.352-353). Soon though, under attack from both
drug gangs and the State, the militias adopted a more violent and criminal approach, becoming more and more like the forces they had meant to drive out.

Between 1989 and 1991, U.S. anti-drug aid to Colombia jumped significantly as the Colombian government stepped up its efforts to fight the “Extraditable Ones” – namely Pablo Escobar, but also other prominent drug dealers such as the Ochoas and the Castanos. Escobar responded to the hyped up front with increased violence, putting a price on the head of every policeman not working for him as police and military units were brought in from surrounding areas for reinforcement (Hylton, 2010). In November 1989, the Cartel blew up a passenger plane mid-air in a failed attempt to kill the future liberal president Cesar Gaviria, killing 110 people in the process (Drummond, Dizgun, & Keeling, 2012; Hylton, 2010). There were 4,000 homicides in 1989 in Medellin, and between 1990-1991 some 500 policemen were assassinated (Hylton, 2010).

In 1991, the Colombian government negotiated the terms of Escobar’s surrender when a newly written constitution officially barring extradition to the United States was passed. The surrender was something of a farce, a display that Escobar put on to show that he was cooperating. The situation could better be described as a house arrest, as he was “imprisoned” in his own home, and staffed by his own guards. During this time, the Colombian State led a violent wave of repression against the comunas, where as many as 20-40 young men were found dead each weekend (Hylton, 2010; Roldan, 1999). When in 1992 Escobar “escaped” imprisonment and renewed his violence campaign against the State, U.S. agencies and the Colombian government joined together to form an alliance with the Cali Cartel. This new group, which came to be known as Los Pepes (an acronym for “those persecuted by Pablo Escobar”), used their “local knowledge” (i.e.,
violence) to assist in fighting against the armed forces in Medellin (Hylton, 2010). The violence was on the same scale of La Violencia in the 1950s: “In 1993, the homicide rate was 311 per 100,000, nearly ten times what it would be in 2006.” (Hylton, 2010, p. 355).

Even after Escobar's death in 1993, organized crime remained as members of Los Pepes simply took over. Members inherited the specialist killers left behind, and put them to use threatening or murdering the city's “disposable” inhabitants (perceived miscreants such as drug dealers, addicts, prostitutes, and even street kids) in an effort to make the city safer for redevelopment (Hylton, 2010). In 2002, Colombian military forces launched an offensive in Comuna 13 that successfully established a permanent military presence in the area. Although generally considered a success, there has been some reservation towards the operation due to the fact that a large number of locals sustained injuries in the crossfire (the offensive occurred in a very busy and crowded area of Comuna 13) and rumors that ~40 people disappeared in the aftermath of the event. There has also been some speculation that the chief of police in Comuna 13 at the time had been a party to Don Berna, the drug kingpin known for virtually replacing Pablo Escobar. Altogether, these speculations add to the sense of mistrust the Comuna has toward the government.

The city of Medellin now hosts an approximate population of 2,743,049; the most recent statistics on Colombia from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) indicate that the life expectancy in Colombia is now 73.1 years (76.9 for females and 69.5 for males). The estimated mortality rate from external causes (such as homicide) stands at 106.4 (versus 136.3 in 1998 and 122.7 in 2003). Although homicide and violent-crime rates saw decreases at first, they have been on a slow uptick since 2008 (Hylton, 2010),
suggesting that the city's peace is currently partial and highly unstable. As for youth, the dissolution of the widely organized drug cartels seems to have led many to revert to their previous existence as members in their own youth gangs. The leading cause of death in Colombia today remains homicide -- 67% of deaths due to external causes among youth in 2004 was violence, and is strongly correlated with urban disadvantage (Torres-Rivas, 1999; Poppovic & Pinheir, 1995; Moser & Mcilwaine, 2006). Peace in the comunas is further complicated by the emergence of what youth have termed invisible borders, or markers in the barrios that show boundaries that may not be crossed by youth of other barrios. These invisible borders are not unlike the “turf” of competing gangs caught in territorial struggles – in fact, turf wars are often perpetuated by drug markets similar to those in Medellin (Boga, 1994). This study adds to the current literature by examining the specific ways in which youth are empowered through community organizations such as Sal y Luz, as well as the effect that the invisible borders have on youth activism and mobility.

Figure 1.2: An invisible border.
CHAPTER 2

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES: THE THEORETICAL CONTEXT

In Medellin, like in many urban areas, it can be difficult to see how youth may safely become more involved in their communities and feel empowered. In this regard, understanding the relationship between empowerment and human agency can be helpful. Human agency plays a central role in Anthony Gidden's structuration theory; according to Giddens (1984), agency is the capacity that an individual has to make a difference. The terms "agency" and "empowerment" can almost be used interchangeably; the key difference between the two is that while "agency" refers to the actual capacity an individual has to make a difference, "empowerment" also takes into account the individual's cognition, or the feeling/belief that an individual has that they can make a difference regardless of actual capacity. Important aspects included in human agency are intentions, reflection, power and meanings (Giddens, 1984). Intentions, as they relate to agency, are the outcomes that individuals wish to see result from their actions; at its core, it includes a recognition on the part of the individual that some change may be warranted. Reflection is the consideration an individual takes regarding both their intentions and the reality of a situation. In other words, if the intention involves some outcome, then is that outcome possible given whatever steps are currently being taken, or is more or less effort needed? Power is more thoroughly defined below; Meaning is the importance that
individuals give to their own actions, such that an individual can feel that they have
greater meaning if they are successful than if they are not.

Figure 2.1: A general model of
empowerment by Voorhees (2013), adapted
from Rich et al. (1995).

According to another model (see figure above), adapted by Voorhees (2013) from Rich et al. (1995), empowerment can be broken down to multiple levels, many of which overlap with Giddens' (1984) model. To begin, one can observe two types of institutions, governmental and social. The two types of institutions can have either a partnership or an adversarial relationship -- for example, a social organization such as Sal y Luz could not exist within the context of Medellin if it had an adversarial relationship with the government. Therefore, the relationship is a partnership. These two types of institutions
also provide the actual capacity for citizens to participate -- rarely do individuals address social change on their own. Together, these modes of participation provide an entry point into a cycle of empowerment wherein three sub-levels of empowerment are at play: formal, intrapersonal, and instrumental. Whereas Giddens' (1984) model focuses primarily on human agency as the actual capacity that individuals have to make a difference, the model by Voorhees (2013) recognizes to a greater extent the psychological factors that go with empowerment; in other words, in Giddens' (1984) model, human agency would fall under the sub-level of instrumental empowerment, which refers to the actual capacity one has for participation. Similarly, formal empowerment refers to the opportunities available for participation and decision making, which are created by the partnership between governmental institutions and social institutions. These formal pathways relate to Giddens' (1984) concept of rules, which either allow or hinder potential actions for change. For instance, Sal y Luz, a social institution, creates the capacity for individuals in the community to be involved. The interaction or relationship with the government can be seen either through possible funding, or simply by the government encouraging Sal y Luz to exist. What the model adds to the concept of human agency is the sub-level of intrapersonal empowerment, which takes into account the feelings of competency and ability to participate in making meaningful change, regardless of actual social or governmental institutions to do so. These three forms of empowerment together -- formal, instrumental, and intrapersonal -- lead to substantive empowerment, which is another meaningful addition; it consists of the actual decisions that were made, and whether they actually solved problems or led to the desired outcomes (Voorhees, 2013).
Human agency and social structures are intrinsically related; a key proponent of Giddens' structuration theory is the concept of recursiveness. Recursiveness is the way that society influences the actions of individuals, and how individuals simultaneously make up or recreate social structures. An easy way to think about recursiveness is in the way that humans learn language: parents teach their children the language that they know, and when these children grow up and start their own families, they will in turn pass on the same language (Giddens, 1984). People continue to learn and pass on the same language because they live in a society where that language is spoken. As an example, it is easy to see how language is recursive. The structure of society perpetuates the use of a primary language while individuals simultaneously continue to use it, even though some individuals learn a second language and could choose to pass that language on instead. The implication is that micro and macro levels (individuals plus larger organizations) are related, and that each affect the other. In light of the entrenchment of social structure, concepts such as human agency or empowerment become even more important. According to the theory, human agency, at least in part, is the mechanism by which entire social structures can be changed rather than replicated (Kondrat, 2002).

Power or empowerment is another core concept of structuration theory, and it refers to "the transformative capacity of human action," and is the medium through which human agency is realized (Giddens, 1993). According to Giddens, power can be definitively broken down into two pieces: resources and rules. Resources include both allocative (property, money) and authoritative (position, status, office) resources, while rules include both formal (law) and informal (norms) rules. The concept of power, and by extension, empowerment, is generally only thought of in the abstract, as
something that cannot be clearly defined or seen. However, using structuration theory, power is readily identified as the resources an individual has access to and the rules or norms in society that will either support or oppose possible social change (Giddens, 1984; Kondrat, 2002). Emphasis in the literature is usually placed on the piece where environment affects individuals -- structuration theory suggests however that the focus be moved to the process of recursiveness. In this case, the important question is not only how does the environment affect individuals? but also what kinds of day-to-day interactions are causing us to replicate (or change) the structure within our social environment? (Kondrat, 2002). And these are the types of questions that are important to keep in mind when studying youth empowerment, because youth already contribute to their environment even if they haven't thought about it that way yet. To this end, much of the focus of community groups aiming to empower youth (such as Sal y Luz) should be on helping youth to reorient their mindset so that they can begin to look at the ways they're already contributing to their environment.

What is considered empowerment can be quite broad. Typically, it simply stands for the idea that individuals, groups, and communities have the capacity to take control of their situation, and create their own solutions to those situations (Adams, 2003). More specifically, one youth organization called Youth Force has defined “youth empowerment” as the following:

Youth taking an active role in community planning, decision making, program implementation, and education . . . It means having the courage and commitment to fight for a youth voice where it is absent. It means, most of all, that WE are not powerless, that along with other youth, or in partnership with adults, we can make a difference. (Checkoway, Figueroa, & Richards-Schuster, 2008, p.266).

Empowerment can be viewed from both a micro and macro level; on the micro level,
empowerment can be thought of as the sense an individual has that they have control over their cognition, as well as the belief that they can competently make decisions, solve problems, achieve goals that they set for themselves, and have a meaningful impact on their environment (Rappaport, 1985; Siegall & Gardner, 2000). This micro level of empowerment is often referred to as psychological empowerment (see discussion of Gidden's hour aspects of human agency above) (Chang et al., 2013; Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004).

On the macro level, the concept tends to include tangible knowledge, competencies, skills, information, opportunities, and resources that allow a person to take action and to actively advocate for change (Cheung et al., 2005). This process is also sometimes referred to as organizational empowerment (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004). The advantages of focusing on the macro level is that the emphasis moves beyond individual bias; that is, "the tendency to reduce complex person-in-environment phenomena to individual dynamics" (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004). This person-in-environment perspective is especially important to keep in mind when studying complex violent regions such as Medellin.

Empowerment is a process as well as an outcome -- as an individual learns new abilities through their life experiences, the process of using these new abilities or skills results in an increased sense of personal empowerment (or psychological empowerment). Research has shown a direct correlation between levels of participation among groups and empowerment (Rappaport, 1981; Zimmerman, 1990; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). In other words, as the sense of empowerment increases, individuals take more responsibility for actively improving the quality of their lives and of the environment.
For example, since the mid 2000s Medellin has seen evidence of increased youth activism throughout the city, in the form of artwork (murals, "graffiti"), statues and monuments.
CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Current research focusing on empowerment, or youth empowerment, specifically is somewhat limited. However, studies which focus on participatory action research (PAR), youth participatory action research (yPAR), activism, civic engagement, and social action are common found in the literature and closely related to the concept of empowerment. Though such studies examine empowerment evaluation (see Miller & Campbell, 2006), few studies do so by measuring empowerment specifically. Therefore, a few themes emerge among the existing research which provide direction for the current study. To begin, one study found that several institutions have the potential to empower marginalized, low-income, minority and urban youth, including congregations, youth organizations, and educational settings (Maton, 2008). According to Maton (2008), for such a group to empower youth, it must first have a structure which fosters a sense of community allowing members to rely on strengths (see discussion of resources above) within the group to problem-solve concerns facing an individual youth. Quality leadership is a vital part of such a structure and such leadership must come from within the local environment. Local leaders have the best potential to motivate others based on their personal knowledge of and experience with local injustices and often display a passionate belief that such social problems can be resolved. It is based on this knowledge
and passion that the vision for the group emerges and a clear mission evolves which reflects the core challenges and concerns of its individual members (see intention and reflection above). Next, the organization must offer activities related to community improvement which allow youth to develop skills and learn what it feels like to change their surroundings. Such a process contributes to the youth's sense of psychological empowerment (see discussion above). Further, these activities should offer a diversity of roles so that all interested youth can play a part which matches their unique skills and level of maturity. Finally, the organization must prove itself adaptable to the changing problems and challenges facing the surrounding community and the youth residing there specifically. For example, in Comuna 13 invisible borders are testing the ability of Sal y Luz to adapt to new circumstances.

Further empirical research confirms that empowering youth is important because they are often seen as marginalized (both economically, socially, and politically), troubled, and in need of resources (Checkoway, Figueroa & Richards-Schuster, 2008; Ardizzone, 2008). As such, there are some important outcomes of empowerment. According to one study, empowered youth display higher levels of resilience in the face of change, leading to an enhanced sense of well-being (Maton, 2008; Christens & Peterson, 2012; Ardizzone, 2008). As a result, youth come to be seen as competent players in their communities, as opposed to needy and troublesome bystanders (Checkoway, Figueroa & Richards-Schuster, 2008).

Furthermore, studies have found support that psychological empowerment can mediate the influences of the environment, which is of particular importance in violence areas such as Medellin (Christens & Peterson, 2012). Although youth are prevented from
the most obvious forms of civic participation (such as voting), many are still aware of the issues that are relevant to them, and are further aware that their actions can affect the outcomes of the political and social climates around them (Christens, Speer & Peterson, 2011). Research has also found that psychological empowerment is associated with indicators of positive adult development (including employment status, social cohesion, and involvement in empowering organizational settings); for youth, factors to consider are the presence of natural mentors (such as family members or neighbors), perceived control (which is linked to higher levels of resilience), and perceived agency and the potential to achieve positive outcomes, which have been noted to have a positive influence on mental health and other youth outcomes (Christens, Speer & Peterson, 2011).

Empowering youth, especially in urban settings, can be critical in addressing issues of social injustice and promoting student success. Programs that support the development of empowerment have demonstrated promise in creating stronger group bonding and improved mental health and school performance (Pearrow & Pollack, 2009). Some of the challenges that potential programs face, however, include hierarchical structures of schools and groups, as well as the contextual norms of their environments. In short, these challenges reflect the influence exerted by the existing power structure via the seemingly intractableness of societal rules as discussed above. In the vast majority of school settings, for example, it is very clear to students who is in charge; students are all aware that their teachers control the classroom, the principal controls the teachers, and they may or may not be aware of the school boards and policies that guide the individual schools. The hierarchy is no doubt useful in many ways; however, it instills in youth the
mentality that they must 1) always do what they are told, 2) that there is always one correct way to do things, and 3) that they, as students, do not have the power, be it because of their lack of skills, knowledge, or authority, to challenge the hierarchy. In relation to the earlier discussion of recursiveness, such a hierarchy makes it difficult for single adolescents to see the possibility for change because these are the contextual norms that they are familiar with. In spite of the "hierarchical challenge" endemic to a school setting, empowerment is associated with a number of positive outcomes – enhanced self-awareness and social achievement, improved mental health and academic performance, reduced rate of dropping out of school, delinquency and substance abuse, and reduced violence (Parrow & Pollack, 2009). Because empowerment approaches can seem like a very unnatural fit within the context of schools, informal community organizations such as Sal y Luz, traditionally less hierarchical in nature, offer a unique role toward accomplishing empowerment of disadvantaged youth.

However, pathways for youth to become involved in their communities (one avenue to empowerment) are further influenced by the power structure such that youth are daily segregated from adults, and as such negative stereotypes and public beliefs persist regarding the capabilities of youth (Camino & Zeldin, 2002). Every day, most youth spend the majority of their time with other youth, away from adults, at school, or hanging out with friends. In fact, it seems to be that youth/young adults and adults fail to understand each other very simply because they do not spend enough time together; instead, many adults have only the media to tell them how they ought to perceive youth. According to Camino, the divide between youth and adults is explained as being due to "(a) persistent and entrenched negative beliefs about adolescents, (b) amplifications of
age differences, and (c) denial of age differences.” (2002) - conventional ideas about youth today tend to convey the idea that they are not much more than a source of worry or threat, and not often enough as a source of potential. Camino has also stated that these presuppositions (such that adolescents have a mentality closer to children than to adults) “create an interlocking social dynamic whereby youth are marginalized because they are portrayed as other, and they continue to be portrayed as other because they are marginalized” (2002). Sal y Luz is an all-around youth organization that is wholly centered on youth as the focus. The youth are the ones that come up with the projects and solutions, and they are the ones that decide how to implement them. In this way, Sal y Luz provides an example of how an organization can begin to break down some of these “power barriers,” by bringing youth and adults together in a way that inherently values the opinions of youth involved.

So what are some of the ways to promote empowerment programs that are demonstratively effective? Studies have shown that using participatory action research (PAR) can be useful as a way to challenge the dominant narrative about youth's capacities and to provide free space/public forum (Langhout & Thomas, 2010; Pearrow & Pollack, 2009); other studies have pointed to programs that focus on youth organizing or lobbying, community coalition involvement, public policy consultation, activism, and school or community based learning (Camino & Zeldin, 2002). What the research has done a good job with thus far is identifying the positive outcomes that psychological empowerment has on individuals. It has not been forthright, however, in zoning in on what exactly organizations should do in order to achieve empowerment (with the exception of Maton), and furthermore, how these organizations can measure the effectiveness of these
strategies. Taking into consideration the concept of human agency as a critical piece in psychological empowerment (especially regarding power and intentions), this study seeks to identify a way in which organizations may evaluate the effectiveness of their programs in achieving empowerment among their members.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

Sal y Luz is a youth-centered organization that is located in Comuna 13, Medellin, Colombia. It is led by members of the community, who as such are experts on the local climate and history of the area. Although Sal y Luz was formed partly in response to what is seen as a lack of voice in Comuna 13, the leaders share with the youth a passion for the community and a vision for the future. The primary goal, as articulated by the youth, is to change the negative view the community has of its youth; they also identify areas in the Comuna which need improvement, and formulate actionable solutions.

The field work for the current study was completed between August 15 and August 19, 2012. Because the author of the study does not speak Spanish, Dr. John Dizgun traveled to Medellin and assisted with translation and facilitation of the focus groups. Participants were chosen at the discretion of the Sal y Luz organization, based on the following criteria: the youth was a member of Sal y Luz, a frequent participant of the youth activities directed by the organization, and a resident of Comuna 13. While it may seem unorthodox that the organization was allowed to choose the participants of the focus group for itself, as a foreigner with no previous exposure to the culture or climate of the Comuna it was decided that this was the most appropriate course of action. Further, while a convenience sample was used, such a sample is appropriate for the questions of interest in this study and not uncommon when conducting focus groups. The focus group
consisted of 9 members total (4 males and 5 females), between the ages of 17-28.

The procedure used in this study for data collection is known as photo elicitation, or photovoice. According to Harper, “Photo elicitation is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview” (2002, p.13). The idea is that photos can evoke more information, feelings, and memories than providing information, or asking questions alone – the photos can act as a basis for further exploration (Harper, 2002). In fact, Collier, the first to name “photo elicitation,” noted, “The pictures elicited longer and more comprehensive interviews but at the same time helped subjects overcome the fatigue and repetition of conventional interviews” (1957, p.858).

According to Wang and Burris:

Photovoice is a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique. As a practice based in the production of knowledge, photovoice has three main goals: (1) to enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and (3) to reach policymakers. (1997, p. 369)

Photovoice, as a data collection method, requires that participants travel to some extent, in order to take pictures relevant to the topics. Because Medellin can be dangerous in some areas, and though the members of the group live there, care had to be taken to ensure that none of the members of the group were unintentionally being led into an area where they might feel insecure or unsafe. One of the disadvantages of using photovoice is that persons who are documenting their communities in this way are documenting reality, and potentially putting themselves in danger by picturing scenes that certain members of the community might not want publicized (onlookers may not realize that the photos taken by participants are confidential). Because of this, the primary
disadvantage as a researcher is that each member will likely be engaging in self-censorship in deciding what is appropriate to photograph and what is not (Wang & Burris, 1997). However, some of the advantages in utilizing photovoice as a procedure is that it allows the researcher to view reality from the subjects' perspective, the use of photography is accessible by anyone, and it allows for people to see their assets (not just their needs).

The subjects of the study comprised a focus group, which met twice over the course of a week for discussion facilitated by myself and Dr. Dizgun. Specifically, this study implemented photovoice by handing out a series of prompts to each member of the focus group at the first meeting, along with a digital camera for use when capturing images the subject felt represented each prompt. The topic of the first meeting consisted of a broad overview of Medellin's history, as well as an explanation of the interest and purpose of this study in learning more about how young people use empowerment, or feel empowered in an environment that informally limits their active participation.

After explaining that their views and levels of empowerment would be measured through a mixture of discussion and photography, both the prompts and cameras were distributed. The prompt contained 11 statements of items they should take pictures of (See appendix A for a list of prompts used). Because empowerment is a process, the prompts were broken into three stages: input, intervention, and outcome. Input focuses on environmental factors that influence an individual's feeling of empowerment, as well as the available resources. The input stage also takes into consideration the intentions of those involved, although certainly intentions can change throughout the stages. The intervention stage is the action that is taken in reaction to a problem or situation that an
individual identifies; as Maton emphasizes (discussed above), these interventionist activities are necessary in achieving empowerment, as they are directly related to community betterment. Finally, the outcome is the result of the intervention taken. One such outcome is psychological empowerment (and its macro level equivalent, organizational empowerment), the understanding of which is the focus of this study. Accordingly, prompts 1-5 relate to the input stage, prompts 6-9 relate to the intervention stage, and prompts 10-11 relate to the outcome stage. For example, input asks the questions of why Sal y Luz exists – it includes the historical and environmental context of Medellin and its youth. As such, input provides an opportunity to collectively define the challenges faced as the youth reflected on the past in an attempt to better understand the mission of Sal y Luz. In the study, part of this context was provided by myself in the brief history that was presented at the first focus group. As it relates to the study, this history provided a point from which the youth could then begin to think about how the community they live in now is different from the one described during the presentation. The intervention stage is the actual formation of Sal y Luz as an organization, as well as the different projects that the youth have completed in an attempt to solve the problems they've identified in their community. As an outsider, it is not always easy to know what sorts of interventions would be most meaningful, and so part of the evaluation examines these interventions as an account of what the youth believe to be meaningful. The outcome stage is simply the results. Results, as illustration of empowerment, meaning how the youth feel after they have been involved in Sal y Luz, after they have experienced the results of the projects they have participated in, and things they take away from the process (such as skills).
The biggest obstacle in using photo elicitation or photovoice is that, as a tool, photographs are difficult to digest as data (Wang & Burris, 1997). In overcoming this, grounded theory is used. According to Strauss & Corbin, “Grounded theory is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. Theory evolves during actual research, and it does this through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection.” (1998, p. 273). Grounded theory is an analysis strategy used to inductively develop general theoretical explanations from a set of unique data. In this case, grounded theory means that I have identified a set of patterns based specifically on the data gathered from the focus group discussions and photos. These patterns emerged during open coding of the pictures and subsequent focus group discussion, and became the main themes which explain how Sal y Luz serves as a source for youth empowerment in Comuna 13, Medellin, Colombia.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

Input

Prompts relating to the input stages of empowerment (1-5; see Appendix A for reference) revealed several themes. First, by reflecting on past challenges, the participants identified members of their communities as leaders (available resources as discussed above), and often even identified other youth to be leaders. This is important because, according to Maton, quality leadership can contribute to empowerment both by the influence they exert on members and through their capacity to motivate (2008). Quality leaders most often come directly from the setting they are trying to improve, because these are the individuals who fully understand the injustices that occur in their communities and are most impassioned to direct change. In this case, it is a positive sign that members of Sal y Luz identify each other and members of the community at large as leaders, because they will be the ones that live in the Comuna and see firsthand the challenges faced.
Another theme that emerged involved the local environment. Many pictures in the input stage featured "safe spaces" such as a local library, sports field, or school, which all have in common the characteristic of providing a secure public place for youth to congregate. Even with the emergence of the invisible borders (see discussion below), there are some areas that are safe for youth to be in no matter what neighborhood they live. This commonality could also explain why only one youth depicted a rural area, as these areas are more likely to be dangerous than public spaces according to the youth respondents. In the second focus group, participants indicated that although there are certain aspects of the countryside that they would like to enjoy, access is greatly limited by safety concerns. Further, since youth appear to be in search of safe places, it is possible that the Sal y Luz facility itself provides the first step in empowerment as youth recognize such spaces exist in comparison to the past. As previously noted, empowerment approaches can seem like an unnatural fit within typically hierarchical

Figure 5.1: An example of one safe space is the local library.
settings such as schools, and so the separate physical space of Sal y Luz headquarters, in its own building, allows for a setting which not only values the opinions of youth, but acts on them.

*Intervention*

Prompts 6-9 related to the intervention piece of the empowerment process. In this, participants indicated that they had put effort into many diverse projects. In the second focus group, the youth acknowledged they accomplished much of what they set out to do by the time a project came to a close. This is important to recognize not only because it shows that the youth of Sal y Luz are willing to put a lot of work into their cause, but also because it leads to empowerment as an outcome; as the youth participate in more projects and experience more success, they will likely learn new abilities and skills which leads to an increased sense of personal empowerment. In fact, as mentioned before, research has shown a direct correlation between levels of participation and empowerment (Rappaport, 1981; Zimmerman, 1990; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Youth also stated that all they do is for the people of the comuna, a sentiment that resonates with Maton's qualifier that organizational activities should be related to community improvement (2008).
Numerous challenges were identified by the youth both in the photos they took and in the focus group discussion. Some challenges included finding resources or funding for projects, getting to the facility itself, choosing a meeting time, and overcoming pressures from neighborhood gangs to participate in gang activities.

According to Maton, in order to be empowering, organizations must be able to adapt to the changing problems and challenges faced by the youth in a community (2008). At this moment in time, it is difficult to say whether Sal y Luz will be able to overcome some of its most recent challenges, particularly that of the invisible borders which hinders the accessibility and outreach offered by the Sal y Luz organization.

Figure 5.2: One participant said that, like the weather, the atmosphere in Medellin is hard to predict. This is one of the challenges that Sal y Luz faces.
Finally, the participants of the study emphasized the importance of art as a positive impact on the surrounding physical environment. Further, they acknowledged that the majority of Sal y Luz projects have some sort of artistic component and as such has changed the community for the better in reflection of the lack of such a positive artistic presence in the past. In the focus group, participants stated that art is a large part of the live of the youth in the comunas in general, and not just those of Sal y Luz; murals and graffiti can be found covering the walls of buildings and sidewalks nearly everywhere in Medellin. One youth told me that art is not only an expression of themselves, but it is also a method that they use to try to change the mentality of the comuna; they want to instill the ideals of peace and tolerance/acceptance, as well as prove that they have useful ideas about how they too can better their community.

Considering the argument that youth are both marginalized by society and segregated from adults (Checkoway, Figueroa & Richards-Schuster, 2008; Ardizzone, 2008; Camino & Zeldin, 2002), using art as their voice, youth recognize such a process as challenging the stereotypes and negative public beliefs that society has toward youth.

**Figure 5.3**: Participants emphasized that art was an important component of what makes Sal y Luz work.
Prompts 10-11 related to the outcome piece. I received nine photos of a peace monument that has been erected in a previously violent area, which indicates again the concept of safe spaces and peace. The monument was an interesting entry, however, because it was in response to prompt #10, which was "take at least two pictures that allow you to reflect on change in your community." It's interesting because I would have expected the metro cable to be the premier symbol of change in Medellin due to its innovation and ability to access remote parts of Medellin. I did receive some photos of the metro cable, although only four in comparison to the monument's nine. I would speculate that, at least in part, this lower interest is due to the fact that few (if any) of the youth participating in this project live in the areas that require metro cable access to reach the city, and in fact I suspect that all of them live near the most accessible part of the comuna (that is, close to the metro stop). Had they lived in the mountainsides, it is
possible that they might have viewed the metro cable as a more important symbol of change. Regardless, having multiple photographers submit the same pictures does seem to point towards the notion that safe spaces and accessibility are important aspects of youths' lives. This, in addition to the slew of potential projects the youth identified in the focus group, goes back again to Maton's suggestion that empowering organizations ought to focus on community improvement. In fact, the sheer number of ideas that youth have regarding future projects, with ideas ranging from exploring isolated country spaces to bringing more services to the elderly and disabled, seems to be one of the biggest ways that empowerment can be seen as an outcome of participation in Sal y Luz. Although brainstorming and/or imagination have not been previously identified in the research as indicators of empowerment, it does seem to point towards higher levels of critical thinking and problems solving as effective means to approach newly identified problems or issues.

Figure 5.5: Medellin's Metrocable.
Youth have stated that there appears to be a decline in the availability of youth organizations in Medellin, citing the creation of the invisible borders. These invisible borders, created by drug-fueled gangs of the different sections of the comuna, are basically markers that are scattered throughout the comuna to mark where their territory begins and ends; youth from other parts of the comuna are not permitted to pass, or if they do pass through they are taking a risk (facing a threat of violent victimization). The invisible borders only seem to pertain to youth, and the youth that I spoke with noted that young children, adults, and the elderly may pass through the invisible borders whenever they wish. Not surprisingly, this is primarily due to the fact that these gangs need to recruit the youth; as people get arrested or killed, the youth are needed to take their place.

The main issue with youth groups in Medellin does not appear to be a lack of interest, but rather accessibility, especially due to the recent creation of the invisible borders. Further, though Sal u Luz is centrally located next to the community metro stop and convenient for most youth who participate in their programs, the youth still have trouble coming to an agreement on what kind of project they should work on due to the varied locations of these projects (and the assumed threat of reaching these locations). On the whole, the invisible borders seem to be too large of an issue for the youth to tackle on their own. Local youth agree that it is not so much that the government authorities do not want to do anything about the problem, but that the problem is too widespread for even them to take on. Some residents believe that further military intervention will be necessary before they can begin to really solve the problem (in the same vein of Operation Orion and Mariscal). I think that the reasoning behind this is that military strength/power can arrest more quickly; as it stands, both the police and citizens know
who is responsible for the violence, but neither can directly intervene. Youth will tell you that they often find themselves taking circuitous routes to places that they need to travel to everyday, such as to school or work, in response to the invisible borders. The exception, according to those I spoke with, is if the youth are wearing a school uniform or backpack (something that shows they are on their way to school). This signals to the gangs of a barrio that they are just passing through, and that they are not looking for trouble. However, it is understood that the risk can never be fully removed.
CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to evaluate whether a specific youth organization, Sal y Luz, was successful or not in helping the youth it serves achieve empowerment on a micro, psychological level, and also for the author's personal growth in the field. It is important to identify whether groups such as Sal y Luz are successful, and if so, the elements which make them so. For example, does the importance of quality leadership at the local level outweigh the importance of the organization's stated mission or activities? Given what is known about the positive effects of empowerment, it is critical at this juncture to know the exact mechanisms by which other organizations may empower its own youth. In order to identify these, the photo prompts were organized in a way that would help uncover the “stages” relevant to empowerment as both a process and an outcome; as previously stated, the process can be loosely broken down into three steps: input (resources available, history/context of an area, community makeup), intervention (proposed and enacted solutions in reactions to problems found in the input), and outcome (the results of the intervention, whether they were successful or not, the impact they've had on the community, and if empowerment was among the outcomes of the intervention). The analysis also has to take into consideration the concept of recursiveness, in that while resources and other input affect youth, youth are also affecting their environment via the interventions they put in place.
It is difficult to define the success of Sal y Luz as an agent of empowerment among youth. Many factors indicate high levels of empowerment among members, such as: quality leadership, as defined by Maton (2008), the way that the group draws on the strengths of its individual members as dictated by different projects, active participation, steady membership, and, as most fervently stated by the youth themselves, a dedication and passion for the work that they do. Based on these factors alone, it would seem that Sal y Luz is quite effective in empowering its members (and in fact, that is how the youth defined themselves when asked). Given the disadvantaged and still highly threatening context of comuna 13, that last bit can be quite telling – that these youth, despite the general lack of resources and the abundance of crime in their community, would still self-identify as “empowered,” is a strong indicator that Sal y Luz does achieve its goal in empowering youth. As noted earlier, one of the primary barriers to future empowerment in Sal y Luz appears to be whether or not the group will be able to adapt to the rising issue of the invisible borders. In addition, the organization currently has little to say about the gangs personally, indicating that these youth may view the gang youth as “other,” which may or may not hinder potential outreach to this population. Furthermore, Sal y Luz does appear to be somewhat lacking in making a diverse set of roles available; multiple participants noted that they wished less artistic interventions would be considered, either or both because they felt that they were not artistically inclined or because they felt that a more substantial (and sustainable) project should be considered.

Keep in mind also that Maton's model, while thorough, was not designed in reference to an environment as violent as Medellin. As a result, not all of the five points are completely adequate measures of empowerment in this particular area. For example,
one of the points states that activities offered by the organization should offer a diversity of roles for members. Some participants of this study acknowledged that they would like to see a greater diversity of roles available as well, because Sal y Luz currently is very media-based. However, given the context of the area, it is possible that the reason Sal y Luz emphasizes art so heavily is because it is a relatively safe way to express oneself. It is hard then to say whether or not this measure is an accurate of empowerment at Sal y Luz, because on one hand it could be said that the organization is restricted because it is less able to explore new possibilities, but on the other hand they are also improvising and being creative with the artistic interventions that they are coming up with. This lack of diverse roles is also related to Maton’s point that members within an organization should be able to rely on each other to solve problems, because if all the projects are art related and yet not all of the members perceive art to be a strength of theirs, then there is a disconnect. It is not that members are not going to have a lesser capacity for problem solving or critical thinking, but as far as actually participating in a project some members may find themselves falling short. In light on the second focus group discussion, in which several participants validated this concern that projects may be too narrow-focused, it is certainly a point that Sal y Luz may need to look into (for example, participants brainstormed potential projects that may not necessarily be media-based, such as possible work with the elderly, with the disabled, with the mentally ill, and with the isolated countryside). Furthermore, considering Maton’s point that organizations need to be able to adapt to new problems or challenging facing the community and the youth specifically, it is difficult to say to what extent Sal y Luz as a small grassroots organization will tackle issues such as the invisible borders.
On Maton's two other points, regarding quality leadership and activities related to community improvement, the measures are more relevant. This is especially so for the quality leadership. As mentioned previously, a community leader is going to be better able to motivate members simply because they are more likely to have firsthand experience with local injustices and challenges, and they are going to be the most visionary and passionate. In Medellin, and in other similarly violent environments, having a leader who understands exactly what that violence entails is a serious requirement. The same can be said for community activities, in that they are essential for youth organizations to begin physically altering their environment in a positive way.

As mentioned previously in the results, I found it curious that participants did not cite the metrocable as a significant symbol of change in Medellin. According to the metrocable's own website, the lines were conceived for the sole purpose of improving transportation conditions for the citizens of Medellin; to quote, "These works and the investments made therein are imbued with a major societal dimension that seeks the common good. They are both geared towards the advancement of living conditions for the lower income population, which makes great use of our public transportation." (2013) The metrocable provides what I would have considered an excellent example of how an intervention (the building of the metrocable in response to the lack of adequate transportation options, or input) could lead to empowerment as an outcome. Since the metrocable connects low income citizens to more urban centers, the system effectively affords many a safe and quick commute to work, which may not have been available to all before. As a result, more people are able to hold down a job because they can get there, and by extension have access to a greater amount of resources than previously.
This can lead to feelings of empowerment as individuals begin to feel success by bringing in a steady income where before they were not able to, and be greater participants in their community. As noted, I believe that part of the reason I did not receive more photographs of the metrocable is because I suspect that most of the participants live near the most accessible part of the comuna. If they required use of the metrocable to get to either school or work, then it is possible that they might view it as a more important symbol of change. It is also worth noting that the metrocable currently only accesses one side of the neighborhood, and so while it does provide great accessibility to those it serves, those living on the opposite side remain bereft of adequate transportation. Given this, it may also be that the participants view the metrocable as only a partial solution to a yet unsolved problem. As it stands, the metrocable could be significant in that it can link people to safe spaces; referring back to Voorhees (2013) model of general empowerment, safe spaces such as the metro stops, libraries or schools are all created by the partnerships between social (communities within Medellin) and governmental institutions (Colombian government). The metrocable in particular is a great example of the two institutions coming together in a partnership, creating the capacity for participation (access to employment/education/activities), and reaching some level of substantive empowerment.

Using photovoice as a way to measure data from the youth turned out to have its own set of limitations. On one hand, photovoice was extremely valuable given the language barrier that existed. Anyone can be taught to take pictures, and I think that photovoice as an activity was a much more engaging and fun way for the youth to participate in my study as opposed to simply taking a survey or doing a standard interview. Understandably, these same methods would likely not be as suitable in a more
formal environment (such as a business organization). On the other hand, however, it can be difficult to get completely clear information from photos. For example, this study originally intended for participants to write their own captions for the photos, yet this piece fell through because participants simply didn't do it, or they would skip the captions for certain photos, or even skip taking a photo for some prompt. Thus, like with any survey or interview, participants can opt to just not submit information to the extent that it is requested. Furthermore, empowerment as an exceptionally abstract and broad topic proved to be difficult to measure via photovoice. In other words, it was excellent for straightforward prompts such as "Take a picture of a leader in your community" (prompt #2) because a specific person is depicted. Other prompts, such as "Take at least two pictures that allow you to reflect on change in your community" (prompt #10), are more broad, and were the prompts that required the most discussion during the second focus group to understand the results. Even in retrospect, photovoice is still the data collection method of choice, however in the future I would certainly acknowledge that prompts should either be more specific, or more focus groups should be held so that more discussion can be held in order to delve into what the photos submitted signify for each participant.
CHAPTER 7:

CONCLUSION

The project is meaningful in many ways. First, I think that the results are helpful in informing Sal y Luz/Comuna 13 of some of the ways that they are both enabling and hindering youth empowerment. For example, even though individual members of Sal y Luz identify ways that the organization can expand, Sal y Luz as a whole may not be considering anything that puts a lesser emphasis on the artistic aspect (such as the proposed project of working with the elderly). It may be helpful to reflect on some of the projects that were proposed to see if they are either relevant or viable. Second, I also took away a lot from this study as a researcher. This is my first research undertaking to date, and the learning curve was rather steep. Before I arrived in Medellin, I was worried that the youth I was working with would be disheartened about the idea of empowerment due to the violent context, and therefore uninterested in the project despite its artistic elements. I also thought that empowerment, being the broad and abstract concept that it is, would require more discussion (after all, I spent months trying to define it!). However, just the opposite is true for both cases. Not only were the participants excited about the project (focus groups meant to last only an hour lasted two or three), but the youth showed me more about what empowerment meant than I probably ended up measuring in the end.

In the future, I would likely change some of the organization of the methodology;
namely, I should have been more explicit in the directions about the use of photovoice, and also I should have placed more emphasis on empowerment as a discussion point in the first focus group (the majority of this discussion was in the second focus group). In reflecting on what this study has learned regarding measures of empowerment and the context of Medellin specifically, future research should focus on diversifying the populations, as well as quantifying the several identifiable mechanisms by which groups empower youth, in order to understand the relative importance of each.

Empowerment, even though it is not new subject matter, is still worth investigating. Beyond identifying characteristics of what an empowered organization does look like, the focus should shift to how exactly one attains or maintains those characteristics. Given the multitude of positive psychological and social outcomes associated with empowerment, it is important to continually identify specific ways that communities and organizations can empower themselves.
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APPENDIX A

PHOTO PROMPT

The following are some items to think about, and that I would like for you to photograph. Please also feel free to write captions for your photos in the notebook provided, so that I will have a better understanding of what you’ve chosen to photograph.

1. Take a picture of your favorite place in your neighborhood.
2. Take a picture of a leader in your community.
3. Take of picture of what makes Sal y Luz work.
4. Take a picture of your community.
5. Take a picture of the way you get to school or work.
6. Take a picture of something that you have put a lot of effort into, or worked really hard for, during your time at Sal y Luz.
7. Take a picture of any new people you’ve met or friends you’ve made as a result of your participation in Sal y Luz projects.
8. Take a picture of something that has been challenging for you in working on a Sal y Luz project.
9. Take a picture of something that you think needs to change about Sal y Luz.
10. Take at least two pictures that allow you to reflect on change in your community.
11. Take a picture of the next project you'd like to work on in Sal y Luz.
APPENDIX B:

SELECTION OF PHOTO RESPONSES

1. Take a picture of your favorite place in your neighborhood.
2. Take a picture of a leader in your community.
3. Take a picture of what makes Sal y Luz work.
4. Take a picture of your community.
5. Take a picture of the way you get to school or work.
6. Take a picture of something that you have put a lot of effort into, or worked really hard for, during your time at Sal y Luz.
7. Take a picture of any new people you've met or friends you've made as a result of your participation in Sal y Luz projects.
8. Take a picture of something that has been challenging for you in working on a Sal y Luz project.
9. Take a picture of something that you think needs to change about Sal y Luz.
10. Take at least two pictures that allow you to reflect on change in your community.
11. Take a picture of the next project you'd like to work on in Sal y Luz.