SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND CHILDREN – CREATING IDENTITY CAPITAL:

SOME CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

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Background

This paper will provide a brief overview of the work being carried out at Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (OECD/CERI) in the field of social exclusion as it applies to children. In particular it will focus on disabled and disadvantaged children and young people since these are the ones who are most likely to be at risk of exclusion.

The concept of "social exclusion" was first popularised in 1974 in France, by René Lenoir the then Secretary of State for Social Action and was used to refer to the "physically disabled", the "mentally disabled" and the "socially maladjusted". Lenoir recognised the need to improve conditions for those the economy was leaving behind and to strengthen social cohesion.

In more current usage the concept of social exclusion has expanded to include those with disadvantages and has taken on a more elaborated meaning both inside and outside France (Ebersold, 1999, OECD internet http://www.oecd.org/els/edu/ceri/conf220299.htm). It has now become one of the most important themes of contemporary social debate in many OECD countries, because of the challenge exclusion presents to social cohesion.

In contrast to poverty and unemployment, which focus on individuals and households, and which were central to earlier discussions on exclusion, social exclusion in its current form has taken on a broader significance and is concerned with the 'inability to participate effectively in economic, social and cultural life and, in some characteristics, alienation and distance from mainstream society (Duffy, 1995). The concept of social exclusion thus focuses on the relationship between the individual and society and the dynamics of that relationship.

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1 .The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and invited experts and cannot be taken to represent official policy of the OECD.

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The main groups who are potentially subject to being socially excluded remain unchanged and include those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with disabilities. But the results of disadvantage are no longer viewed as being passed exclusively through families leading to a restriction on life chances and an impediment to development. Instead social exclusion shifts the responsibility to society, which is seen as erecting obstacles to progress of particular individuals and groups and even to citizenship itself. When looked at in this way social exclusion can, therefore, "be seen to be present in almost any of the domains of modern living, including education, employment, community life and citizenship to which individuals or groups fail to gain access or exclude themselves from." (Bynner, 1999).

Such an approach also lies comfortably with other descriptions that emphasise a rights based approach. Room (1995) for instance talks of the 'denial or non-realisation of civil, political, and social rights of citizenship'. A rights based approach, which was the model driving the inclusion movement in the USA, has also much in common with the capabilities approach developed by Sen. This "calls for efforts to ensure that people have equal access to basic capabilities such as the ability to be healthy, well-fed, housed, integrated into the community, participate in community and public life, and enjoy social bases of self-respect (Sen, 1992)" (see Klasen, 1999).

Much of the current debate has focused on adults, but children and young people too are in danger of becoming excluded. Thus, extending the idea of social exclusion to children requires further considerations and is best considered in the context of the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

Defining Social Exclusion among Children

Under which circumstances can one say that a child is suffering from social exclusion? Applying the capabilities approach by Sen (1992, 1999), we can define social exclusion as the inability to participate in, and be recognised by, society. A slightly stronger version would also include the terms of such participation and recognition in the definition. In particular, one may want to include that participation in society, and recognition of people by society has to be on the terms of equality or equal opportunity. This would ensure equality inherent in the notion of citizenship and the protection of human dignity necessary for all social interactions.

Failure of the ability to participate in, and be recognised by society has not only theoretical appeal. Attitude surveys have determined that European citizens consider it a necessity of life. Using data from the Eurobarometer survey, Golding (1995) shows that 65% of EU citizens regard 'feeling recognised by society' as an absolute necessity. Other indicators of participation are ranked very highly as well, which suggests that participation is indeed an important and valued capability that should be open to all citizens.[3]

One way to refine this capability failure would be to define more specific rights and capabilities that are necessary for the child to be able to interact equally in, and be recognised as an equal by, the rest of society. Berghman (1995) distinguishes between four types of integration and participation: civic integration relating to the democratic and legal system (and, for example, the legal status and treatment of children in general and minority, foreigner, or disabled children in particular); economic integration mainly related to employment; social integration related to the inclusion in the public safety net, and

[3] The three others related to participation are the ability to 'go out with family and friends' (62% see that as a necessity), being 'useful to others' (70%) and having a 'social life' (42%). Unfortunately, a more direct question on the ability to participate in economic, social, and public life on equal terms was not asked in the survey (Golding, 1995).

family and community integration relating to networks or, to what some observers have recently termed 'social capital.'

A related starting point focusing specifically on children would be to consult the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF 1989) which has been signed and ratified by the majority countries in the world. The rights that may be relevant to social inclusion and exclusion are the following:

1. Article 2: "States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's of his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, birth, property, disability, birth or other status...."

2. Article 3: "In all actions concerning children (...), the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration..."

3. Article 7: "The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality, and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents."

4. Article 9: "States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will (...)"

5. Article 17: "States Parties (...) shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual, and moral well-being (..)"

6. Article 23: "States Parties recognise that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community. States Parties recognise the right of the disabled child to special care (...)"

7. Article 27: "States Parties recognise the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development. (...) States Parties (...) are to assist parents to implement this right (...)"

8. Article 28: States Parties recognise the right of the child to education (...) and on the basis of equal opportunity shall, in particular make primary education compulsory and available free to all; encourage the development of different forms of secondary education (...), make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need; (...) take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates; (...)."

9. Article 29: "States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential (...); the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national, and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin."

10. Article 30: "(...) A child belonging to a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language."

11. Article 31: "States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreation (...); States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, recreational, and leisure activities."

Failure in meeting any of these rights, for whatever reasons, could then be seen as evidence of social exclusion, as all of these rights deal with the ability of the child to interact with society on equal terms.[4] The advantage of basing discussions of social exclusion and children on the Convention is the public and political acceptance the Convention has gained through its signatories, ratification, and monitoring processes that have accompanied it.

One should point out, however, that the Convention of the Rights of the Child is not in all cases consistently following a capabilities approach as suggested by Sen (1992, 1999). In particular, in some parts of the Convention, it merely calls for equal opportunities and non-discrimination, which may be interpreted as less than calling for equal capabilities.[5]

Also, it singles out physically and mentally disabled children as having rights to special support to achieve a full and decent life in dignity and self-reliance and with active participation of the community (Article 23). Children who are not disabled but otherwise disadvantaged by birth, background, or circumstance are not specifically mentioned and all children are not specifically granted the right to a full or decent life and active participation in the community. As argued above, it is unclear why non-disabled disadvantaged children (or, for that matter, all children) should not enjoy these same rights.[6]

The mentioned clauses of the rights of the child deal with a variety of aspects of children's lives. Many of the mentioned clauses relate to legal rights of inclusion (nationality, non-discrimination, growing up with parents, access to media and respect for own culture and language etc.) and can generally be met through appropriately passed and enforced legislation. Others, particularly Articles 23, 27, 28, 30, and 31 deal with the interaction of economic and social forces and governmental action where governments are asked to correct exclusion that may otherwise be created as a result of economic or social forces (see also Klasen, 1999).

Such a capabilities or rights-based approach to child development differs sharply from a utilitarian concern of maximising wealth or consumption. Article 29 about the goals of education highlights this contrast. While a utilitarian approach to education would promote education in ways that raise the sum total of achievement in the education system and thus would target resources on those best placed to

[4] Not all of the Articles in the convention are stated in ways that make them legally enforceable claims, and the Convention as a whole is only enforceable in most countries if it has been translated into appropriate national legislation. This paper is not concerned with this aspect and just uses the Convention to highlight areas where the spirit of the Articles are not adhered to.

[5] For example, equal opportunities in access to leisure activities could be interpreted as merely providing for non-discrimination of access. Equal capabilities would, in addition, also call for efforts to ensure that all groups of the population effectively feel able to participate and may necessitate specific interventions to open such facilities to children with particular disadvantages.

[6] The special concern about physically and mentally disabled children is understandable in view of the fact that disabled children still face many barriers in developing and developed countries. At the same time, there are good reasons to extend this concern to non-disabled children who are otherwise disadvantaged.

make use of them, a rights-based approach calls for maximising the potential of each child, regardless of whether this will or won't further growth, technological development, or the position of the country in the global marketplace. Thus the focus of educational policies and other policies, if they are to deal with social exclusion, has to deal with the capabilities of those most disadvantaged rather than those who are able to use the system most effectively. Thus a focus of educational policies aimed to combat social exclusion will have to focus heavily on the distribution of access and achievements, rather than averages[7] and OECD/CERI has begun work on these issues (Evans, 2000).

Intrinsic and Instrumental Issues

The rights or capabilities based approach used above in defining social exclusion carries with it a focus on the *intrinsic* problems associated with social exclusion. If social exclusion is a violation of rights or capabilities, it immediately implies that a society that tolerates social exclusion is *intrinsically* deficient if it fails to grant basic rights or capabilities to its citizens, in this case to its children. The use of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed and ratified and thus accepted by the majority of the world, nicely illustrates this intrinsic importance.

At the same time, there are several types of *instrumental* reasons why the treatment of children should receive close scrutiny. First, socially excluded children may grow up to be adults that are similarly suffering from social exclusion about which we should worry for intrinsic reasons. Thus combating social exclusion among children can help combat social exclusion as adults.

Second, socially excluded children may, as a result of their exclusion, suffer from deficiencies in other important capabilities, such as the ability to be healthy, well-educated, well-housed, or well-nourished. This clearly reduces well-being of those suffering from it, but may also have larger societal implications (e.g. due to the positive externalities of health and education). In addition, social exclusion may have close empirical relations to other social problems that threaten the stability and prosperity of society at large such as crime, violence, social pathologies, societal divisions, racism, xenophobia, etc.

Third, there is the additional worry that socially excluded children will pose a threat to the future well-being of society as they may become a social and economic burden to society or, worse, generate considerable social disruptions if they have little stake in the existing order. In addition, to the extent that social exclusion is transmitted intergenerationally, social exclusion of children may create ever deeper divisions within society that amplify across generations.

Fourth, there may even be situations where one cannot speak of social exclusion among children, but nevertheless the particular situation some children find themselves in will help promote social exclusion among adults. For example, one can think of educational arrangements where children with learning difficulties or other disadvantages are well-integrated and do not suffer from social exclusion, but their needs are insufficiently taken into account and leave them poorly catered for as a result.

It is important to point out that the intrinsic and instrumental reasons to be concerned about social exclusion have a very different moral standing. While the intrinsic arguments against social exclusion rise and fall with the acceptance of their philosophical basis (such as a capability-based or other rights-based approach), the instrumental considerations rise and fall with the veracity of the linkages postulated, which is largely an empirical question. This has important implications for a research agenda on social

[7] This does, of course, not mean that educational policies should be geared exclusively towards meeting these rights. It merely means that, in an assessment of the benefits and costs of alternative educational policies, these rights are and should be an important consideration.

exclusion. A research agenda focused on testing the linkages between exclusion and other desirable welfare criteria implicitly accepts the instrumental approach; one that accepts the intrinsic arguments, such as the rights or capabilities approach suggested above can immediately move to policy questions related to social exclusion.[8] In practise, even an approach highlighting the intrinsic problems associated with social exclusion should also be interested in the instrumental issues. After all, if social exclusion causes other social ills, which themselves are intrinsically problematic, this should add to the worry of those who worry about social exclusion for intrinsic reasons.

As noted above, children, as members of families, may also suffer from the social exclusion of their parents. The restriction this places on their development provides the basis of their own exclusion later on in life. This means that the outcomes of their early experiences at home and in the school and through which their positions in adult society are ultimately determined need to be a focus as well. Such a sequence is illustrated by the list below:

- poor acquisition of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy
- poor educational attainment through school
- early leaving from education without qualifications
- early labour market entry problems, including jobs without training
- casual work and unemployment
- teenage pregnancy
- trouble with the police
- alcohol abuse
- criminal convictions
- poor physical and especially mental health

Each outcome is both an indicator of social exclusion early on and a predisposing factor for social exclusion later. This brings the idea of risk and protective factors into the picture. Thus, for example, success in heading off educational failure by intervention directed at pre-school preparation is a source of protection against the risk ultimately of exclusion in the adult labour market.

Such a process is continuous, in the sense that one outcome leads to another, and it is also to a degree cyclical in its effects, in the sense that its outcomes are mutually reinforcing and may be damaging to achievements earlier in life. For example the experience of family conflict at a particular stage of childhood may not only hold back the child educationally relative to peers, but he or she may regress to earlier levels of cognitive performance and behaviour (Bergman and Magnusson, 1991; Caspi et al, 1996).

[8] At the same time, establishing the empirical linkages may be very important to generate societal consensus around policies combating social exclusion, particularly if it can be shown that social exclusion hurts everyone and not just those suffering from it. The complete reliance on this approach is quite tricky as it may get bogged down in empirical issues rather than focus on important policy-questions.

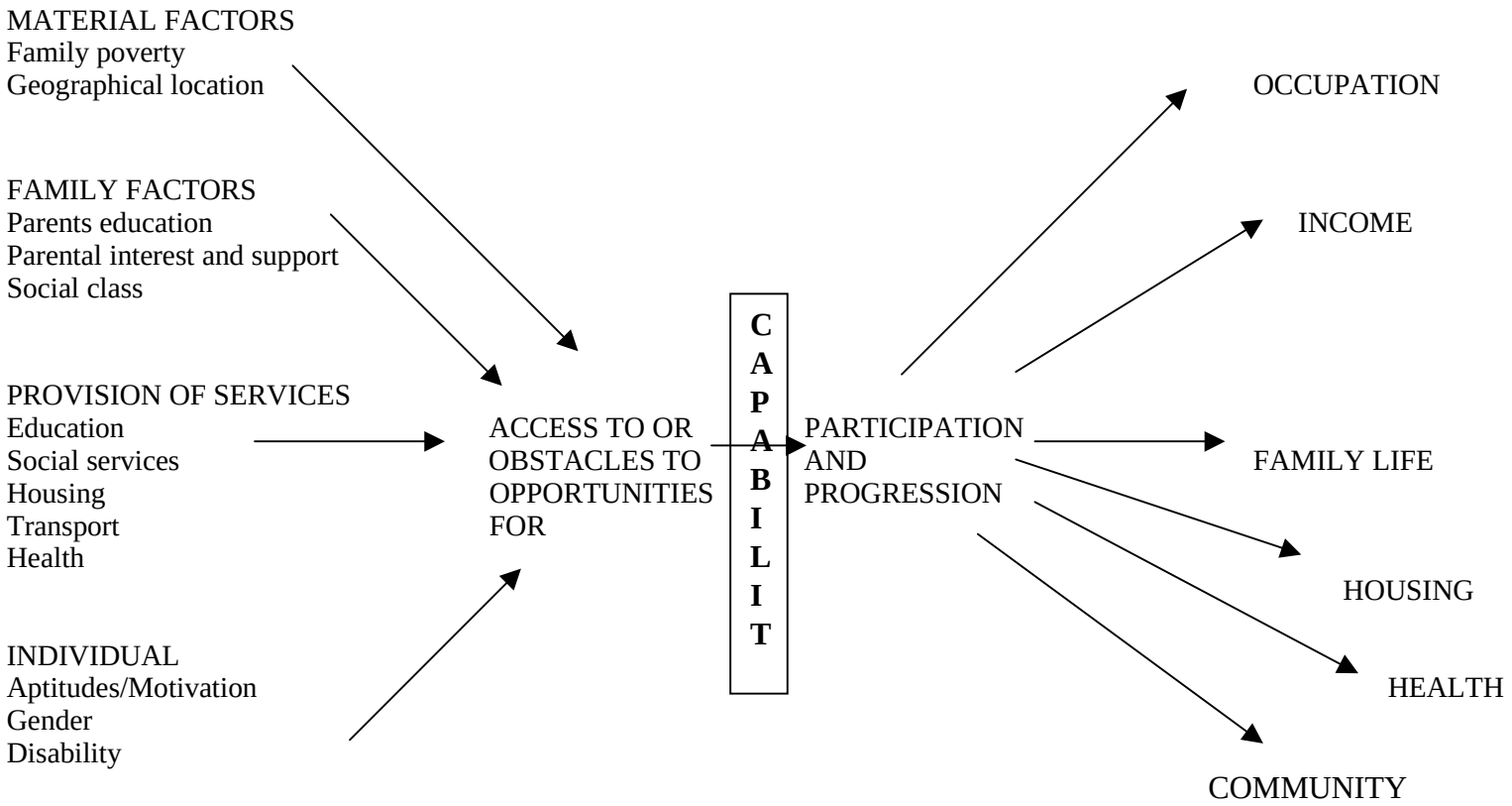
The broad definition of social exclusion advanced here involves restriction of access to the capabilities essential to functioning in adult life. Through the early stages of childhood first the basic building blocks and then the capabilities themselves are developed. Principally these are reflected in educational outcomes associated with cognitive development, such as literacy and numeracy in childhood and educational qualifications in the teens - the basis of *human capital formation* (Becker, 1975). But alongside these are the psychological and social resources, underpinning the *social* and *cultural capital* components of human development. In total these add up to what Côte (1996) describes as 'Identity Capital' - the key protector against adult social exclusion in late modern society.

Figure 1 gives substance to the idea illustrating how early precursors in a child's life translate into particular social exclusion externalities or outcomes via the medium of capability. The former include material elements of the child's home and parental characteristics when the child is born, together with such individual characteristics as gender, ethnicity, disability. From birth onwards the child is subjected to both the positive and negative aspects of the services directed towards him or her. These comprise in early life the health and early education services, then schooling, then in adolescence, the education service, youth service and vocational advisory service. In adulthood they broaden out further embracing all the institutions of the state: social welfare, employment, housing, transport, health, and the judicial system. It is in these institutions that the obstacles as well as opportunities for the individual's access to capabilities and ultimately identity capital reside (Bynner, 1999).

Inclusive education, for example, may draw children with special needs into mainstream schooling. Large class sizes, on the other hand may mask the difficulties of individuals who, through lack of parental support, are unable to keep up with the rest of their peers. There are both physical and educational resources that play a part here, but also, the more hidden but nevertheless highly potent, psychological and cultural resources on which identity capital is built. The labelling of children as dull or stupid excuses teachers in large classes in dismissing such children as lost causes. Gender and ethnic stereotyping may in subtle ways reinforce their marginalisation.

Figure 1

PROCESS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION OR INTEGRATION



Longitudinal studies (e.g. Bynner, 1999) show that as children move through education the gap between the educational haves and have-nots gets wider; progress is enhanced for some while held back for others. The consequence is social exclusion for the former and full participation in citizenship for the latter, as illustrated on the right-hand side of Figure 1. The statuses through which such citizenship is expressed include occupation, income, family life, housing health and community (including social and political participation). The social exclusion process may be conceived as one in which the probability of access to such outcomes is much reduced or disappears altogether.

The research approach

OECD is approaching the problem of studying social exclusion as it applies to children from several points of view. It is clear from what has been said above that the concept of exclusion requires a broad approach which will look at issues as they cover the development of the whole child. This approach is commensurate to that taken in earlier OECD studies on both children at risk and those with disabilities (OECD, 1995, 1996, 1998, 1999).

For this study, three complementary approaches are being developed. These include mainly quantitative data derived from international longitudinal studies, data based on cross-sectional studies and OECD comparative work and qualitative case studies. In this work literature from different academic traditions is also covered.

There is not enough space here to develop this work in any detail. Suffice it to say the evidence from a variety of approaches shows the importance of a wide range of factors which can increase the likelihood of exclusion through early learning experiences, the education process and onwards into employment, health and criminality. Fuller accounts will appear later in OECD publications (see Bynner, 1999; and Klasen, 1999).

In the next section, examples of developments to tackle social exclusion in children from two countries, the UK and the USA are briefly reported. In both countries, approaches around 'zones' are being developed in rather different ways.

Examples of country approaches

The UK[9]

Education Action Zones have been implemented by the current government as a way to tackle social exclusion through community development. There is an especial concentration on tackling underachievement and raising educational standards which are often linked to other problems such as truancy, exclusion from school and crime. Educational Action Zones (EAZs) are being developed to provide new solutions to these problems by the development of new forms of governance to enable capacity building and social inclusion to develop over time. EAZs are supposed to develop action plans to improve educational outcomes through a number of inter-linking strategies that will bring together schools, families, business, health and social services etc i.e. a co-ordinated services approach (e.g. see OECD, 1996, 1998) with the intention of improving learning and teaching. In EAZs educational standards are often low with significantly reduced achievements at GCSE in comparison to other parts of the local

[9] The work described here is based on a fuller account of the working of Education Action Zones in the UK (Ranson, 1999).

education authority and England as a whole. This is especially true for boys. There are generally negative attitudes to learning with 30 per cent of 16 year olds not proceeding into training or further education. The post-16 drop out rate in EAZs can be double the local figure.

This approach is in the tradition of developing learning communities and hence improved governance through the renewal of civil society. In addition to creating learning communities and improving community governance, some of the features of this approach include the development of lifelong learning, partnership across sectors, participation and improved consultation and dialogue with the citizens involved.

EAZs frequently suffer from geographical isolation, for instance housing areas on the edges of urban developments with poor transport and communication facilities. Rural isolation is also common especially if parents do not have cars. The areas are often seriously deprived in terms of social amenities, access to shopping facilities, libraries and sporting facilities. There is often substantial poverty. Unemployment is common leading to poverty. Children often are hungry or without the appropriate clothes e.g. to attend school in the rain.

Children also often suffer from ill health which also lead to learning difficulties, restricted emotional development, poor mental health, criminality, teenage pregnancies etc.

Single parent families and absent male role models are common. Mothers, therefore, must have a number of jobs, to raise adequate resources, and to try to keep the family together. There are few male role models in the nursery and primary schools and many EAZs are looking at ways of bringing males into schools as teachers or assistants.

These factors lead to low standards in education and hence potential exclusion through factors such as inertia and restricted experiences, parochiality, hopelessness about the future, low educational aspirations, disaffection and community anger.

The work on EAZs is not only needed but is also based on a new agenda or a new culture for learning and education in the UK. The key components of this, which are being practised in EAZs are the following:

- *Learning for capability and active membership of society*

  Education has been driven by too narrow a conception of the competencies which people are to acquire. The challenge is to reconceive the purposes of education as being a preparation for living and becoming active citizens of the communities in which they are to live and work.

  Education has been shaped by a mistaken division between knowledge and practice. The point of learning is practice. Learning now needs to be connected to the wider experiences of people and the purposes which are to shape their lives. The relevance of education to the lives of people is the challenge facing educators at every level.

- *Valuing the whole learner - recognising all the needs of all the learners*

  Learning has been envisaged, mistakenly as a narrow cognitive process, with thinking and feeling separated out. The research of Goleman (1996) and others is illuminating the significance of emotional well-being, of health and quality of relationships for learning and fulfilling potential. Educators are learning to recognise the importance not only of developing basic cognitive skills and competencies but also the need to address the social emotional health of each person to enhance their self-esteem, motivation and well-being.

– *Learners are capable*

Education has been undermined for many because of the flawed assumptions of capacity and intelligence. The research of Gardner (1993) is transforming our understanding of human ability and potential. In this model, intelligence is thought of as being far more diverse and broad ranging than in more traditional approaches. Intelligence is not viewed as a fixed internal characteristic of individuals, but each individual is accepted as able and with a different portfolio of abilities which require careful nurture and attention to develop each person's talents to full potential. Intelligent behaviour is learned (Perkins, 1995) through experience, hard work and through developing capacities for critical self-reflection. Achievement in all areas of learning needs to be celebrated.

– *Involving the family*

The more holistic view of the learner which the new education strives to achieve is reflected in the practice of involving parents and families. This also requires focusing support on the family unit to encourage and bring out the best in both parent and child through family learning and the development of positive parent child interaction.

– *A pedagogy of active and flexible learning*

If learners are to become active members of their communities then institutions need to become crucibles of active learning, enabling people to see the purpose of education by reconnecting learning and practice. Grounding education in investigative learning and reflective problem solving motivates people to become involved in their learning. Gardner's research has revealed that individual learn in different ways. Music and colour and movement are as important as traditional forms of transmission.

– *Curriculum extension and enrichment*

The new education is grasping the importance of encouraging and supporting learning beyond the classroom. As the work of Macbeath (1999) has emphasised achievement depends upon encouraging self- directed learning out of classroom and school hours. The DfEE[10] has reinforced the importance of Extra curricular provision for achievement in school: through curriculum enrichment (sport, drama, photography and other clubs and societies) and curriculum extension (study support opportunities provided before and after school and in holiday time.

– *multi-agency working*

Addressing all the needs of the learner and the family leads to a much more integrated approach to education, one which involves family support, health and social services in a co-ordinated approach.

– *Engagement with the wider community*

[10] DfEE = The Department for Education and Employment, of the UK government.

The new pedagogy which relates learning to practice and social purpose together with the inclusion of families provides the context for engaging with the wider community. An education which includes adults in their own learning as well as in support of the education of the young creates a broader agenda supporting education for life-long learning.

Conclusions

EAZs are faced with overwhelming problems and require radical innovations. Additional funding whilst helpful cannot be seen as enough. Many are therefore basing there innovations around three key themes.

The new pedagogy of capability for active citizenship which includes:

- Reconnecting learning to living through preparation for active citizenship;
- Understanding all the needs of the learner, particularly emotional well-being;
- Enriching understanding of human capability and potential;
- Active learning for developing responsible as well as reflective learners.

Learning to learn in the learning school

The learning school places dialogue at the centre of its management strategy for change helping colleagues to unify around shared purposes. This process helps schools to learn to value all the students in the school thus creating motivation for learning.

Community governance

Some of the characteristics of community governance were perceived to include:

- 'the government of difference, both responding to differences in needs and aspirations and creating differences. One learns from difference rather than uniformity;
- a capacity for local choice, which creates the potential for innovation, and the learning made possible by that innovation;
- the diffusion of power - change is more easily made on the smaller scale, and there are limits to political capacity at the centre;
- a concern for the community beyond the mere provision of service;
- local and visible government - decisions can more easily involve when made close to the community than when made in corridors and committees of central government;
- a renewed basis for accountability in local democracy.' (in Stewart and Stoker, 1988)

The USA[11]

Federal policies for helping disadvantaged persons in the USA have developed since the great depression of the 1930s. These policies have tended to be fragmented providing for instance high density housing which while achieving the goal of putting roofs over heads also set the stage for exclusion. Enclaves of poverty developed with associated problems of crime, gang activity, substance abuse and a lack of role models for youngsters.

Another example of a segmented programme is Job Corps. Initiated in the 1960s, this programme was aimed at one very specific aspect of social exclusion for youth – lack of education, job and life skills that will lead to employment. Job Corps is a model which takes youth out of their families and communities and gives them training and other forms of support in residential centres. But removing youth from their communities has two associated problems. First it may serve to isolate the young person and make long term inclusion even more difficult, and second it does nothing to address the broad community issues that led to the young person's problems in the first place and the need for Job Corps (see Job Corps, 1999).

Similar developments also apply to students with disabilities. Prior to 1975 these students were typically excluded from education systems, although legislation in that year guaranteed these students a free and appropriate public education. The outcome of this was the setting up of special schools and classes and despite later legislation which stressed the importance of inclusive education, in reality for many students this has proved difficult to achieve especially for those with emotional disturbance or significant mental health problems. These students frequently find themselves excluded from school and their behavioural problems bring them into the juvenile justice system and the child welfare system leading to further exclusion. More recently, however, there has been a shift in Federal and State policies to approach these problems from a community perspective. The example described here is from Baltimore in Maryland.

The picture of disadvantage in Baltimore is not unlike the EAZs in the UK. For instance, nationally the high school drop out rate was 4.7% while in Baltimore it was 10.5%. Nationally 24.4% of the population are graduates, in Baltimore it is only 15.5%. Infant mortality rates nationally are in 1996 were 7.2 per thousand live births, in Baltimore in 1997 the rate was 14.4. Unemployment rates are also about twice the national average.

With respect to disability issues it can be noted that nationally these persons also face exclusion. About 80% of the non-disabled population who are not college graduates are employed, but only 24% of those with a severe disability are employed. For college graduates only 48% of those with disabilities are employed and if they are their median income is only just over half that of the non-disabled ($15,144 in contrast to $26,280 (Keck, 1998)).

In Maryland, where Baltimore is located, 30% of students with severe emotional disturbance are in special schools and 11% in residential or hospital settings. This being about twice the national average, the equivalent comparative figures being 15% and 6% respectively. Thus taken together these statistics reveal a substantial likelihood of social exclusion.

Baltimore has started to address these problems by using the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ) initiative of the Federal government.

[11] This section is based on a fuller account of community solutions for social inclusion in the US (Bronheim, Magrab and Crowel, 1999).

EMPOWER BALTIMORE—A NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUSED EMPOWERMENT ZONE APPROACH

The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ) initiative of the U.S. Federal government is an excellent example of the move to community driven and community owned responses to poverty. This program was designed as a key element in a job creation strategy for America. It is different from previous urban revitalization programs in that it is designed so that the community drives the decision making. The community sets its quantifiable goals. The Federal government then empowers the community by providing tax incentives and performance grants to fund the community-chosen activities. In 1994, 72 urban areas were designated Empowerment Zones. These communities and 33 rural Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities are receiving more than $1.5 billion in performance grants and $2.5 billion in tax incentives. Each urban Empowerment Zone received $100 million in performance grants. Employers are eligible for $3000 in tax credits for each employee hired who lives in the Empowerment Zone. Businesses in the Empowerment Zone are also eligible for increased tax expensing for equipment purchases. The program also enables the zones to receive tax-exempt bond financing to finance business property and land, renovations or expansions. Less tangible benefits to the communities are efforts by Federal agencies to reduce red tape and provide flexibility in relation to regulations and an on-line communication network and other ways for the communities to share experiences and ideas. (Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Initiative, 1999)

Empower Baltimore, Inc. the EZ program in that city has been noted as a widely recognised model of a successful implementation of this program. It appears that its success is related to Baltimore taking to heart the concept of community control—the city administration has encouraged independence for the communities within the Zone. While Baltimore has anchored its program on three separate zone districts, Empower Baltimore has gone even further with the concept of local planning and implementation. Baltimore is a city with neighbourhoods that have very strong identities and highly specific needs and histories. The Baltimore EZ effort has seen this as a strength and built on it by having six Village Centres which provide the infrastructure for community planning and development. Director of Empower Baltimore, Diane Bell is quoted as saying, “We don’t see ourselves as touchers; we are facilitators.” (Paige, 1999; Guidera, 1997).

A sample of the initiatives of Empower Baltimore will be presented to illustrate the job creation and the support for businesses that characterize the EZ philosophy. In each case, the EZ creates programs that can support the goals and decisions of the six Village Centres–the infrastructure designed to help those communities take control. These initiatives include Customized Services for Workforce Development and a loans program. In addition Empower Baltimore has been involved with a few efforts directed specifically toward children and youth, including after school programs and youth crime diversion. Much of the work, however, is planned and implemented within the communities connected with the Village Centres.

Customized Services for Workforce Development

Customized Services for Workforce Development is designed to help businesses find and train new staff or upgrade skills of current employees. In providing this service the EZ also creates job opportunities for residents and helps residents develop specific marketable skills that will lead to a job in the business given these services. Empower Baltimore provides assessment of workforce needs; analysis of specific job skills; funding for new employee training; screening of potential employees; skill enhancement for existing employees and employer specific on-the-job training. These services are available for any business in the

area that has full-time jobs, with benefits, to fill. Communities within the EZ can use this service to support businesses in their area and find jobs for their residents. (Empower Baltimore, 1998)

An example of the kind of job and job skills development that has arisen from this approach is a program to train EZ residents for laboratory jobs in the high-tech sector that the state is counting on to fuel economic growth in the next decade. With neither a science nor technology background, many East Baltimore residents are excluded from these types of jobs of the future. Empower Baltimore developed a joint venture involving Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore City College and the potential employer to screen, select and train nine EZ residents for laboratory jobs. The employer will also receive $3,000 tax credits on the wages paid to program trainees who are hired. Once participants have completed the training and passed the final exam, they will be employed as lab technicians for $20,000 a year. Even more important, a whole new career track is opened to them. (Guidera, 1997)

Loan Programs

Empowerment Zone funding is used to promote economic opportunities including small business expansion, entrepreneurial initiatives, job creation, and business retention within the Zone. Empower Baltimore has designated the Community Lending Group, which is an affiliate of the Development Credit Fund, Inc. to manage the Empowerment Zone Finance Vehicle Track Loan Fund. Loans from the $1.5 million revolving fund are available for periods of one to ten years with flexible payment plans and favorable rates of interest. In addition, the Community Lending Group works cooperatively with other lending and loan servicing organizations to provide financial and technical assistance to small businesses within the Zone. Communities within the Zone can utilize this program to meet specific local goals in keeping, expanding or attracting businesses to their area.

Child and Youth Oriented Activities

Empower Baltimore has partnered with the Baltimore School Board to provide funds to individual schools for after school programs. In a matching funds approach, schools and communities could design a program and apply for the funds. After school programs can play an important role in keeping children safe and constructively involved during hours that may not be supervised. In addition, it keeps children engaged with activities that may build skills and relationships that will keep them included within school and later work. Again, there is community opportunity to plan and implement these programs.

Within the EZ, an innovative approach to dealing with juvenile crime has been developed that draws on strengths and supports within the community. Vandalism is often considered an entry level crime–the first step into illegal behavior. If youth can be diverted from the juvenile justice system and prevented from going into more serious criminal activity it goes a long way toward preventing the ultimate social exclusion in adulthood–incarceration. This exclusion comes not only in the form of physical removal from the general society, but with long lasting effects that continue this exclusion. It is difficult for individuals with a criminal record to obtain jobs and those convicted of a felony crime[12] lose voting rights for life. For the neighborhoods in most of the EZ in Baltimore, such an approach is particularly important due to the high percentage of African-American youth living in these neighborhoods. This group of youth are at particular risk of being involved with the Juvenile Justice system. While African-American youths constitute 15 % of the 10 to 17 year olds, they account for 26% of juvenile arrests. Perhaps more striking is the fact that 41% of those detained as delinquents are African-American. (Rasberry, 1999) Within the EZ,

12. In the United States crimes are classified at two levels—minor crimes are misdemeanors and more serious crimes are felonies

there is a program where video cameras are used to catch youth committing acts of vandalism. Community members help identify the youth involved in the activity. The youth, however, are not turned over to the Juvenile Justice system. Instead, resources within the community are used to work with these young people to help them avoid further criminal activity. In this way, the community works to prevent potential isolation for its youth and at the same time enhances the quality of life for all community members by working to reduce crime.

Baltimore's Plan for Children and Families

While the Empowerment Zone activities help support the development of communities to support children and youth, Baltimore also has a major initiative with a specific focus on children, youth and families.

The Family League of Baltimore City, (a private, non-profit organization) is the designated governance entity for children and family services. As the local management board (a structure developed in the state of Maryland to allow for more community control in the administration of programs for children and families), it is charged with developing and overseeing a comprehensive system of services for families and children in Baltimore City. The initial step in this process was the development of a set of six Results for Children and Families which describe what outcomes Baltimore wants for its children and families. In addition, 23 Indicators have been established which will be used to measure progress on impacting the Results. One of the primary functions of the Family League is to develop a critical mass of energy and investment in moving the measures related to the Indicators.

A strong partner in this process is the Safe and Sound Campaign. This city-wide planning and action effort directed at making children "safe and sound" is one of five urban initiatives funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Safe and Sound Campaign has developed five major strategies, which when implemented, will bring substantial investment to the six Results.

Both efforts were developing goals, outcomes and plans through a process that involved significant community input. Wisely, in Baltimore, these two efforts were brought together with coordination through the Family League of Baltimore City to develop one set of goals, plans and data collection and reporting efforts.

The vision for Baltimore City is that all initiatives and service delivery programs directed at family and children will fit within the framework of the six Results, which are:

- Children live in nurturing families
- Children enter school ready to succeed
- Children and young adults are educated
- Children and their families are healthy, with youth avoiding high-risk behaviors
- Children live in safe and supportive communities and neighborhoods
- Children's families are self-reliant.

These goals all contribute to factors that can alleviate long-term social exclusion of children and youth. Again, these goals reflect a broad-based, integrated and community rooted approach, rather than a piecemeal set of efforts directed at any one specific problem or issue. Healthy communities are seen as a

key to supporting and nurturing children and youth. From these six goals, a set of 23 key indicators were developed and baseline data gathered on these key indicators. A series of action plans have been developed to address these goals.

The twenty-two key indicators for Baltimore, broken down into health, education and social issues are:

- prenatal care
- pre-term births
- low birth-weight births
- infant mortality
- teen births
- rate of child and adolescent substance abuse
- school readiness
- third grade reading levels
- school attendance rates
- school-age children's use of time
- young adults' use of time
- poverty rate
- homelessness in children and families
- high school program completion
- unemployment rate
- placement of children and youth out of home
- child abuse and neglect
- child and adolescent adverse effects injuries
- juvenile crime
- juvenile violent crime
- juvenile violent death rate
- exposure to crime/victimisation.

These efforts have just begun and there is only historical and baseline data. Thus the effects of the initiatives described in this paper are yet to be documented in relation to the key indicators.

One important recognition of the effectiveness of Baltimore's planning and data efforts related to children and families is Baltimore being chosen as one of thirteen communities in the United States for Vice President Gore's Boost4Kids initiative. Boost4Kids Partners (the communities and state and federal agencies) will work to achieve better opportunities and outcomes for children by working to cut bureaucratic rules and regulations that prevent communities from effectively using resources and programs to meet the needs of their citizens. Boost4Kids will help communities measure results; find ways to pool administrative savings from discretionary grant programs to use for improving outcomes; streamline administration and provide greater flexibility to communities in administering grant funds; address barriers in legislation and regulation at all levels and maximise the use of resources for children and families. Communities were chosen for Boost4Kids through a competitive nomination process. Baltimore was chosen as a partner that had the existing mechanisms to implement this effort and to teach other communities about successful approaches.

These city-wide efforts, however, do not mean one approach to obtaining these goals for the whole city. Neighbourhoods are actively engaged in planning and developing the actions within their own communities. Data on the 23 core indicators of children's health and well-being were collected not only city-wide, but also baseline data and ongoing collection of data are broken down by neighbourhood. Safe and Sound, for example, invited up to 15 neighbourhoods in Baltimore, based on data of these core indicators, to participate in community-based planning. Up to eight of the communities responding will receive planning grants, technical assistance and support to develop their own local strategies for implementing the Safe and Sound family support program. Finally, six of those communities will receive implementation grants. The funding of these neighbourhood efforts is a collaborative effort as well with Family League of Baltimore City supplying funds for the planning grants and United Way of Central Maryland providing resources with other partners for the implementation of neighbourhood-based service delivery.

The Family League of Baltimore City also supports community development by serving as a grants clearinghouse. This process helps get information to community organisations about grant opportunities, co-ordinates applications among interested organisations, serves as a research and technical assistance resource and thus helps increase funding coming into Baltimore City to better serve and support children and families.

As already noted, the Baltimore's Results effort is focused on outcomes and sees planning as a data-driven process. (Baltimore Data Collaborative, 1998; Baltimore Data Collaborative, 1999) One barrier for many local community planning and development efforts for children and families is the lack of data that relates to the specific area or neighbourhood in question. Much Federal and state data focuses only on state, city or county level units. Other data may relate to Census tracts and sometimes postal codes (ZIP codes), but these externally imposed geographic designations often do not correspond to organic communities and neighbourhoods. The Family League of Baltimore in partnership with the Safe and Sound Campaign of Baltimore and the Maternal and Child Health Community Health Science Consortium of the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health established the Baltimore City Data Collaborative in 1998. Other participating organisations include the Baltimore City Health Department, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Urban Institutes National Neighbourhood Indicators Project. The Data Collaborative tracks the 23 core indicators to monitor progress toward the six goals or results developed for Baltimore. With the Family League of Baltimore City, the Data Collaborative provides status reports about progress toward Baltimore's Six Results for Children and Family. A web page provides city-wide summary data, but also provides the support needed by individual communities within the city with community-specific geo-mapped data and listings of community

resources. Thus, the support for local community planning has been built and reflects an unusual level of commitment and concrete support for allowing these community planning efforts to blossom.

Overall conclusions

The initial discussions of social exclusion which began in France in the 1970s were focussed on disabled and seriously marginalised persons. However, the current debate has expanded this group considerably and has become more concerned with features of modern life which broadly speaking threaten to exclude people from citizenship and deny them certain rights. This analytic framework fits well with other contemporary discussions of social exclusion such as that developed by Sen (1992, 1999) using a capabilities model. By extension, social exclusion for children is best understood in terms of a rights based approach stemming from the UN Charter on the Rights of the Child.

A rights based approach raises a large number of questions not only about the form of services and support that must be provided to prevent a denial of rights but also in terms of how systems are evaluated. For instance, a utilitarian approach to education would promote education in ways which would raise the sum total of achievement in the education system and thus would target resources on those best placed to make use of them. In contrast, a rights based approach calls for maximising the potential of each child irrespective of the contribution to the overall economy. Thus policies aimed to combat social exclusion should change the focus of evaluation criteria from one based on averages to one relying in addition on the distribution of access and achievements. Such an approach would go beyond human capital formation to include the psychological and social resources underpinning social and cultural capital to sum to what has been described as identity capital - the key protector against adult social exclusion in modern society.

Much work remains to be done to elaborate on all of these different factors, but it is clear from the two case studies described from the UK and the USA that a start has been made. A start that recognises the complexities of the processes that can lead to social exclusion and the innovations and creative energy that need to be put into communities to help to prevent it.

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