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Briana Bardos

University of Connecticut - Storrs, brianabardos@comcast.net

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MicroConsignment as Magic or Sleight-of-Hand: How Social Entrepreneurship Affects Women's Political and Economic Participation in Guatemala

Briana Bardos

Primary Thesis Advisor: Professor David Richards

Secondary Thesis Advisor: Professor Jennifer Sterling-Folker

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Much research has been done on increasing the amount of female participation in both the formal economy and political sphere across the globe. This project seeks to go beyond this idea and analyze whether economic empowerment leads to increased political participation. By analyzing a specific type of empowerment, social entrepreneurship, through the specific lens of Soluciones Comunitarias' MicroConsignment Model, my paper looks to explore if and how women in Guatemala are affected by this model politically and economically. Existing work in the field of women's social movements makes clear the linkage between social mobilization and positive outcomes, such as increased development, capability, and capacity. This research aims to look at the interim step (indirect linkage) between social movements and positive outcomes for women by studying the relationship between women's exposure to social entrepreneurship programs -- via one type of social mobilization -- and the level of women's political participation and participation in the formal economic sector. I hypothesize that women who have been exposed to social entrepreneurship will be more likely to engage in political participation and will be more likely to be involved in the formal economic sector; ultimately, my hypotheses were proven correct. Through synthesis of the literature and data analysis of sixty surveys completed by Guatemalan women, I illuminated the effects of the model beyond its intended purpose to a broader political and economic level.

Introduction

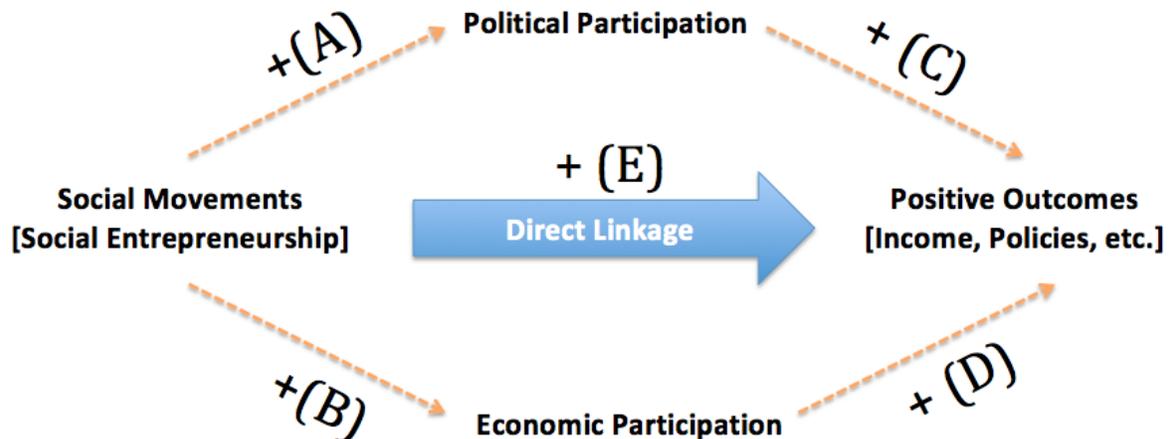
The Millennium Development Goals are eight international development goals that were established following the Millennium Summit of the United Nations in 2000 that create an agreed upon blueprint by all the world's countries and leading developmental institutions (United Nations 2015). Goal 3's mission is as follows: " [To] Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women." Many countries continue to have persistent gender inequality and women continue to face discrimination in access to work and economic assets, as well as limited participation in government (United Nations 2015). Studies have shown that empowering women reduces poverty and stimulates growth in the formal economic sector (i.e. Revenga and Shetty 2012).

Existing work in the field of women's social movements makes clear the linkage between social mobilization and positive outcomes, such as increased development, capability, and capacity (Cueva Beteta 2006; Htun and Weldon 2012). A gap in the present research aims to look at the interim step, or indirect linkage, between social movements and positive outcomes for women by studying the relationship between women's exposure to social entrepreneurship program -- via one type of social mobilization -- and the level of women's political participation and participation in the formal economic sector, as depicted in Chart 1. This image represents the direct linkage known and discussed in the present literature: social movements lead to increased incomes, new policies, and various other positive outcomes. The dotted orange arrows depict the lesser-explored path: that social movements leads to increased political and economic participation, which then leads to overall positive outcomes.

The start and endpoints remain the same; what is expanded upon is what could go on during that progression.

Chart 1

Interim Step, or Indirect Linkage, Between Social Movements and Positive Outcomes



This paper looks at paths (A) and (B) in the chart by exploring one type of empowerment, social entrepreneurship, to begin to fill the gap in this literature and analyze whether through this model of economic empowerment there is increased political participation and formal economic sector participation.

Scholars have written on how the increased number of women in politics creates a sense of dignity for other women (Schwindt-Bayer 2010). It has been shown by Soluciones Comunitarias¹ that the MicroConsignment Model provides impoverished women with an opportunity to improve their health, nutrition, and economic situations with an income (Van

¹ Soluciones Comunitarias (SolCom) is a Guatemalan-owned social enterprise established through the work of Community Enterprise Solutions. SolCom is a financially and administratively sustainable organization that leads the implementation and growth of the MicroConsignment Model (MCM).

Kirk 2010). There is a need for more varied research in this field to investigate the subordinated, to focus on gendered interactions, and to explore the standpoints of women, especially in developing countries (Buzzanell 1994). Ahl (2006) speaks to this by identifying the need for new research directions in the field to capture richer elements of female entrepreneurship. She states that there has been a lack of explicit female analysis in the field. She also includes data to support that women's entrepreneurship is mainly important as an instrument for economic growth. This is directly related to my hypothesis, as I will be analyzing whether or not the involvement of these female entrepreneurs increases their formal economic participation (whether they pay taxes, specifically) as well as their economic growth. This method of empowerment, though its main objective is to build business opportunities for very poor women, could even further impact the political and economic sectors through female participation (Burand 2012).

Though models such as microcredit and microfinance have been praised, the search for effective economic empowerment strategies is far from over (Chatnani 2010). To analyze these components further, I have chosen to look specifically at one country, Guatemala. Guatemala is a Latin American country with a history of gross gender inequality (Jones 2009). Guatemala's experience is not exceptional among the Latin American countries; lessons learned from Guatemala have a very good likelihood for being fruitful in understanding the progressions of other countries, making the results of these findings widely applicable in the developing world of Latin America (Jaquette 1989; Schwindt-Bayer 2010).

The goal of this paper is to delve into a model of social entrepreneurship, via the MicroConsignment Model, a lesser-known model compared to its predecessors of Microfinance

and Micro Franchising, through a mixed-methods analysis focused on survey research. The objective of this paper is to investigate a potential method for female empowerment that also leads to greater formal economic and political participation. This paper will first present the relevant bodies of literature, leading to the presentation of my hypotheses. Here, I included a large portion of discussion surrounding Guatemala, the case study of this research. I next discuss the methodology used in my analysis. I discuss at length the original survey instrument I created for this project, as well as discuss the ethnographic elements to my research. I then examine the data I collected, followed by the results of my analysis and a discussion of these results. This paper concludes with an overview of my findings and a discussion of future research in this field.

Relevant Literature

In order to fully understand the methodology and importance of this research, four bodies of literature must be explored. These literatures are women and empowerment, participation, social entrepreneurship, and Guatemala. As this research delves into the indirect linkage between social movements and positive outcomes for women through the MicroConsignment model's effects, it is important to understand not only the social movements via empowerment literature, but also political participation and economic factors as a body of work. Beyond this, an understanding of Guatemala's past is critical to understanding the research design and methodology, as the study of Guatemala is for various reasons rooted in the literature due to past and present factors.

Women and Empowerment

Among the poor, voicelessness and powerlessness are ubiquitous and constantly

influence every part of their lives. Poverty's effects move beyond just financial status and leak into involvement and participation of those who are poor. This is why there is a need for empowerment among those of this socioeconomic class. Empowerment is broadly defined as "the expansion of freedom and choice and action to shape one's life" (Naayan 2005, 4). Empowerment is extremely important as, oftentimes, the lack of financial resources limits this ability to have freedom and choice and action, as these constraints force a particular set of options in order to survive.

Female empowerment, in particular, has specific characteristics that do not apply to the broader definition of empowerment. As stated by Nussbaum (2000), "Women in much of the world lack support for fundamental functions of a human life" (1). Because of the severity of inequality, efforts at empowering women must be especially cognizant of household-level implications and often involves the systematic transformation of patriarchal structures (Naayan 2005). Nussbaum's human capabilities approach further explains how unequal social and political circumstances make it so that women do not have equal human capabilities, and that women in general lack support that would allow them to lead lives that are fully human (2001). Due to these key differences, Kabeer (1999) defines empowerment, in the female context, a bit differently; she defines female empowerment as, "The expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" (437). This is where the importance of instrumentalist forms of advocacy comes in; this form combines the desire for the end-goal of female empowerment with desirable multiplier effects to create even more expansive and powerful outcomes for women through means of empowerment (Kabeer 1999).

In feminist scholarship, the idea of “gender ideologies” is present that constitute belief systems of separate spheres, therefore creating a social dichotomy of masculinity and femininity that are negotiated in various areas: work, family, and organizational and social contexts (Buzzanell 1994). There is a growing body of literature that has documented the gendered character of internal labor markets, interpersonal relations, jobs, and within work units (Martin 1992). An extremely critical point made by Burns, Schlozman, and Verba (2001) is the impact of organizational affiliation on political participation. References are made to the organizations themselves as important actors, engaging participants in various activities and causing various outcomes that are related to increased political participation. Non-political organization involved allow women, and men alike, to develop civic skills, increase exposure to political messages and discussion which increases interest and political knowledge, provide leadership opportunities, and give members a place to exercise their voice in organization matters.

The literature calls for the need to explore core feminist issues, including women’s economic and political oppression and women’s power to make change collectively (Buzzanell 1994). Further delving into these organizational elements and understanding how they influence women and societal structure is a crucial point in this research. A particularly interesting pattern is that the process of organizational involvement is driven largely by socioeconomic factors, as women whose family income is higher also tend to participate more (Burns et al. 2001).

Female Participation

When one looks at the spectrum of political participation, running for office is the facet

at the most involved and difficult end, as it is the ultimate form of participation. Lawless and Fox (2005) investigate the reasons why women do not run for political office, thus maintaining the significant gender gap between the number of men and women representatives. First, aspiring candidates are more likely to seek office when they face favorable political and structural circumstances. Next, citizens with relatively high levels of political activism and interests might be the most likely to emerge as candidates. Third, in U.S., women and men are almost equally likely to participate; for example, women outnumber men among registered voters, women have voted in higher proportions than men since 1986, and women are now more likely than men to attend public meetings and rallies, sign petitions, and write to elected government officials.

Though Lawless and Fox's work specifically pertains to the United States, I still find that it contains relevancy and importance in understanding female participation. Considering there is such a large gender gap in the United States, a country that has significantly less patriarchy than a country like Guatemala (though it is definitely still inherent), it shines light onto this subject and shows it is a global phenomenon, not isolated to one country. I will use the definition of political participation presented by Burns, Schlozman, and Verba (2001) which reads: "activity that has the intent or effect of influencing government action either directly, by affecting the making or implementation of public policy, or indirectly, by influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (4). This includes, but is not limited to: calling or writing public officials, contributing monetarily for a campaign, volunteering to canvas for a candidate, putting a bumper sticker on your car, etc. (Burns et al. 2001). The formal economic sector will be defined as work within the constraints for the government with a set pay,

discounting work done within the home and on things such as the black market (International Labour Office 2013).

The literature also shows the importance of having women be a part of the legislature. A woman having the right to run for office is only the first step; if women are not actually running, there is an intrinsic problem that needs to be rectified. Vega and Firestone (1995) examine how gender affects legislative behavior and what significance these effects have for the substantive representation of women. Ultimately, they confirm that female legislators have distinctive legislative patterns that portend greater representation of women and women's issues. Representation, as defined in this article, is the acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them. They also foresee a continuation in the increase of substantive representation of women's interests. Here, though it is based on the United States, relevancy exists because it examines the relationship between women's voting and women's issues and discusses how this is important.

Social Entrepreneurship

Current research articles on women's entrepreneurship have a tendency to recreate the idea of women as being secondary to men and of women's businesses being less significant or a complement to those of men (Ahl 2006). This idea can be expanded and applied to social entrepreneurship in the need for a more specific addressing of this issue. Dees (2007) explores whether the concept of social entrepreneurship has the potential to create sustainable and scalable impact in areas which government efforts have been ineffective. Social entrepreneurs embrace pragmatic private initiatives to improve social conditions. They may be technically 'charities' or 'nonprofits,' but ultimately they are entrepreneurs who move comfortably across

sector boundaries to achieve the best sustainable impact. Social entrepreneurs are “swimming against the current of cultural assumptions and biases” (Dees 2007, 28).

Social entrepreneurship is key in increasing the opportunities for women at the base of the economic pyramid (Burand 2012). Burand specifically refers to the MicroConsignment model’s method of offering investment-ready networks that are financially and operationally sustainable and measurement success of networks holistically and transparently, through financial and developmental lenses. I conceptualize social entrepreneurship as the process of empowering participants to create innovative, scalable and sustainable social impact through a MicroConsignment Model (MCM), specific to Soluciones Comunitarias. The MCM, designed in 2003 through the leadership of Soluciones Comunitarias and Community Enterprise Solutions, creates “access to health care-related goods and services in isolated rural communities through village access campaigns” (Social Entrepreneurship Corps 2014). The key to the MCM strategy is to give local women opportunities to become entrepreneurs by selling goods and services in their community using consignment methods, providing a scalable, replicable, and sustainable method of social mobilization (Social Entrepreneurship Corps 2014).

Greg Van Kirk (2010), Co-Founder and Executive Director of Community Enterprise Solutions and creator of the MicroConsignment Model, discusses the strengths of the MCM in his article. He discusses how this model provides impoverished women with an opportunity to improve their health, nutrition, and economic situations with an income. Van Kirk states that this model delivers essential products and services at affordable prices to the rural poor in the developing world. MCM entrepreneurs provide solutions to health problems, save families money, help individuals increase their productivity, and help protect the environment, as well

as offer solutions to the population at the 'base of the pyramid' through creating a highly scalable local distribution network to diagnose and address the many obstacles present. Van Kirk thought that consignment was the answer. With MicroConsignment, a supplier gives a product to a retailer, who then sells it. After the sale is completed, the retailer reimburses the seller, keeping a commission; therefore, the risk taken is by the supplier, not the retailer (Rosenberg 2011). Microfinance, for example, may have higher repayment rates by borrowers (approximate 95%), but it does not translate into profits as advertised; a survey conducted showed that the social entrepreneurship groups using microfinance that were poverty-focused with a commitment to financial sustainability cover only about 70% of their full costs (Morduch 1999). Van Kirk (2010) explains the significant difference, stating:

In a microcredit-financed model like microfranchising, the entrepreneur first buys the products on credit and then sells them. She then uses her sales revenue to pay back the loan, and ideally buys more products to sell after taking out her profit. When she sells, everyone is happy: the financing/distributing organization achieves its mission and earns revenues, villagers get what they need, and the woman can help support her family. But when she doesn't sell, the villagers are in the same place, the organization does not achieve its mission, and the woman is stuck with both inventory and debt (104)

This is the differentiating factor that sets part MicroConsignment from microfinance and microcredit, and why it presents an important opportunity for investigation into its empowering nature.

The Guatemalan Context

The synthesis of these various literatures ultimately leads to the illumination of a space for the research I conducted in Guatemala. Craske (1999) states that paid labor offers opportunities for empowerment, specifically in regards to financial independence, and can have an impact on gender relations, but these opportunities are frequently private and individual,

making it difficult to generalize and develop a model for women's empowerment from these experiences. My research takes this claim head-on and looks to see if it is possible to find a potential system (social entrepreneurship, specifically MCM) that creates this empowerment and affects women both politically and financially.

Education, work, and politics are three necessary components to understanding the importance of curbing the issues surrounding women in Guatemala today. Regarding education, dropout rates are as high as 81% in rural areas and 51% in urban areas; beyond this, only 17 of every 100 girls complete primary school, and in rural areas 66% of them drop out of school before completing the third grade (Montenegro 2002). The high levels of illiteracy and women's disadvantageous situation in terms of human development constitute a serious limitation to women's access to politics. Even decades after the Democratic revolution of the 1980s, Guatemala is ranked as one of the lowest in terms of political representation (Schwindt-Bayer 2010). Data from The World Bank (2014) shows that women currently hold 13% of seats in the national parliamentary, putting Guatemala at the lower end of the spectrum of female political representation.²

Beyond the higher-levels of political participation, which include running for or being elected to office, in Guatemala female political participation is negligible in the state beyond voting (Montenegro 2007). There is a significant statistical difference in turnout between men and women: 82.2% of men indicated that they voted, compared to only 75.2% of women, which is about the average of most Latin American countries (Azpuru 2012). Aviel (1981) has a

² As of 2008, Guatemala was ranked the third lowest country in Latin America in terms of percentage of legislature that is female with only 12% of the lower house being women (Schwindt-Bayer 2010).

bit of a different approach and writes a bit inconsistently with Montenegro's idea of 'negligible' participation beyond voting. Aviel (1981) argues that women attempt to influence public officials and ask politicians for favors as a way of political participation and also discusses the influence of organizational activity. Although organizational affiliation does not translate automatically into political participation, it does serve as a potential source for recruitment. While membership in religious organizations or doing charitable work may not be considered political either by outside observers or by the women themselves, it can have important political implications. This idea of organizational affiliation, especially religious participation, is something that is crucial to understanding the true reach of women's political involvement. Understanding the connection between this and political participation is crucial for comprehension for the political schema of women in Guatemala and their true political reach.

Craske (1999) states that the numbers of economically active women more than tripled in the period of 1960-1990. However, countries with large rural sectors tend to have lower female participation rates in Central America; specifically, the lowest recorded rate is in Guatemala, at 15.6% (Craske 1999). Many men in Central and Latin America disapprove of women working outside the home, stating that it will lessen their commitment to the family as it stems beyond the parameters of their traditionally defined roles. Due to the separation of public spheres, work and political activity, both considered public pursuits, have been seen as related and masculine occupations. In terms of work, female labor is not always recognized, which lowers their ability to participate. In Guatemala, women's participation in public affairs is very recent.

In looking at Guatemala's specific case, the role of indigenous groups in the overall society is crucial to full-comprehension of the situation at hand. Particularly indigenous women, though women in general as well, were completely ignored during the first ten years (1985-1995) of democratic transition, though they are needed as voters (Lopez 2006). In Sololá during 2004, discrimination against women suffered a major blow when indigenous communities, for the first time, chose a woman leader for the position of Indigenous Mayor, based on her leadership skills and commitment. Indigenous mayors have always been ad honorem positions that demand accountability and integrity (Lopez 2006). This represents a turning point in the mindset and attitude in the communities with regards to the participation of women. It is a step forward against the discrimination towards women leaders in indigenous communities. It is also an encouraging example of how Mayan women's determination and capacity can break new grounds in the face of adversity (Lopez 2006). Below, Table 1 depicts the number of indigenous women who have been voted in over an 18-year period. Guatemala has twenty-one different Mayan groups making up an estimated 51% of the population, making them the only indigenous culture that constitutes a majority of the population in a Central American republic (UNHCR 2014). The fact that these women are hardly being at all represented yet make up a majority of the population is something that calls for further investigation.

Table 1

Summary: Results of the last five municipal elections

Year	No. of Municipalities	Indigenous Majors (men)	Indigenous Majors (women)
1985	325	59	0
1990	300	80	0
1995	300	62	0
1999	330	93	0
2003	331	111	1

Source: Reports by the Electoral Supreme Court and the Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation's monitoring of the 1999 and 2003 electoral processes.

Reprinted from "Indigenous Women and Governance in Guatemala" by M. L. Mejia Lopez, 2006, Canadian Foundation for the Americas.

Hypotheses

Ultimately, the literature presented leads me to the following two hypotheses:

H₁: Women who have been exposed to social entrepreneurship will be more likely to engage in political participation.

H₂: Women who have been exposed to social entrepreneurship are more likely to be involved in the formal economic sector.

My first hypothesis requires me to analyze the difference in political participation between those who are involved in social entrepreneurship and those who are not. In a country like Guatemala, where the income of women is much lower and discrimination much higher, women's participation in politics is not encouraged. However, with exposure to new norms and ideology through social entrepreneurship, political participation could increase due to various

components of social entrepreneurship, including networks, social capital, and increased sense of independence. Singelmann's (1975) work depicted how sustained participation, specifically in his articles' case campesino movements, has contributed to increased politicization of members. With this in mind, there is significant reason to believe a social mobilization effort of Soluciones Comunitarias could have a similar effect.

My second hypothesis involves looking at how former social entrepreneurs have become involved in the formal economic sector. This is known to be true in an isolated case, as one of the former entrepreneur groups created their own social enterprise called Soluciones Comunitarias (the group that I am studying), which will earn the equivalent of \$300,000 this year, involving more than 100 Guatemalans in selling the product across the nation (Baverman 2013). Therefore, this expansion of the outcomes of the SolCom may be somewhat common, creating more participation in the formal sector. If there is an organization to be studied to see if this model can work or is working, SolCom's model is the one.

Data Collection and Methodology

Empowerment approaches, as explained by Naayan (2005), work in various facets to ultimately create a better-off and stronger economically and politically:

Empowerment approaches can strengthen good governance, which in turn enhances growth prospects. When citizens are engaged, exercise voice, and demand accountability, government performance improves and corruption is harder to sustain. Citizen participation can also build consensus in support of difficult reforms needed to create a positive investment climate and induce growth (3).

To further investigate female empowerment, my research delves specifically into one form of social mobilization: social entrepreneurship. My research looks into the relationship between this form of mobilization, political participation, and economic participation, which begets the

question: what is the effect of social entrepreneurship on political and economic participation?

My research design exhibits both inductive and deductive elements. On the deductive side, I have read quite a lot of literature that has led me to this research question and these constructs. On the inductive side, however, I am looking at the indirect linkage that has not yet been investigated. The data I have collected will contribute to this theoretical concept. These two research approaches combine to create an in-depth analysis of social entrepreneurship, political participation, and economic participation combining existing frameworks with new models of analysis. I will be using Guatemala as a specific case study to look at this linkage, while also synthesizing ethnographic information and survey research data to more completely understanding the connection (or lack of connection) between these constructs. Within my research, my independent variable is being apart of social entrepreneurship, specifically being involved with and, at a minimum, trained by Soluciones Comunitarias, where dependent variable is the level of political and economic participation measured. The potential relationships between these variables are:

1. Social entrepreneurship leads to increased political and economic participation
2. Social entrepreneurship does not lead to increased political and economic participation
3. Social entrepreneurship leads to increased political participation, but not increased economic participation
4. Social entrepreneurship leads to increased economic participation, but not increased political participation

The analyzed survey results will indicate the relationship between the two variables, which will deem importance in determining if social entrepreneurship, specifically the MCM, is useful in political and economically empowering women.

Original Survey Instrument

As presented in my literature review, past scholars' work and research done has led me to two hypotheses:

H₁: Women who have been exposed to social entrepreneurship will be more likely to engage in political participation.

H₂: Women who have been exposed to social entrepreneurship are more likely to be involved in the formal economic sector.

To test these hypotheses, I created a twenty-four-question survey. The survey models the AmericasBarometer Guatemala survey, one of the activities of the Latin American Public Opinion Project (2012). The AmericasBarometer survey is an "effort by LAPOP to measure democratic values and behaviors in the Americas using national probability samples of voting-age adults" (LAPOP 2014). This made for a good baseline, as many of the question formats that AmericasBarometer uses, I paralleled in my own survey as they have been proven to be effective question frames. Ultimately, the questions I included in my survey were both from the U.S. literature and based on research I did specifically on Guatemala.

I also used research done by Dalton (2006) as a reference point for what elements of political participation needed to be included in the survey. Dalton discusses the need to analyze more than just voter turnout at elections. There is more of a transformation of citizenship norms and the patterns of political participation, as social modernization has altered the "calculus of participation." Table 2 depicts the results of two surveys on dimensions of democratic citizenship (the United States Citizenship, Involvement, Democracy (CID) Survey and General Society Survey (GSS)) and highlights actions that respondents considered "citizen duty" or action that made one an "engaged citizen." Table 2 is directly relevant to my survey, even

though the data is from the United States, as the methodology and the type of research is very similar to my own project. In my survey, I drew from Dalton the questions on whether or not participants voted in an election, have been or are active in voluntary groups, and choose products based on political reasons.

Table 3 depicts the correlation between citizenship norms and participation through the same two surveys. Ultimately, Dalton (2006) concludes that the trends in political activity represent changes in political action style beyond levels of participation. Again, the methodology and the types of questions here are very related to my personal survey, specifically: voted in election, worked for party, worked for campaign, donated money, contacted politician, contacted media, signed petition, demonstration, boycotted/bought product, visited website, etc. I used this table as a basis for my survey.

Table 2: Dimensions of Democratic Citizenship

Variable	CID			GSS	
	Citizen Duty	Engaged Citizen		Citizen Duty	Engaged Citizen
Report a crime	.84	.12	Vote in elections	.65	.17
Always obey the law	.77	.09	Never evade taxes	.65	-.01
Serve in the military	.64	.15	Serve in the military	.54	.07
Serve on a jury	.63	.32	Obey the law	.51	.10
Vote in elections	.56	.43	Keep watch on government	.51	.40
Form own opinions	.29	.47	Active in association	.39	.54
Support worse off	.16	.65	Choose products	.22	.59
Be active in politics	.15	.80	Understand others	.28	.59
Active in voluntary groups	.10	.84	Help worse off in world	-.12	.77
			Help worse off in America	.02	.77
Eigenvalue	2.56	2.37		1.95	2.37
Percent variance	28.5	25.8		19.5	23.7

Source: 2005 CID Survey and 2004 GSS; the order of dimensions in the GSS has been transposed to simplify comparison of both surveys.

Reprinted from "Citizenship norms and political participation in America: The good news is... the bad news is wrong," by R.J. Dalton, 2006, *The Center for Democracy*, 202.

Table 3: The Correlations Between Citizenship Norms and Participation

Activities	CID Survey		GSS Survey	
	Citizen Duty	Engaged Citizen	Citizen Duty	Engaged Citizen
<i>Voting/Elections</i>				
Voted in election	.11	.06	.25	-.04
Worked for party	-.03	.17	.13	.07
Worked for campaign	.01	.14	--	--
Donated money (GSS: any pol group)	.03	.18	.10	.20
<i>Contacting</i>				
Contacted politician	.02	.20	.18	.12
Contacted media	--	--	.02	.08
<i>Contentious Actions</i>				
Signed petition	-.01	.23	.09	.09
Lawful demonstration	-.15	.09	-.07	.23
Illegal demonstration	-.17	.09	--	--
<i>Consumer Action</i>				
Boycotted product	-.05	.319	.02	.18
Bought product	-.04	.18	--	--
<i>Internet Action</i>				
Visited Website	-.02	.21	--	--
Forward political Email	-.02	.14	--	--
Web Activity	-.06	.17	-.03	.16

Source: 2005 CID Survey; 2004 General Social Survey

Note: Table entries are Pearson correlation coefficients

Reprinted from "Citizenship norms and political participation in America: The good news is... the bad news is wrong," by R.J. Dalton, 2006, *The Center for Democracy*, 202.

There is not a significant amount of literature on how Guatemalans politically participate, so I mostly used Guatemalan political party websites to try and see what parties were doing and how citizens were getting involved. I also read about Latin America generally and applied those specific forms in conjunction with the general and U.S.-based political forms to create an extensive list of political participation forms. I also included a section where respondents could submit their own forms of political participation in the event I missed any elements when doing my research.

To properly administer the survey I designed in Guatemala, I applied for and received approval by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Connecticut (Protocol # H14-128). As explained earlier, Guatemala's history of gender inequality and an institutional patriarchal framework creates the perfect environment for studying this type of female empowerment. Guatemala fits well into my research design as the organization I studied, Soluciones Comunitarias, originated there and is the most established in the community. While there, I took field notes and observed various facets of the organization, from working on campaigns with female entrepreneurs to meeting with the president of SolCom and other staff and working on various consulting projects for SolCom. Survey respondents were a part of one of two groups—experimental or control. The control group was chosen using matched sampling, where the interviewers would choose women from the same region who were of a similar age. All of the participants were females over the age of eighteen.³ The general participant population ranged in income, though generally of lower socioeconomic status, generally uneducated, and Spanish speaking along with another dialect (though the survey was

only offered in Spanish).

A native Spanish speaker who worked for Soluciones Comunitarias translated the survey in country. It was read over by a non-native, though fluent, Spanish speaker who has been living in Guatemala for three years as well as by a native Guatemalan, both who worked for SolCom, to ensure that the translation was sound. SolCom tested ten surveys by interviewing ten Guatemalan women (Spanish teachers who work with SolCom and women from a local market) to make sure that the timing of the survey was appropriate and that there were no issues with translation of the oral consent form or question formatting. These surveys were not included in the final data used for this research.

The interview instrument was created to measure the differences in political participation between those who were involved with SolCom and those who were not, as well as determine the positive economic effects of being in SolCom versus those who were not involved. The interview process was estimated to take between ten and fifteen minutes, though ultimately the survey took approximately five minutes for non-SolCom women and eight minutes for women who were part of SolCom. The location of the interviews varied, though all interviews occurred in settings that offered sufficient privacy to the participants (i.e. homes, offices, and field sites).

The field coordinators of SolCom conducted the interviews. Each of the coordinators was bilingual, trained by SolCom, and trained by me in how to properly conduct the interviews. The training I provided allowed the coordinators to fully understand how to go through the consent form and the verbal consent process, how to administer the survey itself, how to answer any and all questions regarding the content of the survey, and how to properly handle

the filled-out surveys. Having the field coordinators conduct the interviews allowed the confidentiality and privacy of the participants to be as high as possible, as I do not know the identities of any of the respondents. Soluciones Comunitarias recruited the participants of this study, as their reputation and standing within the various Guatemalan communities was on a level in so that SolCom was a trusted and known organization that the women would feel comfortable with. This was an extremely important point for my design and for approval, as it was my hope that the women taking these surveys would feel comfortable enough that their answers would be honest and thoughtful. Ultimately, sixty women participated in the survey—thirty from the experimental group and thirty from the control group.⁴

Based on central limit theorem, a study of sixty participants will allow the data to be normally distributed. I will be using Stata to analyze the correlations between SolCom involvement and political and economic participation. I will support these findings with my experiences in Guatemala, as I worked for eight weeks as a consultant for Soluciones Comunitarias. These experiences will give me a bit more insight into the research findings and may help me shed light into why particular patterns are evident. I will be able to synthesize the quantitative data I collect with these experiences, as well as the relevant literature, to ultimately come to a conclusion or observe something for further study on the correlation between social entrepreneurship's MicroConsignment Model and political and economic participation.

While doing this research, I ran into various problems in the field that I did not predict.

³ The N for neither control nor experimental group in Appendix B is 30 participants as some surveys had to be rejected due to survey administrators having breached study rules (e.g., age threshold for inclusion) for certain respondents.

Though the NGO, Soluciones Comunitarias, had written a letter of support that was included in my University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board application, when I actually got to Guatemala this support seemed to waver. At first, the NGO wanted to change the content of my survey; they wanted to change most of the demographic questions, if not delete them entirely, for example stating that asking someone their race or ethnicity is offensive. I countered this by citing LAPOP (2012), as my demographic questions are parallel to their questions, which are quite effective, but this was not enough. Ultimately, after intervention by my university, they agreed to allow the survey to stay as it was approved and to conduct the research they said they would do.

There are some scholars who would question some of the methods I have chosen to use in my research design. Dogan and Pèlassy (1990) stated, “One can validly explain a particular case only on the basis of a general hypotheses. All the rest is uncontrollable, and so of no use” (121). This is a conventional view: that case studies need to be linked to well known ‘hypothetic-deductive’ models of explanation (Dogan and Pèlassy 1990). Though my case study is on the basis of general hypotheses, they are not well known; I have predicted these will work based off of the literature on political and economic participation, social entrepreneurship, and Guatemala. Flyvbjerg (2006) discusses the popular idea that many scholars ascribe to: that it is often difficult to summarize and develop general propositions and theories on the basis of specific case studies. However, I believe my research works beyond these criticisms as the blend of inductive and deductive research, specifically the synthesis of ethnography, case study, and survey research, uses three separate methodologies to account for a wide arrange of factors that will be explained in my conclusion.

In regards to some threat to validity and reliability within the survey, overall the survey questions were clear and, upon analysis, did not cause issues in computing regressions or when analyzing descriptive statistics. Of course, if I were to continue this research further, I would edit some questions; for example, I know that one of the questions for political participation I have on the survey is, “Involved with a charitable or religious organization.” This question is compound, as I am not able to say with certainty whether or not the women were involved with a charitable organization, religious organization, or both. Because of my ethnographic observations, I know that women in Guatemala, on average, are quite religious and involved with the church at a higher level compared to charitable organizations; the ethnographic research methodology works to create a full picture with the women involved being subjects, not objects, of the research (Gilbert 1996).

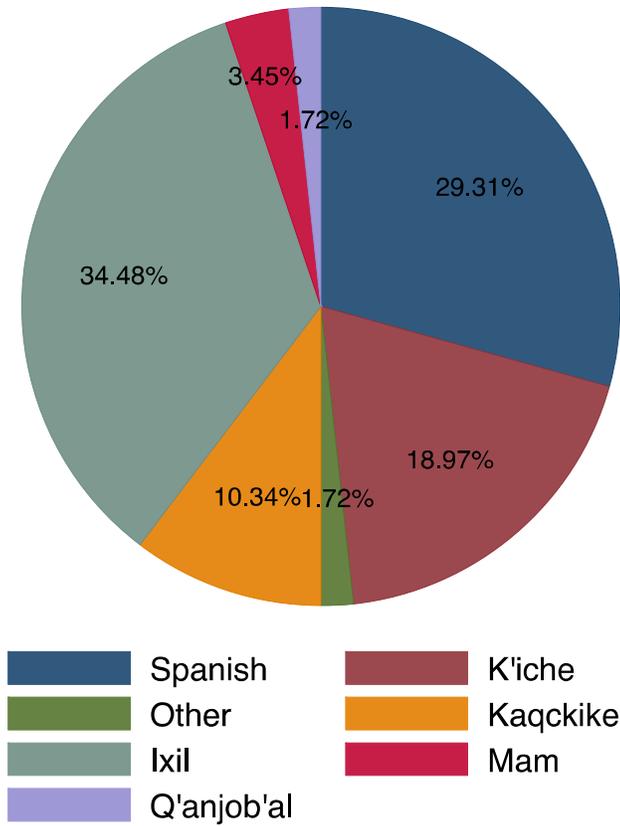
Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

Of the 58 women surveyed, 29.31% categorized themselves as Other Mayan, 24.14% categorized themselves Guatemalan, 18.97% categorized themselves K’iche, and the rest categorized themselves as Ladina, Kaqchikel, Mam, or Other. Over half of the women surveyed stated their primary language that was not originally listed, the largest group speaking Ixil at 34.48%. The second largest group followed by 29.31% of the women surveyed classifying their primary language as Spanish, which was listed on the original survey, which is depicted by Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Primary Language of Respondents



In regards to marital status, 50% were married or in a domestic partnership, 36.21% were single and never married, 8.62% were widowed, and 5.17% were separated. In regards to the United States, 44.83% of women had family in the United States either currently in the past, though no respondents had ever lived in the U.S. themselves. Education ranged from none to the U.S. equivalent of a master’s degree, or maestrado. The two levels of education that had the highest completion were primary and secondary school, or the U.S. equivalent of elementary and high school, at 27.59% and 24.14% respectively. The mean age of respondents was 35, ranging from 19 to 72.

Table 4**Descriptive Statistics for Selected Variables**

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Marital Status 1=Single, never married 2=Married or domestic partnership 3=Widowed 4=Divorced 5=Separated	58	1.88	.96	1	5
Lived in US 1=Yes 2=No	58	0	0	0	0
Family in US 1=Yes 2=No	58	.448	.502	0	1
Education 0=None 1=Pre-Primary 2=Primary 3=Middle 4=Diversified Secondary 5=Technical/Upper Secondary 6=Basic School Teacher Education 7=Secondary School Teacher Education 8=Licenciatura 9=Maestrado 10=Doctorado	58	3.40	2.00	0	9
Age	57	35.4	13.7	19	72

Preliminary Results

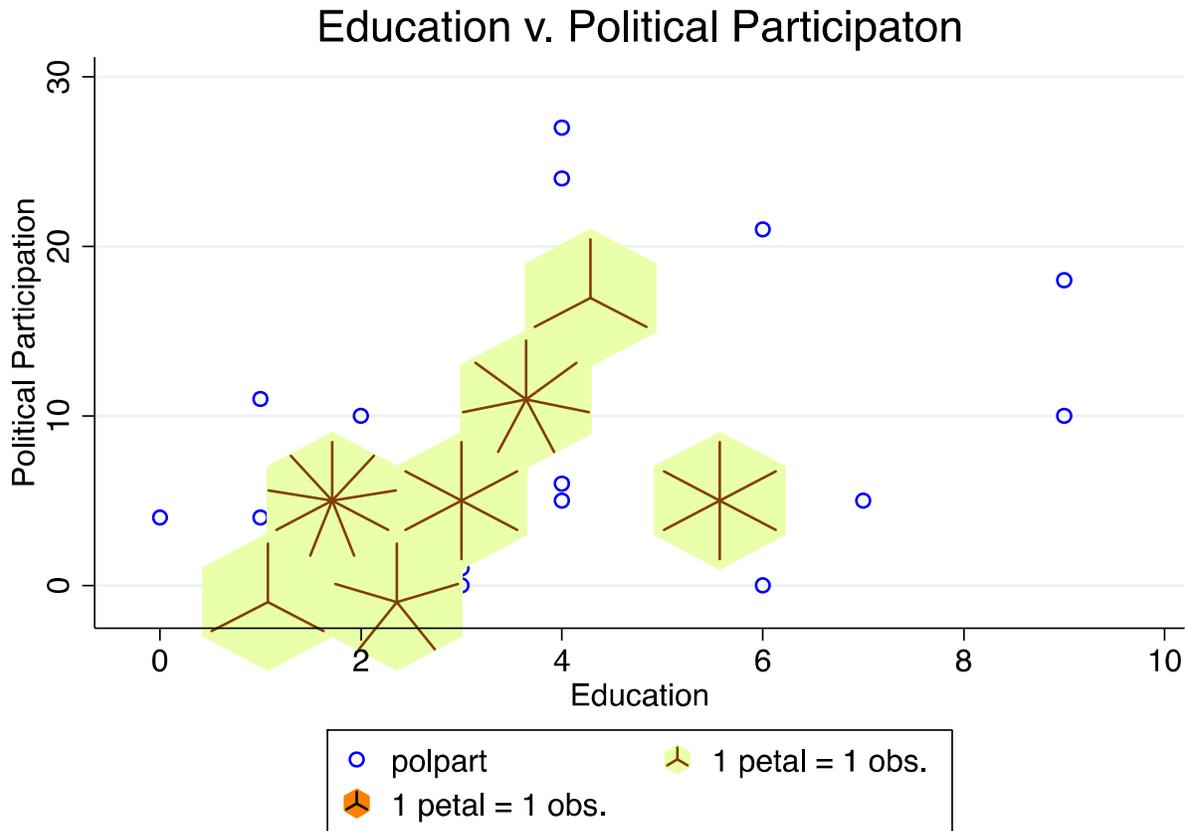
After doing some preliminary analyses on my data, I find that social entrepreneurship does lead to increased political participation in Guatemalan women. Each respondent received a political participation score between zero and forty-two, based on their responses to the survey question on political participation (see Appendix A, Question 9a). The respondents were asked their level of involvement on twenty-one different forms of political participation, including involvement in religious or charitable organizations, participation in demonstrations, and boycotting of products. The levels of participations were: Frequently, Sometimes, or Never.

Women in the experimental group (those who were involved with SolCom) had scores that ranged from 2 to 27, whereas women in the control group ranged from 0 to 12. On this

scale, respondents in the experiment group had a mean of 10.68 on political participation, where those who were not part of the MicroConsignment training program had a mean of 3.15. I then ran a two-sample t-test with unequal variances, which found the difference between those two means to be statistically significant at the .000 level (see Appendix B). This leads us to believe that economic training program is reliably associated with increased political participation, as hypothesized, and is supported by regression analyses that will be discussed in the following section.

Next, I wanted to look to see if there was any correlation between each respondent's score on political participation and the level of education they received. Figure 2 shows this relationship very clearly with the sunflower plot. The x-axis represents education level completed; each level of education was given a score zero to ten, each representing a level of schooling from none to a doctorate. The y-axis represents political participation, with possible scores ranging from zero to forty-two, as mentioned previously. As you can see from the graph, there is a peak in political participation at education level four, which is the equivalent of a high school level education. Figure 2 shows us that education and political participation are correlated in some way and this correlation is strong and statistically significant. It also seems that there is some sort of threshold effect occurring at the high school level of education; something about this level stirs political participation in this group of people. I further explore this relationship through regression analysis, which will be explained in the following section.

Figure 2



Regression and Analysis Results

In a logistic regression of three independent variables on the dependent variable of female political participation score with three independent variables (age, education level, and years involved with SolCom), demonstrated in Table 5, I find education to be statistically significant. Age is insignificant in the right direction and the variable “Years Involved in SolCom,” though close, is not quite significant.

are increased 1.6 times. My finding also highlights the importance of asking two questions on my survey instrument regarding involvement with SolCom. Had I only looked at involvement on with the “yes” or “no” question, I would have missed the correlation between years of involvement and likelihood of paying taxes. By only asking a question on years of involvement, I would not have found the relationship between political participation and SolCom involvement. By looking at both, I know the more full story.

Conclusion

This paper illuminates the impact that the MicroConsignment Model of social entrepreneurship has on political and economic participation; as predicted in my hypotheses, women who are involved with the MCM will have increased levels of political and formal economic sector participation. Van Kirk (2010) states:

They must be empowered through a mechanism that provides the support and time needed to overcome the barrier of high uncertainty and turn obstacles into opportunities (108).

Through my research, we see that these opportunities have the potential to move past the traditional realm of capital gain into an important part of the empowerment structure, political and economic engagement. The findings of this survey instrument support the findings of previous research on social entrepreneurship broadly, demonstrating the potential for increased empowerment (Burand 2012, Dees 2007). However, Chatnani (2010) writes the following on these other types of models:

In order to be effective, economic empowerment strategies must acknowledge that not all women have an entrepreneurial spirit. The information, resources, skills and technology base of poor women are very weak. However, they have an exceptional ability to optimize their frugal resources, and are certainly not unproductive. In fact, by virtue of sheer numbers and labor potential, they are one of the more productive segments of the population (29).

What I believe sets MicroConsignment apart is its understanding of Chatnani's point, discussed further in her article. These women are beyond capable of achieving success in the market and prove themselves to be productive; they just do not have the economic resources or educational background to create a structured, self-sustaining business with no infrastructure in place. Van Kirk (2010) has created a model that allows these marginalized women to become the curators of their own finances while also creating a tangible empowerment effect.

Through analyzing the potential of this model in the Guatemalan context, I believe that there is a need for further research into this model of social entrepreneurship to further understand its impact more broadly, including in places besides Guatemala. Previous research would lead me to believe that the impact would be similar in other Latin American countries such as Honduras or Nicaragua, but perhaps looking at the model in another context, such as India or South Africa,⁵ would give a greater insight into the effectiveness of this model in a country where there is still great inequality, but a far different cultural and societal structure (Chatnani 2010, May 1998). Researching in other countries such as India and South Africa, where other models of social entrepreneurship have been implemented and researched, would allow for a more direct comparison in models and would contribute greatly to our understanding of social entrepreneurship outcomes.

This type of research into female empowerment is an extremely important and critical area of human rights and political science research on gender inequality. As mentioned previously, greater female equality is one of the Millennium Development Goals and is

⁴ There has been talk about having SolCom also be in South Africa; New Development Solutions has been looking into the possibility and conducted a feasibility study recently.

considered of great importance to the United Nations. Equality does not yet exist between the genders, especially in Latin America. This is evidenced in the literature, but is even more obvious when conducting this type of research; by living in Guatemala for two months, I was able to witness the institutional inequality that is rampant in all parts of the country. Women such as Yoly Acajabon and Clara Luz de Montezuma, were two examples of such women. They were the first entrepreneurs to become involved in the MicroConsignment Model in 2004 with no experience or start-up capital, originally local homemakers. Today, they are regional coordinators in charge of training and supporting 10 other women, including other new regional coordinators in the most successful and active branch of Soluciones Comunitarias. As Van Kirk (2010) writes, "The MCM has empowered Yoly and Clara to believe in themselves and what they are doing" (106). Yoly and Clara are just two of the women this model has impacted, and the possibilities that this model contains are unknown. This model has broad potential that needs to be further investigated; I hope to continue this research, through surveys and other measures, in future papers.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

SURVEY SUBMITTED FOR IRB APPROVAL

Title of Study:

How Social Entrepreneurship Affects Women's Political and Economic Participation in Guatemala

Principal Investigator:

Dr. David L. Richards, Assoc. Prof., Dept. of Political Science & Human Rights Institute

Student:

Briana Bardos (SURF Recipient)

This study will be administered orally to participants by a fluent speaker, in the local dialect of the survey administration area in Guatemala. The translator will be reading from a version translated into the local dialect upon the student's arrival in Guatemala.

1. In what year were you born?

2. What is your race/ethnicity?

(Choose One)

- Guatemalan
- Mestizo/Ladino
- European
- K'iche
- Kaqckikel
- Mam
- Q'eqchi
- Other Mayan
- Indigenous non-Mayan
- Other _____

3. What is your marital status?

- Single, never married
- Married or domestic partnership
- Widowed
- Divorced
- Separated

4. What is your primary language?

- Spanish
- Q'eqchi
- K'iche'
- Other _____

5. What town/city/municipality do you currently live?

6. Have you ever lived in the United States?

- Yes
- No

7. Do you have any family members that have lived or are currently living in the United States?

- Yes
- No

8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Pre-Primary
- Primary
- Middle (Basico)
- Diversified Secondary (Ciclo Diversificado)
- Technical Secondary School (Upper Secondary)
- Primary/Basic School Teacher Education
- Secondary School Teacher Education
- First Stage: Licenciatura
- Second Stage: Maestrado
- Third Stage: Doctorado
- None

9a. The following chart lists different types of political participation. For each item, choose one of the following responses that most closely represents how often you have engaged in that type of participation: Frequently, Occasionally, or Never. If for any of the items below you are unsure, you may respond with “Don’t Know” for that item.

Have you ever:	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Don’t Know
Been a part of a demonstration				
Voted in local election				
Voted in national election				
Been involved with a human rights organization (i.e. Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo)				
Been a candidate for elected office				
If you have been a candidate for elected office, did you win and hold that position?				
Belonged to a political party				
Worked for a political party				
Worked on a political campaign				
Donated money to a politician or political party				
Contacted a politician				
Been a community manager				
Been a part of a religious or charitable organization				
Contacted a media source about a politician, issue, or political party (e.g. TV station, newspaper, magazine, etc.)				
Signed a petition				

Have you ever:	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Don't Know
Bought or not bought a particular product because of political reasons				
Visited the website of a political party or politician				
Posted something online (such as on Facebook, Twitter, Blog, etc.) about a politician, political party, or political issue				
Forwarded a political email				
Put a sign in your yard about politician, political party, or political issue				
Worn a sticker for a particular politician or political party				

9b. Are there any forms of political participation that you engage in that were not listed?

Yes

No

9c. If yes, please describe the type of participation and choose one of the following responses that most closely represents how often you have engaged in that type of participation:

Frequently, Occasionally, or Never.

Type of Participation	Frequently	Occasionally	Never

10. Do you currently identify with a political party?

Yes

No

11. If yes, how many years have you identified with that party?

12. How would you describe your current overall economic situation?

Very good

Good

Neither good nor bad (fair)

Bad

Very bad

Don't know

13. Were you subject to national income tax last year?

Yes

No

14. What was your annual income last year?

15. Do you expect your annual income this year to be more or less than last year?

More

Less

16a. Have you ever been involved with the Social Entrepreneur Corps?

Yes

No

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE ONLY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN OR ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED WITH THE SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR CORPS. IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN INVOLVED, YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY IS COMPLETE.

16b. Are you currently working with Soluciones Comunitarias?

Yes

No

17. If yes, how long have you been working with them?

18. If no, how long did you work with SolCom?

19. How would you describe your economic situation before being involved with SolCom?

Very good

Good

Neither good nor bad (fair)

Bad

Very bad

Don't know

20. Do you think that your economic situation is better than, the same as, or worse than it was before being involved with the SolCom?

Better

Same

Worse

Don't know

21. Is your primary personal residence:

Rented

Occupied without payment of rent

Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan

Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (without a mortgage or loan)

22. What type of occupation do you have?

- Agricultural (i.e. subsistence farmer)
- Healthcare (i.e. nurse, doctor, lab technician)
- Education (i.e. ciclo diversificado teacher)
- Higher education (i.e. college professor)
- Transportation (i.e. bus driver, taxi driver)
- Government (i.e. elected official, government office employee)
- Retail (i.e. shop owner, merchant)
- Hospitality (i.e. hostel owner, hotel worker)
- Other: _____

23. For the industry you answered above, what is your position? (For Example: manager, laborer, etc.)

24. Is that a different position than before you worked with SolCom?

- Yes
- No

.END OF SURVEY.

Appendix B:

Two-sample t test with unequal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	26	3.153846	.564848	2.880171	1.99052	4.317172
1	28	10.67857	1.243027	6.577479	8.128091	13.22905
combined	54	7.055556	.8644774	6.352586	5.321633	8.789478
diff		-7.524725	1.365346		-10.28976	-4.759692

diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = -5.5112
Ho: diff = 0 Satterthwaite's degrees of freedom = 37.5716

Ha: diff < 0 Ha: diff != 0 Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.0000 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000 Pr(T > t) = 1.0000