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Youth and Economic Development: A Case Study of Out-of-School Time Programs for Low-Income Youth in New York State

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YOUTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
A CASE STUDY OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS
FOR LOW-INCOME YOUTH IN NEW YORK STATE

A Dissertation Presented

by

KRISTEN MAEVE POWLICK

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2011

Department of Economics

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SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS

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DEDICATION

To my mother, who has devoted her life to ending violence against children.

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I would like to thank my adviser, James K. Boyce, for supporting me in using qualitative research in my dissertation, for guiding me in formulating coherent research questions, and for providing an excellent example of the type of economist I would like to be. I would also like to thank my committee members, Nancy Folbre and Eve Weinbaum, for providing helpful suggestions and doing inspiring work.

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ABSTRACT

YOUTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS FOR LOW-INCOME YOUTH IN NEW YORK STATE

SEPTEMBER 2011

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Children are conceptualized many ways by economists— as sources of utility for their parents, investments, recipients of care, and public goods. Despite the understanding that children are also people, the economic literature is lacking in analysis of children as actors, making choices with consequences for economic development. Using a capability-driven approach and an emphasis on co-evolutionary processes of institutional and individual change, with mixed qualitative and quantitative methods, my dissertation analyzes the role of children in long-term economic development at the community level. I use a case study of community-based, out-of-school time (OST) programs for low-income youth funded through the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) to analyze the role of youth in economic development.

OST programs provide community-level benefits such as reductions in juvenile crime and foster economic development by creating linkages between the state, the market, the community, and the family. My study contributes to the body of interdisciplinary research on OST programs, and is situated in the middle ground between case studies with very small samples and quantitative studies with a narrow focus on academic performance as measured by grades. The 21st CCLC programs in New York State are unique in their emphasis on partnerships between schools and community-based organizations. An analysis of the costs and benefits of OST programs shows that the benefits of programs such as 21st CCLC substantially outweigh the costs. Using Geographic Information Systems and statistical analysis, I examine the relationship between eligibility for 21st CCLC funding, demographic characteristics related to the need for free or low-cost OST programs, and the presence of 21st CCLC programs, and find that the presence of these programs cannot be explained solely through the characteristics of people who will be served by them. Additionally, it is clear that there are not enough 21st CCLC programs to serve all eligible communities, raising questions about the scale of funding as well as its distribution.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation I use the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) in New York State as a case study of youth involvement in economic development at the community level. 21st CCLC is a federally-funded program (part of No Child Left Behind) for Out-of-School Time (OST) programs serving youth living in communities of concentrated poverty, with approximately 735 programs in New York State at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Since 2003, the grants have been administered state-by-state. Grants are awarded based on a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process with proposals put forward by partnerships, including at a minimum a school district and one other partner, with one serving as the lead agency. OST programs are becoming increasingly important in the lives of young people, especially those living in communities where they are otherwise at high risk of becoming a victim or a perpetrator of crime during the after school hours of three to six pm. The 21st CCLC programs are unique among the few funding streams devoted to OST programs because of the partnership requirement—a technical assistance provider for the 21st CCLC grants described the process as an unexpected departure from “business as usual” where OST money is automatically distributed to school districts as long as they meet the funding requirements. Because of this emphasis on partnership, and the involvement of community-based organizations (CBOs) in substantive and powerful roles, many 21st CCLC programs are community-based and operate with unique and varied objectives. These objectives, such as culture change, increased opportunity for

youth, and providing youth with new opportunities to excel, directly relate to economic development from a capabilities perspective.

I first became interested in this research in 2005, when I learned about the grant program and the many discussions going on among youth service workers about how 21st CCLC was 'different' from past OST programs. Attending state-wide trainings of 21st CCLC staff in February of 2005, I was able to witness the excitement among youth workers about the potential for these programs to induce community change. When I asked them to define development, they defined it again and again as work with youth. My primary research interest is in economic development in the face of vicious cycles, including violent conflict and multigenerational poverty. Development in these cases involves change in both individual preferences and behaviors as well as in institutions. Additionally, development in the face of vicious cycles means breaking out of self-reinforcing equilibria. Such evolutionary change occurs over the long-term.

Long-term economic development is intergenerational, intimately related to raising children. Development, from a capabilities perspective, is when people improve their ability to do and be what they choose (Sen 1985), and it involves a long-term co-evolutionary process of individual and institutional change (Bowles 2004). However, the economic literature is lacking in its understanding of youth as actors in the development process.

Children tumble out of every category economists try to put them in. They have been described as consumer durables providing a flow of utility to their parents, investment goods providing income, and public goods with both positive and negative externalities. Children are also people, with certain rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (Folbre 1994, 86).

Raising the next generation produces the important public good of the perpetuation of the species, and children who grow into productive adults produce many other important public goods as well. When children begin to work at an early age, such as on family farms, and when parents have claims over their adult children's assets and earnings, they provide important economic benefits to their parents (*ibid.*). In this way they act both as capital – the produced means of production – and as assets. Additionally, children are an investment—we need to invest in children in order for them to be the valuable public goods, the useful capital, or the stable asset they may become. However, children are different from other goods, capital, assets, and investments—as Folbre asserts, they are people. Starting from very different initial conditions, youth themselves must engage in action, making and enacting choices, to create the benefits we expect from them as adults. They are active participants in the public good generation process, of which they themselves are a public good. They are the only type of ‘capital’ that can produce through their own will. They can choose to invest or not invest in their own assets. Like adults, children both affect and are affected by economic changes around them.

The ability of children to participate actively in the development process, however, is not given. While they can do powerful things for others, they have many needs that must be attended to by adults. They are in the process of articulating their identities, meaning they have the potential to enact agency through everyday practice (Cleaver 2007). However, they are also vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and maladaptive examples from peers and adults (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008). They have an entire lifetime to

develop their capabilities, but they may also believe that their lives are circumscribed by the limits of the communities in which they live, and may feel hopeless in their ability to develop productive assets such as human capital. Hope for the future is an important asset for youth development¹.

The work of raising children was once largely the job of mothers, chained to the species through continuous attention to their own children (de Beauvoir 2010). Even in the 21st century, mothers spend on average many more hours per week than do fathers in activities with their children (Folbre and Bittman 2004). It has been argued by both Nancy Folbre (Folbre and Bittman 2004; Folbre and Yoon 2006) and Susan Himmelweit (2000) that the transition from a system where women cared for children to one where the task is equally shared between women and men has begun but has not been completed, and that completing it entails a wider acceptance of the responsibility to care for children. In the United States, poor women and women of color have historically always had high levels of participation in the labor market (Jones 1985; Kessler-Harris 2001), but this has in the past two generations extended beyond these subgroups. However, aside from the abandonment of a family wage, the institutions of the labor market have changed little from the days when an employer's expectation is that their employees would be going home to a wife who managed all domestic needs, including care of her husband and children. With this incomplete institutional change, the burden of care continues to fall disproportionately on women, many of whom come home to work the infamous second shift. Both fathers and mothers are scrambling to fulfill their own needs and those of

¹ See the Search Institute, creator of the Developmental Assets framework - www.search-institute.org/assets

their children, balancing demands for money and time. “...Once we start moving away from a gender-divided society, in which each gender is expected to make its own specific contribution to the care of children, towards a more equal one, we have to go the whole way if children are to be sufficiently well cared for” (Himmelweit 2000, 18). This has not yet occurred.

In this transitional period of gender norms, other institutions have been developed to help meet the needs of parents and children. Youth experience their world through a series of settings—especially school and family. After-school programs, also called Out-of-School Time (OST) programs, from three to six pm², are an increasingly important setting in the lives of youth, especially in the United States, which is the focus of this dissertation. After school care is a universal need for children of working parents, and many would argue that OST programming is also a universal need for adolescents. OST programming as a need is developed in section 2.4.1. Affluent parents frequently buy these services through the market, including academic support and enrichment opportunities, during the school year and during the summer. OST programs also provide an opportunity to interact with and form relationships with adults and peers outside of the structure of the school. Many low-income parents are priced out of the OST opportunities available in affluent communities, and due to low effective demand they may not be available in low-income communities anyway. Even in affluent communities, the market does not provide enough school-aged care to serve all children, nor is such care always of high quality. Given the lack of funding for OST programs,

² OST programs also frequently provide services on weekends, during school holidays, and during the summer.

existing resources must be targeted to the children most in need of services, although universal after school care may be more desirable. Children in affluent communities have access to better schools, with better academic support and more enrichment opportunities available directly through the schools. Providing equality of opportunity for youth requires targeting public funds to those children not currently having their need for OST programming met through other channels. While OST programs for youth include a wide variety of programs, I have chosen to focus on programs that operate primarily during the school year and serve children living in concentrated poverty.

OST programs and other settings make up the village that raises the child. But how does a village raise successful children? How can the things that youth do and learn in these settings contribute to economic development, especially at the individual and community level? Even if programs fail in their stated objectives, could they become successful failures³ that facilitate development in other ways? Involving youth in the development process requires bringing development to their everyday lives, through these settings.

In 2009, the federal government recognized a crisis in the juvenile justice system in New York State and demanded a massive overhaul. Youth who have broken the law are being sent to jails where they are abused by their guards, are unable to access mental health services that most of them need, and are faced with ever tightening limits on what they believe they can achieve. Most of these youth come from communities of concentrated poverty—many from just fifteen neighborhoods in New York City. In

³ Eve Weinbaum (2004) develops this concept in reference to plant closings in Appalachia, discussed in greater detail below.

September 2009, a coalition of juvenile justice groups staged a protest to demand that the State respond to the federal mandate and completely revolutionize the system of response to youth who come into conflict with the law. One juvenile justice activist, interviewed on National Public Radio (NPR), made a pointed analysis of the misappropriation of resources to abusive jails – he asked us to imagine what would happen if all the money spent on incarcerating youth were instead invested in their communities.

Instead of ignoring the needs of youth in poor communities until they become teenagers with untreated mental illness, low levels of productive human and social capital, and a growing sense of hopelessness for their future, we collectively have the capacity to invest in these youth as the important assets that they can become. High quality early prevention programs have been found to produce benefits that outweigh their costs, although more research is necessary in this field to adequately identify what defines high quality programs (Aos *et al.* 2004). Juvenile justice organizations, such as “Fight Crime, Invest in Kids” advocate a response to youth delinquency that focuses on OST programs – after-school programs that bridge the gaps between state, community, and family and can provide community-based alternatives to babysitting, lack of supervision, and/or incarceration.

It has been well documented that OST programs reduce juvenile crime⁴. What is lacking from the debate, however, is discussion of the fact that the accomplishments of OST programs, including but not limited to reducing crime, are contributions to

⁴ See, for example, the research briefs posted by Fight Crime, Invest in Kids (www.fightcrime.org).

economic development with the explicit participation of youth. I seek to redress that in the following pages.

My dissertation is organized into four chapters, plus this introduction and a conclusion. Chapter 2, “Youth and Development” explores the core issue in the context of the interdisciplinary literature. I first present my perspective on development, grounded in Sen’s (1983, 1985) capabilities approach with an emphasis on agency (related to Hirschman’s (1970) concepts of exit and voice). I also highlight the importance of a creative envisioning of assets in poor communities, as emphasized in the Natural Assets Project (Boyce and Shelly 2003). I then discuss development at the community level and the importance of OST programs, arguing that, following (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008) and many practitioners in the field, these programs are needed in poor communities. Chapter 3, “Mixed-Methodology and Youth Programs” discusses the methodology and dataset used in the dissertation. I first discuss mixed-methodology as an application of the General Theory of the Second Best. I go on to discuss the methodology of existing studies of OST programs, and then the specific methods and data used in this study, which revolves around 735 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) in New York State, providing free or low-cost OST programming to low-income kids. Chapters 4 and 5 address two key issues in the role of after-school programs and development. Chapter 4, “An Exploration of the Costs and Benefits of 21st Century Community Learning Centers,” explores the value of OST programs from a mixed-method approach grounded in the philosophy of cost-benefit analysis (CBA). I start with a critical discussion of CBA and some alternatives (such as Multi-Criteria Evaluation, or MCE), and then present the costs and a discussion of the short- and long-

term benefits of 21st CCLC programs from a development perspective. I show that, in many ways, the benefits of high quality, community-based, publicly funded OST programs outweigh the costs. Chapter 5, “Understanding the Allocation of Funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers in New York State,” presents a quantitative analysis of the degree to which the allocation of 21st CCLC funding serves eligible communities, based on demographic characteristics. I first discuss the choice of variables related to the need for OST programs, using regression analysis to analyze the relationship between demographic factors and the eligibility requirement for 21st CCLC funding, which is solely based on income. I then estimate and present cartographically the correlation between the location of existing 21st CCLC centers, eligible communities, and communities likely to be in need. A substantial amount of the variation in the location of 21st CCLC programs is unexplained by these demographic characteristics, raising the question of what does explain their distribution. Not surprisingly, there are many eligible communities without funding, which, along with the argument that the benefits of OST programs outweigh the costs, indicates a need for additional funding for free OST programs like 21st CCLC. Chapter 6 summarizes my key arguments and findings, and suggests future directions for the study of young people and economic development.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM STATEMENT: YOUTH AND DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

Economic development can be viewed as increasing the capabilities of individuals to do and be what they choose (Sen 1985). Through interactions with each other and with adults, young people are continually developing these capabilities, meaning that development is an intergenerational process. Youth may become enmeshed in poverty traps when they live in environments that expose them to high levels of risk, limiting their ability to ‘develop’ as individuals and carry forward economic development. Although poverty is often blamed on a ‘culture’ of poverty, poverty is part of a larger culture of inequality that limits economic mobility across generations. Youth and others can and do engage in conscious action to improve their lives, enacting agency. Agency can be defined as “working past structure” (Lyons 2000), and it is identified with conscious action, empowering activities, and challenging norms by changing everyday practice (Cleaver 2007). Voice is a key component of enacting agency, as is the threat of exit (Hirschman 1970).

The type of development that affects youth is most likely to occur at the community level. Community can be defined as “a group of people who interact directly, frequently and in multi-faceted ways” (Bowles and Gintis 2002). Poor communities are limited in the assets they may leverage to accomplish this task because of their lack of financial capital. The assets left to poor communities—natural assets, human assets (such

as human and social capital), and informal institutions—must be leveraged in order to accomplish development at the community level.

Free and low-cost OST programs such as the 21st CCLC programs are an example of publicly funded, non-governmental institutions in poor communities, serving youth during the hours between three and six pm as well as before school, on weekends, and in the summer. Because of the demands on parents in poor communities to work long hours for wages to make ends meet, OST programs are important in poor communities. Communities need OST programs because youth need a safe place to be after school, because youth and their communities need the developmental assets fostered by quality programs, and because poor communities need the other public goods and social capital they can engender.

This chapter first develops an understanding of capability-driven development and the involvement of youth. I then explore the setting of the community for economic development, with a discussion of OST programs as a specific example of an institution in poor communities with the potential to contribute to economic development. The concluding section synthesizes these points, and motivates the following chapters.

2.2 Development and Youth

Economic development is a long-term process—for better or for worse, incomes change over time, and the people earning these incomes change as well. While there are many economic models of intertemporal change, the development literature is lacking in its understanding of youth in development. When I asked youth service workers at

statewide trainings for 21st CCLC staff in 2005 and 2006 what economic development was, they responded by directly addressing their work with youth. Giving youth new opportunities, especially in communities that may look hopeless, is development to these community workers.

Youth need care and protection from risk in order to successfully develop their capabilities. Youth in poor communities are exposed to a large number of risks in high concentration, meaning they have high risks of many negative outcomes such as being a victim to a violent crime (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008). While youths are more than dependents, they are dependent on the care of others to a greater degree than adults because they cannot earn their own subsistence easily, and if they are forced to earn their own subsistence in the short-run they must forego important investment in their human capital and other capabilities for future income generation in the long run (Sylwester 2002). Youth need adults to not only provide for their basic needs but also to guide and support them in developing capabilities.

Yet currently people are punished in many ways when they care for children (Folbre 1994). Caring for children is often cited as a reason for the gender wage gap, with the reasoning that women take “time out” from working to care for children (Frank 1991). Child care puts constraints on parents’ time almost 24 hours a day (Folbre and Yoon 2006). Including children can make it more difficult to do other tasks because caring for a child is continuous activity—and this takes work, attention, and energy. Moreover, care-giving jobs are often undervalued in the formal economy. The public good nature of raising children means that many more people will receive benefits than those who worked to create them. In effect, they free-ride off the effort of others.

Because they are the primary caregivers, parents are often blamed for failures on the part of their children, even if there are many countervailing influences over which they have little control, such as failing schools. It is important that care be provided by a large network (Himmelweit 2000)—the metaphorical village. Youth develop capabilities through their everyday activities in a variety of settings within this village, in which OST programs are becoming increasingly important for youth who do not have any other place to be between the hours of 3pm and 6pm.

2.2.1 Capabilities and Young People

Capabilities are about more than obtaining commodities, although increasing the entitlement individuals have to commodities can also increase their capabilities (Sen 1983, 1985). The process of growing up is one of developing capabilities—the key job of youth is to acquire capabilities that will benefit themselves and others in the future (Davis 2003). Agency is a specific type of capability that implies the ability to enact change by developing an increased consciousness and understanding of the structures and processes of social change, and involves the use of strategies of engaging with power such as exit and voice. This implies being able to 1) make good choices, 2) being able to act on those choices, and 3) being able to translate those choices into concrete results. The last step is emphasized by non-economists writing about agency, such as (Clever 2007) and Dowdy (2004), and is described by Sen as translating capabilities into functionings (Sen 1985).

The capabilities approach allows us to look beyond economic growth (i.e. increased income at some level of aggregation) and also beyond basic needs. Basic needs—access to health care, freedom from hunger, and physical safety—are not counted

as economic growth unless they accompany increased incomes, and then only indirectly and incompletely, but meeting basic needs is also not sufficient to say that the work of development is accomplished. Sen understands development as freedom, meaning that it must preserve the agency of people. This is especially important for youth because their values are still in the process of forming.

Certainly, people have ‘needs’, but they also have values, and, in particular, they cherish their ability to reason, appraise, act and participate. Seeing people in terms only of their needs may give us a rather meagre view of humanity.

To use a medieval distinction, we are not only *patients*, whose needs demand attention, but also *agents*, whose freedom to decide what to value and how to pursue it can extend far beyond the fulfillment of our needs. (Sen 1985, 5).

Moreover, development should be sustainable, meaning that development today does not preclude future development. However, simply sustaining living standards is not enough. “Sustaining living standards is not the same thing as sustaining people’s freedom to have – or safeguard – what they value and to which they have reason to attach importance. Our reason for valuing particular opportunities need not always lie in their contribution to our living standards” (*ibid*, 5).

Young people need many of the same capabilities as adults, but they also have special needs because they are in the process of developing the assets they will use later in life. This implies the importance of a wide range of choices, which is also emphasized by Sen – it matters not only what choice people make, but also the range of options that are considered when making that choice (*ibid.*). Many elements of positive youth

development such as building meaningful relationships with peers and between youth and adults, and learning communication skills (Scales, Leffert, and Leffert 1999), can be thought of as building capabilities. These capabilities, especially the goal of building positive relationships between youth and adults, were emphasized by participants in my study, with the recurring theme that OST programs give youth not succeeding in school a place where they may excel and receive deserved praise by adults. Such relationships contribute to developing youths' sense of agency.

2.2.2 Agency, Voice, and Exit

When youth are in situations that limit their choices, such as living in communities of concentrated poverty, agency can be used to work past these limiting structures, thereby expanding their capabilities further. While agency is more complex than simply using voice, the use of voice is important in achieving the goals of agency-led-action. In *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*, Albert Hirschman (1970) started with the analogy of the firm: when customers are dissatisfied with a decline in quality of products, they may either leave the firm and do business with another (exit), or they may let the managers know they are upset and attempt to get them to fix the problem (voice). Both mechanisms, according to Hirschman, may induce a firm or other organization to improve quality, if they are applied in the right amounts at the right time. But, if too many customers leave a firm at once, the firm will lose too much revenue and will go out of business. As Hirschman explains, it is difficult to balance exit and voice efficiently. The situation Hirschman described as having inspired his book, for example, was one in which there was just enough exit so that the national railway in Nigeria could remain inefficient: the customers who might have been the most vocal and persuasive were leaving to use other means of

transportation, and so the rail management was not pressured to fix its problems. At the same time, Hirschman argued that voice is most effective when it is not overly harassing, and most potent when combined with a threat of exit. While exit may induce change, it does not provide a mechanism for directing that change, and the agent who exited the organization does not get to enjoy the changes.

Programs like Moving to Opportunity, discussed in more detail in Section 2.3.1, utilize exit as a response to concentrated poverty, by allowing some individuals to leave the neighborhood. However, poor communities are not conscious actors in the way a firm can be conceptualized. In communities, individuals have little power to influence the whole, but can only do so through evolutionary changes, which they cannot control, or through costly collective action (Bowles 2004). Unlike a firm, a poor community cannot ‘respond’ to the exit of some of its residents because there is no one to enact the response. Participation in changes, such as development, requires the effective use of voice.

While youth already have voices, it is important that they develop the character of their voice (Ellsworth 1994) as well as that they receive an adequate response to their voice (Dowdy and Golden 2004)—these are interrelated goals (Weinbaum 2004). In the quote below, for example, bell hooks discusses how, in order for her voice to be heard, she needed to both learn new tools of communication and find an effective audience.

Certainly for Black women our struggle has not been to emerge from silence to speech but to change the nature and direction of our speech. To make a speech that compels listeners, one that is heard...Dialogue, the sharing of speech and recognition, took place not between mother and child or mother and male authority figure, but with other Black women. I can remember watching, fascinated, as our mother talked with her mother, sisters, and women friends. The

intimacy and intensity of their speech--the satisfaction they received from talking to one another, the pleasure, the joy. It was in this world of woman speech, loud talk, angry words, women with tongues sharp, tender sweet tongues, touching our world with their words, that I made speech my birthright--and the right to voice, to authorship, a privilege I would not be denied. It was in that world and because of it that I came to dream of writing, to write (bell hooks, quoted in Ellsworth 1994, 313).

Both aspects of the use of voice—character and response—impact the way speakers will be changed by the use of voice.

Youth develop the character of their voices and learn what types of responses to expect in the context of settings such as families, schools and OST programs, but also in settings like gangs and juvenile detention facilities. Low-income youth often experience harsher reactions from police than those from more affluent communities (Sampson and Bartusch 1999). Their attitudes about law enforcement will be different if they are discussing the problem in a youth gang or in a community-based organization. Citizens raised their voices in the wake of a plant closure in Clinton, Tennessee, but they were disempowered and discouraged when government officials ignored what they had to say (Weinbaum 2004). In order for voice to be used effectively, it must be heard by those with the power to act on the demands of those who are dissatisfied. In the case of the activists in Clinton, Tennessee, Weinbaum argues that one of the reasons the organization failed to reopen the plant or spur lasting collective action in the community was a lack of analysis beyond a rhetoric of personal betrayal. When the use of voice is empowering and effective, however, voice is a tool for exercising agency.

Defined above as “working past structures” (Lyons 2000), agency is also conceptualized as “deliberate public participation in decision-making and collective action,” but this definition should be expanded to include “more complex ways of understanding agency in collective action as deeply relational, and constituted by routine practice as well as purposive action” (Cleaver 2007, 223). Changes in routine practice refer to changing habits, norms, culture, and other informal institutions. Identifying agency with changes in daily practice means that agency can be brought to people—integrating agency-promoting activities into their life—as well as through organizations, like environmental justice groups, that are organized specifically around the use of agency.

While everyone has the capacity for agency, not everyone will be able to act upon their agency and watch those actions become fruitful. “The working of power through plural institutional settings shapes the effects of agency, the ability of individuals to effect significant difference in their lives” (Cleaver 2007, 230). Power relationships limit the ability to engage in effective agency both because of the self-disciplining that goes along with following norms, and because they may directly introduce roadblocks to enacting agency, such as a lack of access to resources (inequality of opportunity for youth), or stereotyping and discrimination. The development of effective agency requires a co-evolutionary relationship between individual agency and institutions that support its effectiveness.

Youth are in an unusual position *vis-à-vis* power because their position is shifting—they are a people-in-process. They are relatively powerless, but they may grow into positions of power or subordination depending on intergenerational mobility for a

given trait—they may not change their race, although they could move to a different community where the social construction of race takes a different form, but they can influence their class position and their perception of the meaning of class. Moreover, the self-discipline of norms and structure is about knowing ones place (Clever 2007, 235)—this is not innate knowledge for children, but they are in the process of learning it. Moreover, they have not yet experienced the disillusionment and frustration of failed attempts to exercise agency. If they are provided with opportunities where their agency can be successful, they have the opportunity to build a foundation of experience to apply agency in more challenging situations later on.

While many people who work with youth have objectives of increasing the agency of youth or of empowering them, their definitions of these terms vary. Empowerment and agency are often treated as synonymous. Rahm and Grimes (2005) identify providing youth with opportunities to earn a wage and/or operate within a business structure as empowerment. Wilcox *et al.* (2004) identify positive individual experiences, such as celebrating rites of passage, as empowering. Others identify the importance of providing youth with the opportunity to use their critical voices and produce transformative work as empowerment (Soep 2006; Townsend 2003). There are many other examples of programs with objectives to empower youth, such as debate leagues (Hall 2006), political lobbying activities (Austria 2006; Blank, Friedman, and Carlson 2006), and media literacy and filmmaking skills (Fanscali and Nevarez 2005).

The programs analyzed in my dissertation defined empowerment in many different ways, but most of their definitions center around the idea of choice. A common thread in my program site interviews was that youth empowerment involves allowing

youth to choose what they want to do, such as choosing their activities from a list on a given afternoon. Some interviewees, such as at the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) program in Albany, NY, included allowing youth input into choosing what activities could go on the list itself as an element of empowerment and agency. In addition, many programs and researchers highlight the importance of including youth in program development and governance (Lyons 2000; Butcher 2004; Hill 2004). Involving youth in the creation of knowledge has been recognized by many as both important and empowering (Fanscali and Nevarez 2005; Schultz *et al.* 2005; Shevin and Young 2000; Wall Moellman and Rosenbaum Tillinger 2005).

At Harvey Milk High School (HMHS), the agency of youth is supported by providing an environment in which youth are free to express themselves outside the boundaries of heteronormativity, challenging a culture that constrains their expression of identity. This is a prime example of enacting agency through challenging everyday practice. Students who participated in my Participatory Action Research (PAR) class at HMHS had a variety of reasons for choosing HMHS, but all of them were at risk of dropping Out-of-School before applying to transfer there. One student faced violent treats and discrimination because of her transgendered identity, while another explained that he faced the same because of homosexuality. Other students choose not to identify with older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered LGBT labels, but dress and date how they please, fluidly crossing and re-crossing the boundaries of heteronormativity in gender expression and sexual orientation. HMHS provides students with a school setting where they can be themselves, without conflicts and danger over their gender identity or sexual orientation dominating their educational experience.

Agency is also supported through involving youth directly in activism. The agency of youth is supported at Inwood House's Youth for R.E.A.L. programs⁵ in the Bronx by engaging them in the Community Change Project. Students from kindergarten to eighth grade work in age-segregated groups to identify and analyze something they want changed about their community, then undertaking an action to work towards changing it. Youth are encouraged to distinguish between the symptoms and causes of the problem they are analyzing, and to distinguish between actions that address the symptoms and those that address deeper causes. Working within the after-school setting, Youth for R.E.A.L. exposes youth and their guardians to activism otherwise foreign to them, as I discuss in greater detail in the next chapter.

These types of experiences, I would argue, differ from empowerment projects that seek to fit youth into adult roles in an existing structure, like the gardening business discussed in Rahm and Grimes (2005)—in this case, essentially giving them their first jobs. Instead, youth are being taught to assume more adult roles, while simultaneously creating the structure itself in a conscious, self-critical way.

While fostering agency is clearly important to many youth workers, there are obstacles to its achievement. Participants may have basic needs that need to be addressed, and there may be a real or perceived tradeoff between meeting these needs and meeting higher-order needs such as developing agency. One day when I was observing the kindergarten group at Youth for R.E.A.L., there were several children in tears at the beginning of the afternoon, prior to receiving the hot snack they are served every day in the program. Two children said they had toothaches. One boy said he had not eaten

⁵ R.E.A.L. stands for Responsibility, Excellence, Achievement, Leadership.

anything all day, although he did have access to free lunch—he said the food tasted bad. Two children complained of other health problems, a stomach ache and a headache. One girl was tired and wanted to go home so she could take a nap. Kindergarteners are not given naps during the day in her school. Regardless of other programming possibilities, these children required having these other needs met before they were able to listen, participate, and think about the activities they were doing.

Another barrier to developing agency is its widespread absence in the daily experiences of youth (Lyons 2000). Settings of agency culture are difficult to find for low-income youth faced with punitive social policy and schools that increasingly resemble prisons (Noguera 1995). Along with giving youth a place to excel, changing the ‘culture,’ ‘mindset,’ and ‘values’ of youth is a common goal articulated by OST program staff, including line staff, site coordinators, and program directors. Because norms like agency are density-dependent, youth programs alone in providing agency culture may be unable to achieve their stated objectives, no matter how high the quality of their programming and staff.

However, it is possible that the seeds of agency planted by seemingly unsuccessful programs can lead to other changes later on, unpredictable in the short-run—becoming what Weinbaum (2004) identifies as “successful failures.” Successful failures occur because changes in human institutions are subject to positive feedback effects, complementarities, and other unpredictable forces.

Organizing campaigns that scholars and journalists alike would have labeled as failures, in fact led to institution-building, activist networks, and long-term coalitions to protest economic injustice and develop public policies. These failures were the early battle-grounds in which men and women developed the

strategies, arguments, and methods for the larger struggles to come. Failures, in retrospect, were actually critical turning points that created the conditions for later success. By closely studying these nascent grassroots social movements, this research points toward new avenues for labor and community activism around the global economy (Weinbaum 2004).

Behavior related to youth is strongly influenced by norms, density-dependent behaviors subject to unpredictable positive feedback effects (Himmelweit 2000). The density of behaviors and norms influences how quickly the feedback process will work, meaning that the more settings in which youth are exposed to norms like an agency culture, the more likely they will carry that change forward. By increasing the density of norms they wish to produce, OST programs can promote change even if they do not achieve their stated short-term objectives, laying ground work for future activism. OST programs may have positive, long-term impacts on the youth and communities they serve, even if these impacts are difficult to measure through changes in participants' grades.

2.3 Community

Understanding the economy as the market, the state, and the community is a useful way to think about the complex, overlapping network of institutions that govern the economy. States, markets, and communities each perform some functions well. Markets are good at producing easily tradable, tangible goods when there is a minimum of externalities. The state is the only institution capable of providing public goods on a wide scale, such as transportation networks (Bowles 2004). The community can accomplish some things that are not done efficiently or well through either the market or

the state, such as the governance of common-pool resources (Ostrom 1991, 1999; Ostrom *et al.* 1999). Another function best accomplished by the community—the site of long-lasting relationships, multifaceted interaction, small geography, and real and fictive kinship relations—is caring for and supporting the development of children.

Youth are most involved in economic activity within the context of the community. Community-based organizations and youth-based organizations, such as after-school programs, play important roles in this process and have the potential to accomplish tasks left undone by the state and market. OST programs produce unique benefits because they occupy a transitional time and space in the lives of youth, as an institution of the community situated between the state (schools) and family. Young people play an important role in the economy at the community level, through their participation in non-market productive activities (such as caring for siblings, helping neighbors, etc) and their participation, and sometimes leadership, in collective action. Because so many children's activities develop capabilities, children are integral actors in long-term, community-level economic development.

2.3.1 Poverty Traps

Just as well-functioning communities with a high degree of intergenerational closure and social efficacy can have positive impacts on youth, dysfunctional communities can produce the reverse (Coleman 1988). This is especially true when disadvantage is concentrated, leading to high inequality between neighborhoods (Mayer 2002). When there is a high degree of poverty, unemployment, crime, drug-use, and violence in a community, young people are directly exposed to many risks, including the risk of being either the victim or perpetrator of a crime (Tsoi-a-Fat 2008). Indirectly,

communities with low social efficacy provide few role models for young people to model adaptive behavior, especially if the most successful young adults choose to leave. Dysfunctional communities are often described as poverty traps, where families and the entire community are caught in a bad situation that is difficult to escape.

Many problems within poor communities are blamed on the “culture of poverty” among their inhabitants. Cultural elements such as norms of reciprocity (Coleman 1988, 95), glorification of violence (Sampson 1987; Payne 2001), and institutionalized hopelessness (Payne 2001) are cited as reasons for the reproduction of poverty over time. However, these communities are part of a larger culture of inequality where so-called economic development in poor communities—generally meaning using incentives to attract low-paying jobs—relies on workers remaining poor and desperate (Weinbaum 2004; Noguera 2003a). In the same way that environmental degradation can be better understood as connected to inequality rather than poverty (Boyce 1994), poverty itself is part of the larger *culture of inequality* based on class, race, and gender. Inequality is maintained through many barriers to intergenerational mobility, including both institutional racism (such as unequal access to education) and discrimination and stereotyping (Bowles and Gintis, 2002), and mobility is heavily linked to socioeconomic factors (Bowles and Gintis 2002).

Mobility patterns have changed very little over the past one hundred years (Gittleman and Joyce 1999). While some children grow up in affluent communities with ample opportunities to learn, explore, and interact with adults and other children in safe public spaces, children in poor communities, especially urban ones, face a scarcity of resources, helpful adults, and safe spaces (Noguera 1995, 2003; Sampson and

Raudenbush 2004; Sampson and Laub 1994, Tsoi-a-Fatt 2008). The work of R.J. Sampson (1987) shows that what are considered pathological aspects of poor, especially black, culture can better be understood as responses to the social structure, which he defines as the distribution of population to various social positions, but which can also be understood to include institutions. Moreover, public policy directed at poor, urban youth is often punitive in nature, contributing to the problems it is trying to solve (Noguera 1995, 2003a)⁶.

Sampson identifies many consequences of living in low-income neighborhoods with ecological conditions of relative deprivation, crime, and violence. These include an increase in intergroup conflict (Sampson 1984), a vicious circle connecting unemployment, family disruption, and crime (Sampson 1987), harsher punishment exacted on juveniles by law enforcement (Sampson 1986), a lack of social cohesion (Sampson 1991), and lower verbal ability on IQ tests similar in magnitude to missing a year or more of school (Sampson *et al.* 2007). Many of his studies focus specifically on issues of black race, demonstrating how racism exacerbates problems of economic inequality. He shows that problems of family disruption and crime within poor, urban, black communities cannot be blamed on a 'subculture of violence', but are rather linked to chronic unemployment of black men (Sampson 1987). This is a symptom of the larger culture of inequality relying on the exploitation of black labor, and has long been identified by feminist historians as a reason for instability in poor black communities.

⁶ Poor rural youth lack resources like their urban counterparts, but their problems and needs may be obscured by a focus on urban youth and the fact that their population is smaller in absolute terms. Moreover, poor rural youth may be located in communities where the poor population is in the minority because the geographic division in question includes many communities, only some of which contain concentrated poverty.

Because of the lack of well-paying jobs available to black men, they may best be able to support their families by leaving, thereby entitling the mothers of their children to additional public assistance (Jones 1985, Barkley Brown 2000).

Poor communities are typically deficient in what Sampson refers to as formal control informal control of youth, based on tight social networks that facilitate supervision and communication among care givers (Sampson 1991, 1988). Both formal control and informal control are related to crime rates (Sampson 1986). Additionally, poverty trap communities occupied by many recent immigrants are likely to have a good deal of residential instability, which leads to lower social cohesion (Sampson 1988). Demographic turnover, and the accompanying lack of social capital, has also been linked to environmental hazard citing (Pastor 2001). Social cohesion, a similar concept to social capital, is important for achieving group outcomes and enforcing norms. A lack of social cohesion is mitigated by an increase in friendships and acquaintances, but these are difficult to build in poor communities that lack safe public space for meeting people and have large populations (Sampson 1988, 1991). Like voice, low-income youth have community ties of some kind, but they may lack the institutional channels to use that community cohesion as an asset.

The policy responses to multigenerational traps take two main forms—targeting individuals and/or families to break out of the trap (individual focus), or targeting the trap itself (institutional focus). While the best approach would accomplish both goals, economic models of poverty traps tend to start from an assumption of methodological individualism and focus on individual-level behaviors, implicitly assuming that the

appropriate response to a poverty trap is to facilitate individuals breaking out of the trap. Examples include Sylwester (2002), Eeckhout (1999), and Maoz and Moav (1999).

The 10-year ‘research’ program run by the US Department of Housing, Moving to Opportunity (MTO), is a prime example of a ‘breaking out’ policy response to poverty traps. The program provides tenant-based rental assistance to allow approximately 4600 participants, coming from poverty stricken communities in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York, to obtain housing in neighborhoods with less than ten percent poverty. The HUD website states that an advantage of the program is that it allows participants to choose “neighborhoods that can offer ample educational, employment, and social opportunities.”⁷ These are opportunities unavailable in high-poverty communities, and they remain unavailable for the majority of the poor population not able to participate in MTO. The program also provides counseling and other assistance to help participants overcome barriers such as “market conditions, discrimination, lack of information and/or transportation, among others--that force them to rent housing in neighborhoods of intense poverty” (*ibid.*). The goals of the program are to evaluate the benefits of this type of tenant-based assistance and to test “the long-term effects of access to low-poverty neighborhoods on the housing, employment, and educational achievements of the assisted households. The goal is to develop more effective mobility strategies for recipients of tenant-based housing assistance in metropolitan areas throughout the nation” (*ibid.*).

⁷ See the website of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development page on Moving to Opportunity <http://www.hud.gov/progdesc/mto.cfm>.

Researchers have found that if moving to low-poverty communities has positive impacts on households, these impacts are likely to be short-lived. Sampson argues this is because the effects of high-poverty communities are cumulative, and so, for example, teenagers who move to a low-poverty community but spent their early years in a high-poverty community have already experienced concentrated disadvantage that is difficult to overcome (Sampson and Laub 1997). Sanbonmatsu *et al.* (2006) show there were no significant effects of the MTO program on math and reading test scores for children, assessing the results four to seven years after their initial participation in the program. Focusing on outcomes for adults, Rosenbaum and Harris (2001) show that the program led to improved housing and neighborhood conditions among participants—a tautological finding, considering how the program operates—but that changes in labor force participation were similar between the experimental and control group. On the other hand, Leventhal and Brooks (2003) found positive impacts on mental health, including less distress among parents and fewer problems with anxiety/depression and dependency among boys.

The MTO program raises some interesting questions on the issue of youth in economic development—if most communities had some poor people but there were few or no communities composed entirely of the poor, would this produce better outcomes for children raised in poor families? Because a majority non-poor population has the bargaining power to demand adequate public goods not available in poor communities, the answer is probably yes. However, the Moving to Opportunity program is not creating such a desegregated world, and is instead removing a small group of people from communities that remain otherwise unchanged, lack of educational and social

opportunities and all. While some people are able to break out of the trap, the trap itself is not broken and so the policy does not change the social conditions that create the need for such a program in the first place.

Policy aimed at ‘breaking the trap’ may take many forms. For example, some cities invest in increased police presence to reduce crime in poverty-trap communities, but this approach does not always achieve the desired outcome and may in fact backfire if it leads to increased distrust of police (Akerlof 1984). Other examples include social capital-building projects like those outlined in Putnam, Feldstein, and Cohen (2003) and publications of the Natural Assets Project (Harper and Rajan 2004; Kurien 2004; Boyce and Shelly 2003; Boyce and Pastor 2001); such as the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Boston, projects to reclaim former brownfields as public space, and environmental justice groups working to protect their communities from deadly pollution. Breaking the trap is not a problem that can be solved with a one-size-fits-all solution, but requires transforming the community into a place where people want to live and raise their children, and a place where children want to return or stay when they begin their careers. This is highlighted in Sara Hill’s (2004, 7) paper on the public housing projects Sweet Cove and Waterside Homes, when she quotes the executive director of Harmony Center, a non-profit organization serving youth in the community:

A role for Harmony Center is transition. Not so much to get kids out, as to mentally get out. If they decide that [this village] is their home and they want to live here for the rest of their lives, and they’ve made good choices where they want to go in life, I’m happy. So they don’t necessarily have to leave the area...or leave Waterside or Sweet Cove Homes, but they should know that there’s another world, and go out and explore it, and then when they say, “This is my home,” I’m happy with that.

Because poverty traps affect both individuals and communities, individuals need to break out of the trap, and the trap needs to be broken, simultaneously. The community is more than the sum of its individuals. It included institutional structures. Direct attention needs to be paid to community-level outcomes, which requires capitalizing on assets available to poor communities, including children.

2.3.2 Informal Institutions and Assets in Low-Income Communities

Assets are used to generate income. They may be owned by individuals or by a group of individuals, such as a co-operative, a limited liability company, a community, or a family. Conventionally, one tends to identify ownership of stocks and other interest-bearing investments or ownership of machinery as assets. These assets take money to acquire, which is not available to poor people or poor communities. This does not mean, however, that the poor are without assets. The assets of the poor take more creativity and work in order to generate income than an interest-bearing investment, but existing assets, such public space, human capital, and social capital, must provide a starting point for development projects when there is not an abundance of funding to acquire new assets (Boyce and Pastor 2001). Public goods simply taken for granted in affluent communities are a problem for low-income communities that can only be overcome through collective action.

Natural resources are not typically thought of as assets for the poor, and, likewise, the poor are often blamed for the degradation of the environment (Boyce and Pastor

2001). Open space in poor communities is more often a risk than an asset—vacant lots rather than community gardens. However, the natural resources that are controlled by the poor are one of the few assets available to them. These resources do not have to work against the poor.

Due to the lack of public space in poor, especially urban, communities, locations like school buildings are a key asset. Even so, these buildings are often in disrepair, with problems like lead paint, unsanitary bathrooms, and a lack of appropriate technology (Noguera 2003b). Except when they are used for OST programs, summer school, and continuing education, or when they are converted into community schools, schools are often only accessible to the community during school hours and during the school years. Extending the use of school buildings democratizes access to this aspect of the commons, one of the four key routes to building natural assets (Boyce and Pastor 2001). School buildings can be utilized to produce other benefits, such as using school kitchens to provide dinner during after-school hours, meaning that many low-income children will be provided free breakfast, lunch, and dinner at school.

Human capital refers to skills and knowledge attributed to individuals, and it can be built through the use of social capital (Coleman 1988, 95). Children need support in every area of their development, including social relationships, in order to successfully develop their human capital (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008). Social capital refers to social connections that facilitate economic behavior—most simply, it has been labeled trust (Dasgupta 2005). Social capital, however, cannot be owned by one person, so it may be more appropriately labeled ‘community governance’ (Bowles and Gintis 2002), or ‘social cohesion’ (as used by Sampson 1999). Good community governance means that a

community is able to maintain its norms and values, and is able to engage in collective action when necessary. Social capital is especially important for youth, who rely on non-market relationships with others to meet their basic needs—youth in poor communities may have few if any other assets of their own.

Human capital and social capital both can take many forms, some of which are scarce in poor communities. For example, while residents in a poor community may have excellent street smarts, one type of skill, the same individuals may be lacking in a formal education that qualifies them for well paid work. Formal education is subject to a disincentive for people who do not believe they will experience high returns to their schooling—such as youth graduating from high school but unlikely to continue to college, and youth of color (Gamoran 2001). Conversely, “street smarts” are more likely to earn a quick return to youth who can use them in their own neighborhoods to earn a living on the black market. While poor youth may have many friends and a network of caregivers, their social capital is less likely to provide them with access to resources that can help them escape poverty, such as by finding a job (Payne 2001, Durlaf 2002). Additionally, poor rural youth may also be lacking the specific types of ties that can facilitate finding work (Dasgupta 2005). Community-specific social capital is likely to be bonding social capital, and is less useful for economic development than bridging social capital, which facilitates building new relationships across different communities.

Capitalizing on the assets available in poor communities, informal institutions⁸ and community based-organizations is instrumental in generating, maintaining, and utilizing social capital, as well as providing public goods underprovided by the state. Informal institutions can strengthen formal institutions in their ability to promote collective action by facilitating complementarity between organizations. For example, many OST programs that include a successful partnership between community-based organizations (CBOs) and public schools utilize the social capital embodied in the CBO to improve the school itself⁹. Informal institutions also serve as coping mechanisms to deal with the stress of living in poverty traps, some better and more constructively than others.

OST programs have a unique position in poor communities because of their differences from the school, a formal institution often associated with state. They have the potential to act in a role of community-as-family—important in African American communities since emancipation (Barkley Brown 2000, 124). OST programs do not assign grades to students, allowing children to work together in peer groups without evaluation or competition, and OST practitioners tend to follow different pedagogy than in schools, deemphasizing the role of teacher as source of knowledge (Rahm and Grimes 2005). Moreover, because they are not directly a part of the ‘state,’ participation in OST

⁸ The term “informal institutions” has been used in many ways, but here I am following Hodgson and Calatrava (2006), using it to indicate institutions with no direct relationship to the government, those not codified in law.

⁹ As discussed in chapter 4, OST programs run by CBOs have the potential to foster more positive relationships with parents than tends to exist in low-income schools due to barriers such as immigration status, language barriers, parental fear, and negative attitudes held by teachers and school administrators (McDermott and Rothenberg 2004).

programs does not offer the same risks (real or perceived) as participation in the schools for parents with immigration concerns.

OST programs expand the accessibility of important public spaces and utilize human and social capital in poor communities, drawing on local adults and youth to create programs designed to serve specific needs of youth and to build partnerships among community organizations. Examples of social capital and public good-producing activities of OST programs include¹⁰:

- engaging local business owners to watch kids walk home in the evening, protecting them from gang attacks
- providing family literacy programming
- providing free medical, vision, and dental care to children and their parents (see Dryfoos *et al.* 2005)
- volunteer opportunities for parents, building the friendships and acquaintanceships that increase social cohesion (see Sampson 1988)
- employment opportunities for young people to work with younger youth, encouraging caring labor

Human and social capital are not depleted through use, but are rather built. Providing help with homework, academic enrichment, and support for the many interlocking aspects of youth development, OST programs support the acquisition of human capital. They also support social capital, bringing youth together to engage in transformative work in a non-school environment (Townsend 2003), and developing constructive relationships between youth and adults. Moreover, some programs engage in conscious efforts to develop social capital, providing youth with opportunities for service learning, volunteering with other community-based organizations, lobbying trips, and other forms of activism.

¹⁰ These activities were mentioned in interviews and focus groups with 21st CCLC staff.

2.4 OST Programs in context

Out-of-School Time (OST) programs or OST programs generally operate between the school dismissal time and approximately 6pm, and engage youth in activities such as private study, tutoring, athletics, creative activities, and organized academic enrichment activities. They may operate in school buildings, the offices of CBOs, places of worship, or other locations. OST programs of various types are common in communities ranging from low-income to affluent.

The 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) programs across the United States serve youth who come from schools of concentrated poverty (mainly public schools), those that are eligible for school-wide use of Title 1 funding to provide educational opportunities to disadvantaged youth. Funds for 21st CCLC are from the federal government, and are administered at the state level. The programs are generally free or very low-cost for families¹¹. In addition to 21st CCLC grants, they on average have 1.5 other sources of funding and serve youth from elementary, middle, and high schools. Each program is the product of a partnership that must involve a school district as well as one partner from the community. The community partner may be a Community-Based Organization (CBO), a national non-profit like Good Will, a public institution like a library, a faith-based organization, or a for-profit organization. One of the partners must serve as a lead-agency, administering the funding for the program. The

¹¹ 21st CCLC programs that do charge a fee do so on a sliding scale basis such that no one will be turned away for being unable to pay.

largest category of lead agencies in New York State for the 2006 grant year¹² are Community-Based Organizations (41%), which is more than the national average (23%).

Throughout the history of the 20th century, OST programs have filled various needs, but always aiming to provide a safe space for children of working parents—whether picking up the slack due to school budget cuts during World War I, providing nutrition to hungry children during the Great Depression, or caring for the children whose mothers were working in defense industries during World War II (Halpern 2003). In the 1990’s, educators and policy makers became aware that children were experiencing large amounts of discretionary time—approximately 42% of their time—and that the hours between school and evening were a particularly important time for youth (Carnegie Corporation 1992). Additionally, members of law enforcement and juvenile justice advocates have become increasingly aware that this time is “prime time for juvenile crime,” leading to the creation of organizations like Fight Crime, Invest in Kids to promote OST programs from a criminal justice perspective.

2.4.1 OST Programs as Necessary

Human needs can be conceptualized as physiological, psychological, or as a hybrid concept like that of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan 2000). In SDT, the three central “innate” needs are competence, autonomy, and relatedness. Satisfaction of these needs is associated with effective functioning. The SDT approach to defining the concept of need is compatible with a youth development approach. Because youth are a people-in-process, transitioning to adulthood, their needs relate to their future.

¹² This is the most recent grant year for which data is available as programs are required to report data in the second year. The funding round for 2007 was canceled and no grants were awarded.

Youth are expected to someday become successful, productive adults. The details of what this means are different for each individual, but broadly adult functioning includes “finishing school, getting a job, contributing to the maintenance of a household, and maintaining adult friendships and loving relationships” (Davis 2003, 496). Just as competence, relatedness, and autonomy cannot be achieved in a piecemeal fashion, the development of youth into adults with successful functioning requires a holistic approach that addresses many aspects at once: cognitive, physical, social/emotional, ethnic identity, civic engagement, and career. “Each domain is an equal part of the healthy development of a young person, so no portion can be ignored” (Tsoi-a-Fatt 2008, 9). For youth, ‘need’ has a specific meaning—young people are trying to accomplish something (growing into adults) and they need the things that will let them accomplish this transition. Youth needs are conceptualized by many practitioners in the field as developmental assets.

Developmental assets are built by youth in many settings, including the family, school, and OST programs. Examples include access to enrichment activities and positive relationships with adults where the youth receive deserved praise. Some assets cannot be provided by parents, such as a community that values young people. Many OST programs have been founded from a developmental assets perspective, seeking to address the areas where their participants have been underserved. Among 21st Century Community Learning Centers, objectives include helping youth to improve their grades, facilitating older youth finding employment during summer vacations, helping students get into college, providing youth with a creative outlet, providing important resources like English language instruction to parents, and engaging youth in activism and

advocacy projects. The staff of 21st CCLC programs also have objectives for their programs that are difficult to quantify, and that may or may not be stated in their program proposal—for example, to give youth with low performance in school a place to excel, to empower youth and develop their sense of agency, and to effect culture change among the members of a community. High quality programs are those that successfully facilitate the growth of development assets.

Poor school districts routinely find themselves under-funded to maintain their facilities, retain qualified and experienced faculty and staff, and provide enrichment opportunities for youth, such as art and music programs (Dryfoos *et al.* 2005, Ginwright *et al.* 2005). Parents with middle class or higher incomes routinely provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for their children such as music lessons, organized sports, and religious or cultural schools. These expensive enrichment opportunities help produce developmental assets such as youth being valued by the community as resources, youth participation in creative projects, self-esteem, and engagement in learning. Low-income children need these same assets, but have fewer opportunities to produce them because of the scarcity of safe public space for interacting with the community. If youth need developmental assets, need to have some of these assets provided outside the family, and are not being adequately served by their school, then they are in need of high quality OST programs.

On a more basic level, many young people also need a safe place to be during the after-school hours. Although they are more than babysitting, most OST programs are considered to be childcare programs for the purposes of school-aged childcare regulations, because they enroll children (rather than being a drop-in center), and because

they provide more than one type of service. There is high demand for OST programs – for example, according to the America After 3pm dataset, 36% of all K-12 youth in New York State would participate in an OST program if one were available in the community¹³. As of 2009, the After School Alliance estimates that 21% (644,287) do¹⁴. Parents in a focus group at Youth for R.E.A.L. in the Bronx agreed that if not for the program they would need some other form of childcare during the after-school hours, as many of them got home from work just in time to pick up their children as the OST program is dismissed.

At this most basic level, OST programs provide a community-based alternative to paid childcare. Few parents are able to meet their children when they get Out-of-School. If they are able to use flex-time to work opposite shifts, this has costs in terms of stress for the parents and less high-density care for children (Folbre and Yoon 2003). When there is a scarcity of adult caregivers in a community—when there are many single parents, few relatives or friends available to provide childcare, or a large number of grandparents taking responsibility for children—covering this shift of child care is even more difficult. Youth are both more at risk to commit a crime and to be victims of crimes during the after-school time than at any other, and youth delinquency has been found numerous times to decrease in the presence of OST programs¹⁵.

¹³ See the Executive Summary of America After 3pm for New York State, http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/press_archives/america_3pm/NY_NR.pdf

¹⁴ See the New York State Fact Sheet from the After School Alliance, America After 3pm: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM_2009/AA3_Factsheet_NY_2009.pdf

¹⁵ See for example, Fight Crime Invest in Kids www.fightcrime.org/issue_aftersch.php

The degree to which youth need adult supervision during the after-school hours diminishes with age. However, there is evidence that teenagers benefit from OST programs, beyond decreased crime rates. For example, teenagers participating in OST programs have been shown to have better school attendance rates than teenagers who do not participate¹⁶. Additionally, OST programs are an important source of teen employment, such as the Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) program in the rural Schneveus district, whose staff consists mainly of local high school students. It is important that OST programs for older youth focus on meeting identified needs of these youth, rather than simply continuing programming more appropriately developed for younger youth (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008; Quinn 1999; Birmingham and White 2005). The academic enrichment program at Harvey Milk High School, for example, allows teenagers to choose specific classes that interest them but are not available during the normal school day.

In communities with little safe public space, OST programs also provide a place for youth to interact with one another and with adults outside of the institution of the school, without the intrusion of grades. They provide the opportunities for children to engage in constructive activities and unstructured play with peers in an environment that is safe and supervised by adults. In high quality programs, these opportunities contribute to the growth of developmental assets—to the increase in capabilities—and thereby fill a developmental need for young people.

¹⁶ See for example, The After School Alliance www.afterschoolalliance.org/after_out.cfm

2.5 Conclusion

OST programs are important because they can help to coordinate activities with youth across multiple settings and because they participate in the network of spillover effects and complementarities that produce community change. They capitalize on the assets in poor communities, such as public school buildings. They build social and human capital among youth and adults, as do other informal institutions. All of this occurs within the community, which, along with the market and the state, is one of three key institutions in the economy. Youth are important actors at the community level, and much activity that impacts youth occurs at this level of social organization. OST programs, like other community organizations, have the potential to help youth develop their capabilities and also their sense of agency, which makes them better able to make and enact good choices that impact themselves, their families, and their communities—and eventually other communities and macro levels of human organization, thus contributing to economic development at many levels.

Despite this potential, OST programs are clearly not the panacea for economic problems in poor communities. Nor are all of them of high quality. Evaluation that adequately captures community-level impacts is necessary to identify high quality programs and to develop research-based technical assistance to promote quality programs in communities that need them most. Moreover, an end to multigenerational poverty traps requires more than local responses, no matter how successful those programs are. As long as the global and national economy is one that relies on exploitation and inequality, there will be pockets of poverty, and in the absence of equal opportunity for youth, it is likely this poverty will continue to be reproduced from one generation to the

next. However, community activities to alleviate poverty, provide opportunities for youth to meet their full potential, raise consciousness, and create social capital all encourage collective action by poor people for their own behalf, breaking traps and moving from a culture of inequality to one of equality. By empowering youth and strengthening the connections between youth and adults working for change in their communities, OST programs like 21st CCLC can contribute to this much larger process of change.

There are many questions that need to be answered regarding OST programs, youth, and community-based economic development, some of which can be addressed with existing research and some of which require new original research. I turn to addressing some of those questions in empirical chapters that follow. In Chapter 4, I address the question of how to value OST programs for community-level benefits they may produce. I turn to questions of the allocation of funding in Chapter 5, where I address the following questions: 1) How well does the eligibility requirement for 21st CCLC funding capture demographic characteristics related to need for after-school programming? and 2) What factors explain the existing allocation of access to 21st CCLC programs?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

When research is used in policy making, the goal is to provide an adequate picture of reality in order to make an informed decision. As long as the information is analyzed and packaged in such a way that it can be used, more information, of a higher quality, at a greater depth, and representing a broader section of the population is better. But, fulfilling all of these criteria at once is difficult. Increasing the quality or depth of information means that it takes longer to procure, and so given real world constraints it must be obtained for a smaller sample. Likewise, gathering and analyzing information for a larger sample makes depth more difficult and time consuming. A researcher using mixed-methods can gather different types of information to address all of the concerns above, using each type of data and research model¹⁷ for its strengths.

Mixed-methodology refers to a combination of quantitative and qualitative data and/or research models. A mixed-method study may use primarily quantitative methods with mixed data – for example, an experimental design with qualitative questions included in an exit interview – or the reverse, such as a qualitative study that also collects demographic data. Alternately, a study may use a methodology that is itself mixed, generating quantitative and qualitative data, each according to different methodological

¹⁷ Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) distinguish between research methods and research model, where research model refers to the underlying philosophy and design of a research project, and may be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed in nature.

designs. This is identified as the most desirable application of mixed methods by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998). All mixed-method studies are founded on the belief that both quantitative and qualitative data are useful, though for different purposes and for different types of data.

Qualitative and mixed-method research is not commonly used in economics, but it is widely used in many social science, policy, and project evaluation settings (*ibid.*). Because qualitative data are especially useful for information not easily obtainable from official documents and other published materials (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004), the addition of qualitative research to economic analysis is especially appropriate in the presence of incomplete contracts. Moreover, qualitative research emphasizes the interpretation of social events and processes (Charmaz 2006; Mason 1996), meaning that it is useful for building empirically grounded theory about microeconomic activities, such as community-based economic development. The mixed-method and qualitative research process is an iterative process alternating between research and theory building (Charmaz 2006), and such an approach to evaluation has been advocated by Amartya Sen (2000) as well as practitioners of Multi-Criteria Evaluation (Munda 2004, Mathieson 2004).

The use of qualitative as well as quantitative data in economic research has a number of advantages. First, it provides new tools for confronting bias in research design and resultant data. Quantitative data are often assumed to be free of bias, but, like qualitative data, they are obtained through an imperfect process where mistakes are made and misunderstandings can occur (Charmaz 2006). Second, mixed-methodology allows for a triangulation of methods, where multiple types of information are gathered about the same question, issue, or case. These data points are used where different perspectives

may yield different answers to research questions. Third, mixed methodology facilitates interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary discussion by bridging the gaps between quantitative and qualitative researchers. Having familiar data available to aid in the interpretation of unfamiliar data facilitates learning across differences in methodology, epistemology, and ontology.

The General Theory of the Second Best (Lipsey and Lancaster 1956) provides a strong argument for mixed-method research. A first-best world, in this sense, is one that adheres to all of the assumptions of a ‘perfect’ model, such as perfect competition (the example in the seminal article cited above), the ideal quantitative methodology, or the ideal qualitative methodology. A ‘first-best’ quantitative study would have an experimental design, a random, representative sample, homoskedastic errors, and no omitted variables. A first-best qualitative study, in the tradition of feminist research, would exhibit no researcher effects in the generation of data and would live up to ideals of empowerment, participation, and freedom from bias in interpretation. Real-world researchers, however, are seldom, if ever, able to achieve these ‘first best’ research designs. Samples in quantitative research are not purely random—for example, excluding individuals without phones, or individuals who are not found in sampling sites like malls or universities. Quantitative models do not include all relevant independent variables, missing variables that are hidden and/or cannot be quantified, leading to heteroskedastic errors that have no predictable functional form (Hayes and Cai 2007).

Qualitative research is subject to no fewer ‘second-best’ conditions. Observing an event has an effect on that event, and as qualitative researchers recognize, all that researchers can truly do is interpret what they see and hear, which are in turn

interpretations by participants in the studies (Charmaz 2006, Mason 1996). Even when researchers adhere to values of empowerment, these values are difficult to implement and can produce unintended consequences (Ellsworth 1994). Although researchers can attempt to perfect their research designs, they are limited to striving for good research in a second-best world.

The General Theory of the Second Best cautions that, in such a world, it may be better to deviate further from the ideal design than to attempt but fail to reach it. If we cannot achieve perfect quantification of all important variables, it would be better to include qualitative information to contextualize and interpret quantitative results than to ignore non-quantified variables. In a qualitative study with a small and possibly biased sample, likewise, quantitative data can contextualize the sample by providing information on the rest of the neighborhood, city, or country in which research participants live. Research design in a second-best world means using diverse methodologies where they perform best to generate data of different forms.

The research for my dissertation adheres to this standard, using quantitative data to compare information about a large sample of communities and OST programs and qualitative data to provide information with more depth for a smaller sample of communities and programs. Below, I review research studies in the field of after-school programs, placing this study in a larger body of research. I then discuss the data sets used in the two mixed-method empirical chapters that follow.

3.2 Methodology in Studies of OST programs

The existing research on OST programs includes 1) small-sample qualitative studies, often focusing on a single case study; 2) larger-sample quantitative studies that may include small amounts of qualitative data, based, for example, a single site visit to each site; and 3) studies that offer a middle ground between these two approaches. The first type of study has found an outlet in professional, peer-reviewed journals such as *After School Matters*, and the researchers conducting these studies are often staff members of the program under study, employing participatory research methods. Studies of the second type, exemplified by the nation-wide *Mathematica* study of 44 21st CCLC grantees¹⁸, have largely been the result of government funding to evaluate the overall success of grant programs like 21st CCLC. Many examples of the third type of study have been gathered by the Harvard Family Research Project in a clearinghouse of research on OST programs. In general, large-sample quantitative studies with small amounts of qualitative research are less likely to identify positive impacts of OST programs, while qualitative and more thoroughly mixed studies are more likely to identify both positive and negative aspects of OST programming and to offer suggestions for improvement. Rather than taking a ‘fund-or-not’ approach to evaluating whether OST program produce positive impacts, studies with smaller samples are more likely to

¹⁸ The three reports from this study are available at <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/education/21stcentsumm.asp>.

address the more complex question of how—for better or for worse—OST programming is related to in-school success (Fanscali and Nevarez 2005)¹⁹.

The Mathematica study (2005) reports that 21st CCLC programs, after two to five years of existence, on average had little impact on the test scores of participating students. Funding for 21st CCLC programs was almost eliminated after the initial report was published—it was not until after Gov. Arnold Schwarzeneger publicly advocated for the funding to remain in the national provisions for No Child Left Behind that it was restored. The Mathematica study was based on a sample of 26 programs in elementary schools and eighteen in middle schools, relying primarily on data reported by staff and teachers and Annual Performance Report (APR) data. The Mathematica researchers also made one visit to each elementary school program site. The quality of APR data and teacher surveys can both be questioned. In the qualitative fields of New York’s 2005 APR, for example, multiple centers reported that they did not have the correct teacher survey at the time the APR was due and so had to impute their results from a previous version of the survey. Even when the correct survey is distributed, the surveys are not collected until after students are no longer in the teacher’s class. Additionally, I was able to observe 21st CCLC personnel entering their APR data at statewide trainings in February of 2005, and witnessed personnel entering numbers without referring to written records, indicating that they might have been making up the numbers on the spot, or at least were relying on an imperfect memory. As many of the 21st CCLC programs were

¹⁹ Fanscali and Nevarez are clear that they assume OST programs have some relationship to in-school success, but not necessarily that OST programs promote in-school success. Rather than trying to prove that such a relationship exists through data on outcomes, they utilize qualitative research to investigate the process through which participation in OST programs relates to performance in school.

start-ups run by administrators with no prior experience, data collection was most likely an unfamiliar task and a low priority while attempting to also start and effectively run an OST program for low-income youth. It is likely that the APR reports have increased in quality over time as the centers have become more established, but the accuracy of the data is still an open question.

The Mathematica report concludes that children in the programs were more likely to feel safe after school than the control group, but that the OST programs had no positive impacts on grades, teacher reports of behavior, or test scores. The study also found that children in OST programs were more likely to engage in some negative behaviors, as reported by their teachers. The emphasis on grades, teacher reports of behavior, and test scores is a further limitation of the study. While most 21st CCLC programs do profess to goals of increasing academic performance of their youth, they also officially declare many other objectives, including helping youth to form and maintain positive relationships with adults and peers, giving youth a place to excel, and increasing the involvement of parents in their children's education. None of these outcomes are measured in the APR, so success or failure in these objectives cannot be established by studies relying on APR data. Evaluators working with 21st CCLC programs in New York have discussed this problem repeatedly in the New York State After School Network (NYSAN) researcher's group, advocating for a broader collection of data in the APR. Likewise, because an ideal experimental design is impossible in this case, it would be impossible to prove that any improvements in grades were due to the OST program and not other sources, or that in the absence of countervailing influences, like poor school quality, these effects would not be realized. Most 21st CCLC schools are in Schools in

Need of Improvement (SINI), because this is a federal funding priority. Lastly, it is premature to judge an OST program based on the outcomes they are able to achieve in two to three years of operation, as curriculum and staff are both in flux at the beginning of any new endeavor. The short-term nature of funding decisions around youth programs is one factor that contributes to failure of these programs.

At the other end of the spectrum are studies based on a small, qualitative sample of one or two programs, using observation, interviews, and analysis of documents over the course of a year or more. In addition to evaluating the success of programs, these qualitative studies tend to emphasize substantive suggestions for practitioners regarding program design, and evaluate approaches to accomplishing a certain task—for example, bringing together groups and individuals with a different perspectives on the same issue (Austria 2006) and creating a culture of agency in a youth program (Lyons 2000).

Situated between these two extremes in sample size and methodology are studies using mixed methods to evaluate a somewhat larger sample, and meta-studies, often funded by non-profit organizations in the youth development field²⁰. Moving beyond outcomes as documented in the APR, such studies have, for example, measured youth engagement—a common program objective—through a combination of interest, enjoyment, and effort (Harvard 2007). In another study, quality was measured in terms of seven processes: “supportive relations with adults, supportive relations with peers, youth engagement, appropriate program structure, cognitive growth opportunities, mastery orientation [where children can progress in skill in their activities]...and

²⁰ See the Harvard Family Research Project program on Out of School Time:
<http://www.hfrp.org/out-of-school-time>

autonomy opportunities” (*ibid.* 2). Common positive impacts of OST programs documented in studies published through these non-profit organizations include improvements in school attendance rates, decreases in crime, increased feelings of safety, improved social and personal skills, and health outcomes such as reductions in obesity and substance abuse (Durlak and Weisberg 2007, Harvard 2007).

While several studies argue that OST programs have an impact on social skills, the national Mathematica evaluation of 21st CCLC found that participants actually deteriorated in some of their teacher-reported behaviors, as reported in the APR. The low data quality of the APR can help account for the differences between results of qualitative or mixed-method studies with quantitative studies like the Mathematica study. The teacher surveys, for example, are given to teachers months after the students are in their class. Some programs have response rates of 20% or lower, and the surveys that are returned are frequently incomplete. There are also other potential sources of error in the surveys - in the 2006 APR, for example, several grantees stated that they used the incorrect version of the surveys, and had to impute their results.

Using teacher reports of behavior to evaluate OST programs is problematic in many ways. Although OST programs and schools have much to gain by collaboration, the relationship between them is often competitive or antagonistic rather than cooperative. Teachers completing reports of behavior, which will then be attributed to the OST program, are essentially being asked to provide documentation that it is the OST program that led to behavior changes, rather than their own teaching, although such surveys cannot actually discern the true cause of the behavior change because there is no control or comparison group.

The case studies presented smaller-sample studies are able to do what the Mathematica study does not—to examine the detailed nuances of OST programming and the many manifestations of the influence of these programs have on participants. By observing and speaking with youth in the context of the OST program, they include observations of results that, while not readily quantifiable, are probably more reliably linked to the OST program itself than are changes in grades and test scores—for example, observing children engaging a group leader in discussion following a lecture on gardening that followed a non-conventional teaching style (Rahm and Grimes 2005). As mentioned above, the purposes of the studies are also different. The Mathematic approach aimed to determine *if* OST programs had an impact on youth—information meant to be used for making funding decisions—while the other studies are oriented towards the goal of understanding *how* OST programs can increase their efficacy in achieving their stated goals, with the implicit assumption that OST programs are necessary, especially for youth who have no place else to go. Such research can then be used to direct the necessary funds to the highest quality programs. Crafting better large-scale evaluations of 21st CCLC programs does not mean replacing one failed formula, using grades, test scores, and teacher reports of behavior, with another - trying to approach an 'ideal' of a quantitative study but failing, possibly resulting in more flaws in research design. It would be a mistake to invest more resources in collecting more flawed quantitative data, rather than investing those resources in trying something different to increase the richness of data available to evaluators.

3.3 Description of the Dataset

The data in my dissertation are derived from samples of 21st CCLC programs at multiple geographic levels. The qualitative sample includes five programs located in the region between Albany and New York City, involving a relationship of a year or more with two programs. The location of these five programs is mapped in Figure 3.1. Quantitative analysis is conducted for all 735 programs and all block groups in New York State where possible, and for the Albany City School District computing resources demanded a smaller sample²¹. The data comes from three sources—original qualitative research, the 2006 APR, and the 2000 US Census at the block-group level.

3.3.1 Data on 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Original Qualitative Research

Over three years I worked with OST programs to generate a rich bank of qualitative data. The first phase of my research was to conduct focus groups at two statewide trainings for personnel from 21st CCLC programs, in February 2005. This allowed me to develop research instruments based on participant suggestions and the NYSAN Quality Self-Assessment Tool (see www.nysan.org).

Over the 2005-2006 academic year, my research assistants and I made two to three site visits to each of five 21st CCLC programs: 1) a school-run program in a public middle school in Yonkers, 2) the YMCA Program at a public elementary school in Albany, 3) the Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) program at a public

²¹ The specific geoprocessing issue that required limiting the sample is discussed at greater length in Chapter 5.

elementary school in Schenevus, 4) Inwood House's Youth for R.E.A.L. programs at PS33 and MS 399 in the Bronx, and 5) the academic enrichment program at Harvey Milk High School (see Figure 3.1). These site visits involved nine freshmen research assistants from Skidmore College, who conducted interviews, led focus groups, and wrote response papers, in addition to meeting for weekly discussions about the project. Together we produced field notes, essays, and transcripts of interviews and focus groups in English and Spanish. I sought to implement youth empowerment practices in the conduct of my research (itself about youth empowerment and agency), making my research participatory in nature for both myself and the young people involved. Working with Skidmore freshmen and high school students at HMHS, I was able to involve young people as partners in knowledge creation.

During this time I also worked more closely with two programs. In 2005-2006, I taught a weekly class during the academic enrichment period at Harvey Milk High School. The class averaged five students, though the members of the class changed over the course of the year due to new students transferring to HMHS and other students dropping out or transferring to different schools. The topic of the course was "Research Methods" and I guided my students through the development of their own research project, with student-identified research questions: "What impact does HMHS have on its students and their community?" and "How can we improve HMHS?" Together we produced student journals, field notes, a research plan, a survey designed by the class, results of the pilot test of this survey in Washington Square Park and Greenwich Village, and a 25-minute documentary, including student photography and interviews with

members of the HMHS community. The documentary was screened at HMHS in June 2006, with a discussion following the screening.

I also worked with the Youth for R.E.A.L. programs in the Bronx in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. This long-term relationship allowed me to complete many additional hours of research, including observation over five consecutive days in March 2007, and to conduct further interviews and focus groups with staff, parents, and participants.\

3.3.2 Data on OST Programs and Communities: APR and Census

The Annual Performance Report for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers is a federally mandated report completed by each center at the end of their second year of operation as well as in subsequent years. The APR is maintained by Learning Point Associates. The data are comprised of self-reported evaluations conducted by the programs, either in-house or working with an outside evaluation consultant or firm. I have primarily used data on staffing and attendance.

The 2006 APR includes data on grantees awarded money in 2003, 2004 and 2005 (the data became available in 2007). It includes data on program characteristics as well as limited data on outcomes of the programs, specifically changes in grades and teacher reports of behavior, as utilized in the Mathematica Report. There are two units of analysis in the dataset – the center, which serve students from one or more schools, and the grantee, which may operate between one and eleven centers. Figure 3.2 below presents the statewide distribution of 21st CCLC programs as of 2007 (a new round of funding was awarded in 2009, data for which will be available in 2011). 21st CCLC programs tend to be concentrated in urban areas, where there are more communities that meet the income-based eligibility requirement. APR data are combined with Census demographics at the

block group level. The specific Census variables included in the analysis are discussed in Chapter 5.

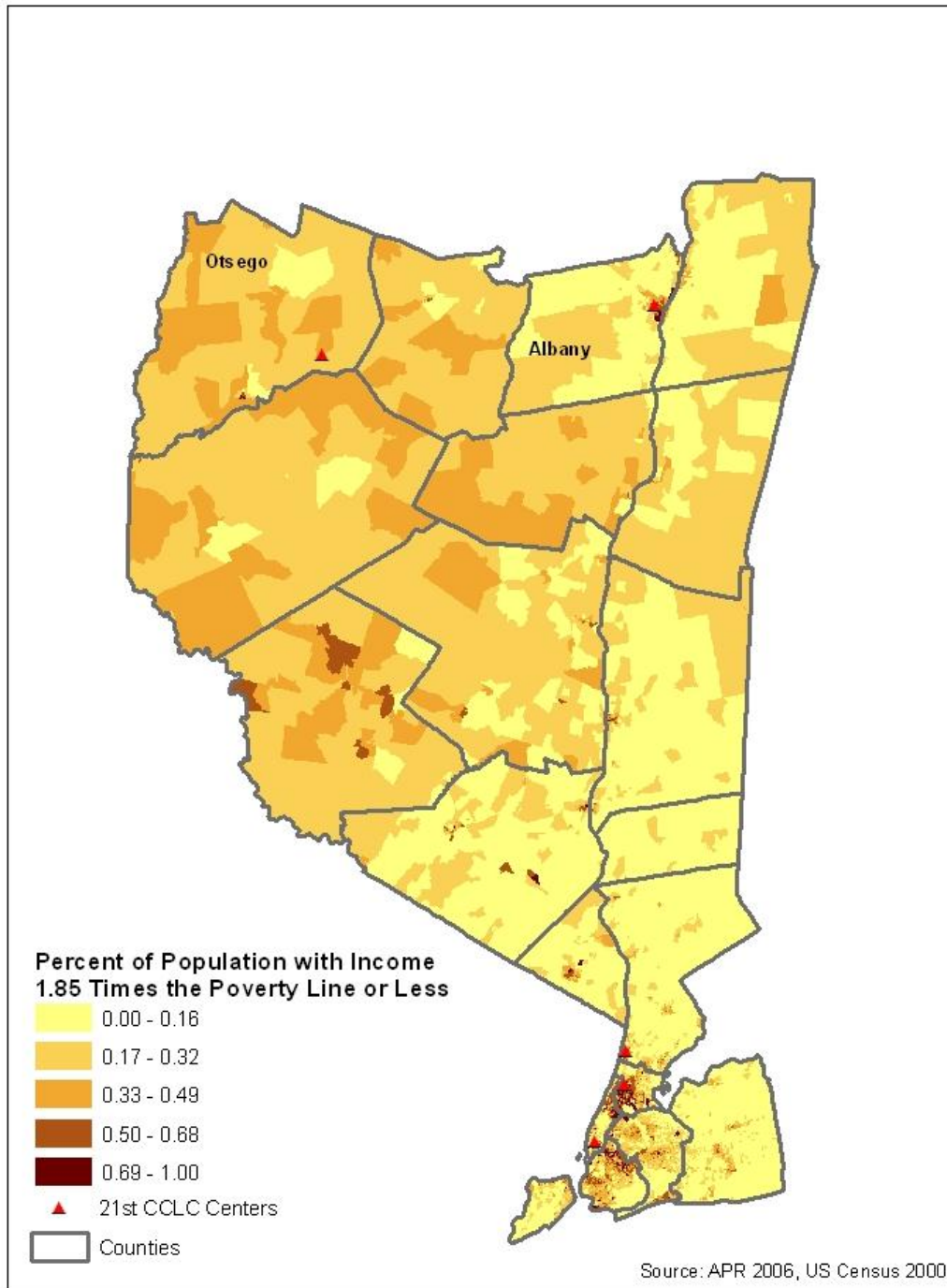


Figure 3.1: Sites Included in Qualitative Research

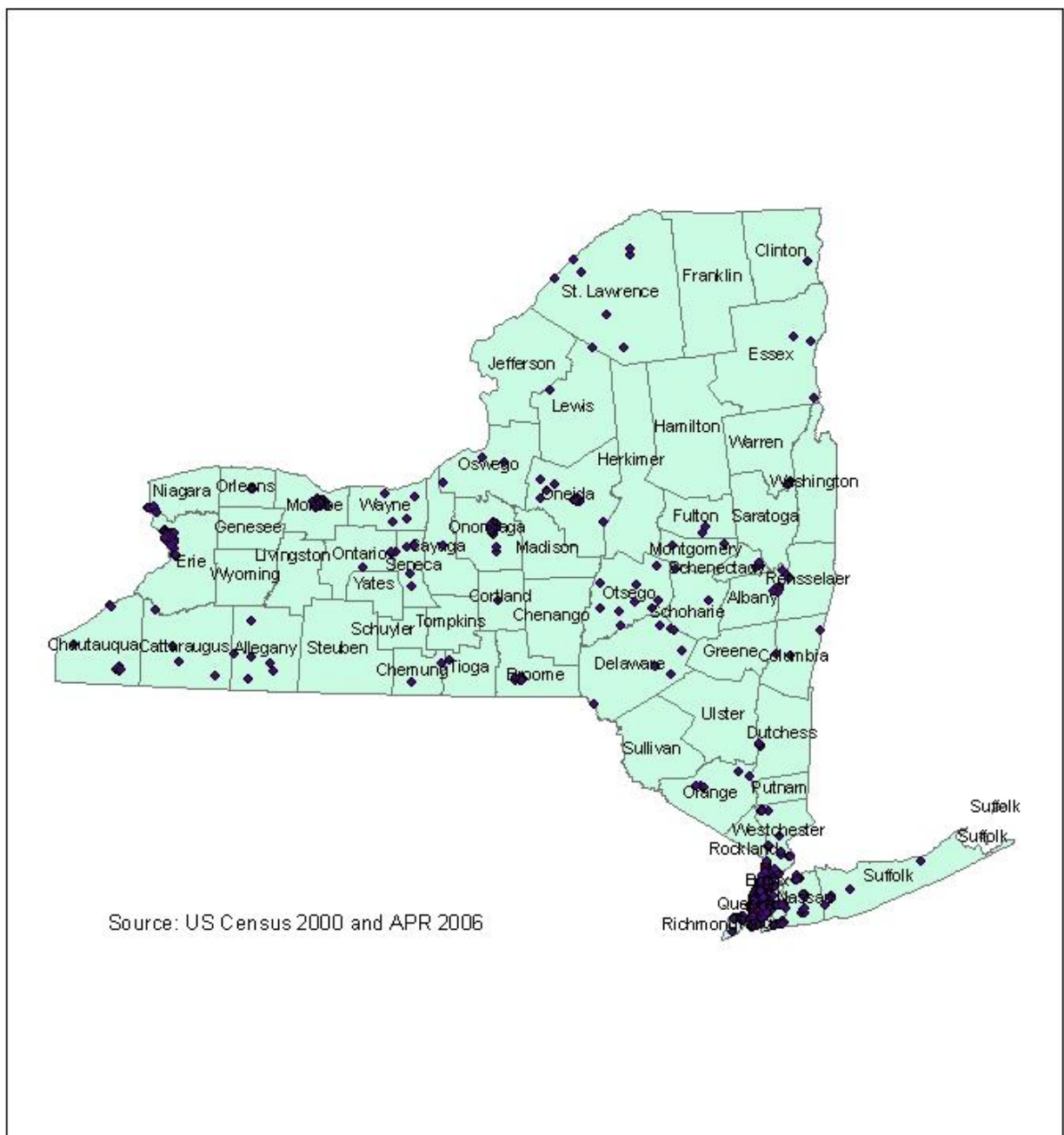


Figure 3. 2: Statewide Distribution of 21st CCLC Programs as of 2006

3.4 Conclusion

It would be impossible to have a complete dataset explaining all the vagaries of growing up. There exists a large amount of uncertainty in the process of developing from child to adult, as well as many opportunities for choices to lead to drastic change—both choices by young people themselves and choices by others in their lives. Moreover, there are so many influences on young people, and so little ‘control,’ that parsing out the specific impact of an individual program or curriculum is very difficult. Relying on imperfect data to make decisions concerning youth can lead to mistakes, bad decisions, and throwing the baby out with the bathwater. However, it would be equally dangerous to allow decision-makers to make judgments without the participation of the many stakeholders involved and concrete information to justify decisions.

In this study, I have added to the methodology for studying youth, and to the body of data on youth, through a mixed-methods approach. In the following two chapters I use these data to investigate two sets of research questions about OST programs for low-income youth. The first relates to weighing costs and benefits. What are the quantitative and qualitative benefits of OST programs? What is ignored when evaluation relies only on a narrow, quantitative definition of benefits? If we do include other non-quantifiable benefits, how highly do we need to value them in order for the benefits to outweigh the costs? The second empirical chapter analyzes the distribution of existing 21st CCLC programs, relating access to 21st CCLC programs to demographic characteristics of communities. How can we explain the distribution of 21st CCLC programs? In particular, are they located in and near the communities with the greatest need?

CHAPTER 4

A MIXED-METHOD EXPLORATION OF THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF FREE OST PROGRAMS

4.1 Introduction

Should we fund free OST programs? Which programs should we fund? How do we meet the needs of parents and communities to care for children in the after-school time period, and why should we? Decisions about after school funding are made by policy makers relying on evaluation data to guide their decisions, typically through some application of cost-benefit analysis to determine whether a program produces net benefits. A full understanding of the benefits of youth programs and other programs related to community development requires moving beyond the restrictive assumptions used in CBA in practice, but this does not require abandoning the spirit of cost-benefit analysis. Even if we consider only the most basic of benefits, child care and job creation, the benefits of 21st CCLC programs will be shown to out-weigh the costs. However, there are many other benefits to OST programs that are difficult or impossible to quantify. These benefits are still important for decision makers to consider, and should be included in evaluation research. While they do not provide the false sense of precision of a single positive or negative number, studying qualitative benefits to OST programs aids in the development of high quality programs and gives decision makers better tools for justifying their decisions.

In this chapter, I critically discuss methodologies used to make decisions about the best use of funding resources, specifically cost-benefit analysis (the most common method used by economists). I then discuss the costs of the 21st CCLC OST programs in New York State. Next, I discuss some of the benefits of these programs. Typically, evaluations of OST programs focus on the direct benefits to youth participating in the programs, specifically changes in grades and test scores (Mathematica Policy Research 2005; Naftzger, Margolin, and Kaufman 2005; Russell *et al.* 2007; Russell, Mielke, and Reisner 2008). Other studies have adopted broader measures of outcomes, but maintain an individual focus—such as increased feelings of safety after school, increased attendance rates at school, and improved social and personal skills (Durlak and Weissberg 2007). I focus on benefits related to community development that are often left out of evaluations. These benefits are 1) provision of safe child care, 2) job creation, and 3) public good benefits produced through the role of OST programs as a bridge between the family and the school. The third benefit also relates to increasing capabilities. The first two are presented using primarily quantitative data, while the last is supported through qualitative data. I end this chapter with a summary of my results.

4.2 The Decision-Making Process and Evaluation Methodology

Because OST programs and other non-profits do not often earn money through market-based economic activities, someone has to decide to grant them money to fund their operations. Whether the decision-maker or decision-making group is connected to the government or a foundation, there are several steps in the decision process, typically involving some combination of methods such as summary judgment, the analysis of data,

and social bargaining among stakeholders. Someone with the power to allocate money must decide that a need, such as OST programming, should be funded. They then determine guidelines for proposed programs (whether loose or strict), how to communicate these guidelines to potential grantees, and the criteria to be used for determining whether proposals fulfill the guidelines and are worthy of funding. The grant making body then issues a Request for Proposals (RFP). Potential grantees must make their own decisions, choosing to design programs that are fundable based on the RFP guidelines, and submitting their applications. In turn, individuals from the grant-making body must evaluate proposals and score them according to the appropriate rubric, which may only be one step in deciding exactly which programs to fund, especially if many programs score highly on their applications. Decision-makers must also decide the criteria to identify high quality and/or successful programs, for future decisions about continuing or ending funding. On a daily basis, grantees make decisions about the operation and strategic planning of their programs. The long-term funding decisions related to OST programs are examples of complex decisions, because there are many stakeholders and many criteria involved. “As perceived complexity increases, decision makers seem more apt to use shortcuts to cope with unmanaged uncertainty and ambiguity” (Nutt 1998, 1150, citing Nutt 1989). Examples of such short cuts are assigning prices for costs and benefits for which there is no actual price-making market and assigning probabilities (such as zero) to uncertain events. Rigid, specific rubrics in scoring grant applications are also a way to cope with the ambiguity of proposed programs serving drastically different target populations and adopting different objectives. Additionally, decision-makers may simply use ‘judgment,’ applying “their

intuition to select among courses of action without explaining (or being able to explain) their reasoning or rationale” (*ibid.*, 1148).

Decisions about the use of public money typically rely on some type of data, qualitative, quantitative, or mixed, and it has been argued that these decisions should be made through a ‘reasoned’ approach (Sen 2000), including the participation of stakeholders (Munda 2004). Data are translated into a decision through a process involving judgments about whether an alternative meets certain criteria or conforms to certain norms, as well as social interaction and some form of bargaining among stakeholders. While decision-makers often use data to influence their decisions, in the end, people must actually make the decisions. When a methodology, such as CBA, is relied on to make the decision (to offer a “yes or no” as lamented by conference participants quoted in Little and Mirrlees (1994, 63)), the power to make decisions is given to the technocrats who determine the quantification schemes and weights for costs and benefits in the equation. Even then, people are still making the decision through indirect means. In order to adequately guide decision makers, evaluation data should be as complete as possible and packaged in such a way as to give good guidance. Cost-benefit analysis is founded on a simple guideline for packaging advice: do the benefits outweigh the costs? However, the methodology also includes multiple layers of questionable or false assumptions about the nature of data, costs, and benefits (Sen 2000). Moreover, CBA as it is practiced fails to live up to the methodology as laid out in two classic works, one by Amartya Sen, Partha Dasgupta, and Stephen Marglin for United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) (second edition in 1992), and the other by Little and Mirrless for the World Bank (1969). Participants at a 1994

discussion of Littles and Mirrles, hosted by the World Bank, complained of inadequate data quality, inability to calculate shadow prices for key items, and the inappropriate use of CBA to make decisions for policy makers. A central problem in CBA is that it ignores all values except price, on the assumption that price can adequately capture all-important values (Sen 2000, Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004).

Below I discuss four critiques of CBA important to the analysis of OST and other youth programs – the importance of rights and values, multiple measures of value, participation, and uncertainty and complexity. These four critiques all suggest the importance of qualitative data and iterative processes in evaluation practice. Qualitative research is advocated by many practitioners of Multi-Criteria Evaluation (MCE), including iterative interviewing, collaborative benefits mapping, and participation of a wide range of stakeholders (Burgha 2004, Mathieson 2004, Munda 2004). A better CBA would include explicit consideration of rights and values, because these are important to stakeholders (Sen 2000, Munda 2004). Cultural change, the protection of rights, the expansion of freedom and opportunity—these and other important potential policy impacts have no market price, but people will articulate in interviews how they fit into their values, price or no. Additionally, CBA should incorporate uncertainty and multiple pathways of causation, which are best identified through the use of qualitative data as well as quantitative data. Likewise, while theories of causation cannot be tested statistically with qualitative data, processes of cause and effect that are valuable in predicting uncertain future events can be observed and explored through qualitative research over time (Mathieson 2004). Qualitative research is especially helpful for analysis of costs and benefits that are difficult to price, may occur in the future, and are

the result of complex relationships—such as the impacts of OST programs on youth and their communities.

4.2.1 Inclusion of Rights and Values

While the spirit of CBA does not demand indifference to rights and values, these are often ignored in practice. The first foundational concept of CBA is explicit valuation, which “demands full explication of the reasons for taking a decision, rather than relying on an unreasoned conviction or on an implicitly derived conclusion” (Sen 2000, 935). This can be translated as the mandate that decisions should be based on an explicit statement of values. Values determine which reasons are acceptable for making a decision (Munda 2004). However, values differ depending on the context, the stakeholders, and the methodology used as a decision aid. For example, acceptable reasons for a decision in a military context would be that the activity will reduce casualties and/or collateral damage (Mathieson 2004). Military decision makers treat lives saved or lost as a measure of what they value, and are allowed to make what decision makers view as essential decisions without referencing costs (Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004). Most cost-benefit analyses treat market value (dollars saved or lost) as a measure of what they value, and attempt with at best limited success to translate all values into these terms (*ibid.*).

The second foundational concept of CBA, consequential evaluation, is that costs and benefits should be “evaluated by looking at the consequences of the respective decisions” not on the basis of the ‘rightness’ of those decisions. Mahatma Gandhi’s “deontological insistence on nonviolence irrespective of consequences” is an example of

non-consequential evaluation (Sen 2000, 936). Many every-day decisions are made through non-consequential evaluation. Himmelweit (2000) argues that women make decisions about caring for children on the basis of what is right in the context of their relationships, rather than because of the consequences of their caring labor. However, even decisions made through consequential valuation are founded on implicit deontological agreements—for example, that an action be legal or (more nebulously) moral. Sen (2000, 936) argues that consequential valuation should go beyond the fulfillment of desire (the standard utilitarian concept) to also include “whether certain actions have been performed or particular rights have been violated.” This allows decision-makers to use the fulfillment of norms or values that have been agreed upon as a decision criteria, but based on the rightness of the consequences, not the rightness of the action itself. In a social decision process, it is important to be explicit about these foundational agreements, because they influence the decision whether or not they are explicitly discussed (Munda 2004).

The inclusion of rights and values in CBA requires abandoning what Sen termed “evaluative indifferences”—nonvaluation of actions, motives, and rights; indifference to intrinsic value of freedom; and an instrumental view of behavioral values (943-944). Non-valuation of actions, motives, and rights is unnecessary and limits the power of CBA to explain what people see as important. Discussed in section 4.5 below, valuing actions, motives, and rights can be accomplished by moving beyond price (Sen 2000; Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004). In the case of OST programs, priceless values might include promoting equal opportunity or maintaining a fair distribution of funds, which in turn implies (among other things) protecting against discrimination based on race, sex, etc.

Fulfilling the right of equality of opportunity could be used to justify providing youth from low-income families with a support network of educational and community institutions like that routinely available to youth from more affluent communities, such as caring youth-adult relationships beyond the family, safe public space, and access to enrichment activities.

Additionally, CBA ignores endogenous changes in values, norms, and behaviors particularly those involving “cultural challenges and also movements of people from one cultural setting to another (for example, from rural to urban areas)” (Sen 2000, 945). Youth are continually in the process of forming their values, for better or worse, and expanding the set of opportunities to youth is essential to empowering them to make free, adaptive choices. Objectives of culture change are hard to measure but cannot be ignored in order to adequately evaluate programs, as these difficult-to-measure objectives are common among programs. However, what changes should be valued positively depends on the perspectives and values of stakeholders involved. Balancing these different perspectives requires participation.

4.2.2 Participation in Decision Making

While many private decisions are made by a judgment process with little explanation²², stakeholders in public decisions like the funding of OST programs demand a reasoned approach that includes their values. This requires a participatory approach to decision making, such as through extended peer communities. Participation in decision making raises many questions – “have all the social actors the same importance (i.e.

²² In Nutt’s (1998) study of corporate decision-making, for example, 14% of decisions in his sample were made by a simple judgment process.

weight)? Should a socially desirable ranking be determined on the grounds of the majority principle? Should some veto power be conceded to minorities? Are income distribution effects important?” (Munda 2003, 667). Moreover, using participation in a creative rather than verification function requires transparency in the decision making process. Participatory approaches must also recognize that policy evaluation is not a one-shot activity, but rather is a learning process that happens over long periods of time (*ibid.*).

Munda argues that the important lessons of MCE relevant to participation are: 1) the relationship between decision maker and analyst is always embedded in a social framework, 2) a variety of participatory methods, such as those used in qualitative research, should be combined, 3) a cyclic or iterative evaluation process is necessary to incorporate learning by the scientific team undertaking the study, which allows for “continuous testing of assumptions and unavoidable biases of the study team”, 4) the first step in the process should be an analysis of the relevant institutions in order to identify stakeholders, 5) the decision analysts/study team should not accept participatory inputs uncritically, as such a process may leave out some important social actors and/or privilege the voices of certain actors (670-671).

Sen also advocates participation, highlighting it as one of the most important freedoms that must be maintained in the development process: “among the opportunities that we have reason to value is the freedom to participate. If participatory deliberations were to be hindered or weakened, something of value would be lost” (Sen 2000, 5). Participation, however, needs to move beyond ‘verification’ processes to ‘creation’ processes where stakeholders have power over the decision at hand. Creation implies

that stakeholders can come up with new alternatives and are involved in changing the nature of the evaluation through an iterative learning process (Munda 2004).

In the context of OST programs, stakeholders include, at a minimum, 1) staff at community-based organizations, 2) school faculty, administration, and staff, 3) parents and guardians, and 4) program participants (youth). Other community members, such as business owners, law enforcement personnel, firefighters, library staff, clergy and lay staff at places of worship, and parks and recreation staff—all of whom participate in some OST programs as partners—may also be active stakeholders. A participatory decision-making process about OST funding requires sensitivity to the needs of these various stakeholders, including constraints on time and transportation. Moreover, participation should not be a burden on stakeholders who have many other responsibilities. For example, it is not a parent's full-time job to influence decisions about their child's OST program, and there should be opportunities for them to participate in decision-making without requiring excessive commitments of time and energy on their part. Collaborative research, where the research process is designed to meet specific needs of participants in the study, and Participatory Action Research, where researchers participate and help in the project they are studying, are methodologies that have potential for needs-sensitive participation (see, for example, Webb *et al.* 1966 and Sullivan and Kelly 2001). Including children's voices presents its own challenge. As with adult stakeholders, the participation of children should not add excessive responsibilities to their lives, and their participation may be in the context of the OST program itself, by including them in collaborative and participatory research. Children have their own language, and they view the world differently than adults, with an

understanding of the broader world that grows as they mature. Including children in research, decision making, and planning requires creative, age-appropriate activities, and staff who are skilled in making adult activities accessible to young people. The differences in the way children think, however, in no way negate the fact that they do think—and they have opinions about how to best meet their needs and wants. Children’s voices may be dismissed as fickle, because they are even more sensitive to emotion than adults—they may say they hate a program one day, because they had a bad day, but go back to loving it the next—but when their stated opinions are contextualized by ongoing observation and participation of researchers, this apparent fickleness can be adequately interpreted.

4.2.3 Multiple Measures of Value

Including rights and values in decision-making requires multiple measures of values that can be compared to justify a decision. This is in contrast to standard practice in CBA that relies on additive accounting and market price as a single measure of value (Sen 2000). It is possible in theory to include distributional weights in an additive accounting paradigm, but in practice these are rarely used. Market value ignores distributional issues because the scarce dollars of the poor and the plentiful dollars of the affluent receive the same weight. Moreover, there is no weight attached to changes in the distribution of wealth that will result from the policy/program (946). While additive accounting is a foundational concept of CBA, Sen argues it is not necessary to the spirit of the methodology. Other methods are possible, such as the multiplicative Nash product in a Nash bargaining model, or a concave function reflecting diminishing marginal utility of income and expenditure. Because the quantities of benefits are based on non-basic judgments, a better procedure would require “conjoint determination of quantities of

benefits and their weights” (Sen 2000, 939). Moreover, a simple additive model may not adequately capture costs and benefits when benefits are projected values rather than realized values and there are multiple pathways of causality, meaning that a single cause contributes to multiple effects and vice versa (Mathieson 2004).

Many things of value have no price, and so in CBA prices are assigned to these values or they are ignored all together.

The imperatives of protecting human life, health, and the natural world around us, an ensuring equitable treatment of rich and poor, and of present and future generations, are not sold in markets and cannot be assigned meaningful prices. The point is not that *everything* of value is priceless; some of the benefits of protecting life, health, and nature can and should be priced. The fish we eat, the hospital beds we need when were sick, even the experience we enjoy when visiting natural wonders, do have monetary values. Cost-benefits analysis incorporating these partial values will lean slightly towards protecting health and the environment. It will not, however, go nearly far enough; it will never reflect the full strength of our impulse to protect life, health, and nature (Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004, 207)

Ackerman and Heinzerling argue that CBA is in practice “complete cost-incomplete benefit analysis,” but that “no theoretical construct or practical necessity justifies relying on such an unbalanced comparison” (Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004, 207). The use of willingness to pay to value things that have no market value—and hence, when people state how much the are willing to pay, they know they will not be asked for the money—is problematic at best but is often used to value things such as “prized components of the environment” (Sen 2000, 946). These values are taken as a real measure of the loss involved when the environment is damaged—Sen gives the example of oil spills, where values estimated through contingent valuation have been

used to determine the liability of the party that caused the damage, regardless of the actual costs of repairing the damage. The inability of one person to purchase the “good” also makes measurement of price difficult. I might say I am willing to pay \$50 more per month for adequate education in my community—and \$50 might be all I could afford—but that \$50 could not possibly cover the entire cost. “What I am willing to contribute must, given the nature of the task, depend on how much I expect others to contribute” (Sen 2000, 949), and on how much I have in the first place. For a person who has very little, \$50 would indicate a high value on the public good.

Additionally, in market valuation the potential for adequate compensation of the losers by the winners is taken as sufficient evidence that an action should take place—as Sen writes, “Don’t worry, my dear loser, we can compensate you fully, and the fact that we don’t have the slightest intention of actually paying this compensation makes no difference; it is merely a difference in distribution” (947). While economists agonize over the question of the allocation of resources, they thereby ignore questions of the distribution of the gains that result from ‘efficient’ allocation—a fundamental problem in much economic analysis (Bowles 2004). Distributional questions are of vital importance, however, to both the winning and losing sides. Moreover, the path-dependent results of initial distributions can explain the existence of inefficient allocations and lack of efficient adjustment over time. Those who have won in the past now have both an incentive and the power to hold onto to their winnings, even at the cost of efficiency (Bowles 2004, Braunstein and Folbre 2001). In the process, adverse initial conditions and inequalities can be exacerbated over time (Bowles and Gintis 2002,

Eeckhout 1999). Distribution therefore should be considered in both assigning weights and in evaluating outcomes.

Ackerman and Heinzerling (2004) argue for 1) evaluating costs and benefits in a holistic manner, 2) valuing moral imperatives above cost comparisons (as is done in military decision making), 3) using a precautionary approach to uncertainty, and 4) valuing fairness towards the poor and powerless, as well as future generations (210). By comparing costs and benefits as a whole, but not forcing them to be expressed in the same units, decision-analysis can avoid the pitfalls of willingness-to-pay methodology. The incorporation of multiple measures of value, such as those used in MCE, does not negate the need for participation of stakeholders. As Ackerman and Heinzerling attest, holistic valuation and participatory decision making requires abandoning the notion of a single ‘formula’ for making seemingly perfect decisions in a second-best world.

Costs and benefits can be compared, however, in complex methodologies like MCE, which involve qualitative data, participation, and iterative processes, and provide information useful to decision-makers but do not make decisions for them. These methodologies are often used the military, where decision-makers feel the need to justify complex decisions, but do not want to rely on a simple method like CBA that reduces costs and benefits all to a single measure (Mathieson 2004). MCE, especially in the form labeled “social multi-criteria evaluation,” has also been used to make decisions about public resources when multiple stakeholders are involved, such as water policy in Italy (Munda 2004). Unlike CBA, MCE allows multiple measures of value, analysis of complex pathways of causation, and the inclusion of different levels of time frame and scale.

4.2.4 Completeness, Uncertainty, and Complexity

Lastly, the lack of completeness in evaluation research, the uncertainty of future events, and complexity in causation, scale, and time frame all limit the ability of CBA to provide adequate information to guide decision-makers.

4.2.4.1 Completeness

The completeness assumption of Cost-Benefit Analysis—that individuals are engaging in an optimization process and that future utility and disutility can be measured through expected values—substitutes for a real analysis of complexity, imperfect information, and uncertainty. Along with the reliance on market price as a measure of value, these limitations can be mitigated through the inclusion of qualitative data and the use of abductive, iterative, or learning processes for making decisions. Sen argues that it is straightforward to move beyond the assumption of completeness—one needs only assume a *maximization* process, where “we do not choose an alternative that is worse than another that can be chosen instead” (Sen 2000, 940). However, children may not know what options are really available to them, instead seeing only the small subset of possibilities visible within their community. The isolation of public housing projects, where young people have little access to role models from outside of the project, has been found to have negative impacts for youth (Pratt 2009, Furman 2010, Schwartz *et al.* 2010). The view these youth have of what is possible may be further skewed if the most successful individuals leave the community and so are not visible. Maximization given what is believed to be available will then be quite different from anything resembling true optimization. A creative iterative or learning process in evaluation can lead to the generation of more alternatives (Burgha 2004), implying that such a process is better than

a simple additive accounting of costs and benefits when there is such incompleteness in the range of choices.

4.2.4.2 Uncertainty

The expected utility principle measures future utility as the weighted average of possible outcomes, where their probability of occurrence is the weight. It typically relies on other assumptions as well, such as no risk aversion or loss aversion (Bowles 2004, Gintis 2000). As Sen points out, when the weights to different possible outcomes are determined by the analyst, relying on assumptions of full knowledge, these weights themselves need justification, in addition to the “axiomatically demanding framework of expected value reasoning” (Sen 2000, 942). The weights are non-basic judgments, based on “factual presumptions, often made in an implicit way” (942). The weights are no more than importance coefficients, not actually measuring the underlying value of each possible cost or benefit (Munda 2004, Mathieson 2004). Uncertain events (for which probabilities are unknown) may simply be assigned a probability weight of zero, thereby removing them from analysis.

Moving beyond the expected utility principle requires a different method of valuing future events, incorporating qualitative information and an abductive process to enable decision makers to judge and value uncertain events. The implications of the weights an analyst chooses in CBA may not become apparent until after the analysis has become completed. “Rather than taking the weights as unalterable entities, they could be offered as tentative values, which remain open to revision as and when the results of using those values become clear. Then, instead of having a one-way sequence of valuation, we could proceed from tentative values to the applied results and then rethink

as to whether the weights need revising in the light of the generated rankings of alternatives” (Sen 2000, 943).

Iterative valuation is especially useful in situations where the costs and benefits in question cannot clearly be quantified. Here, not only are the weights created through non-basic judgments, but so are the so-called measures of costs and benefits. In the case of like OST programs, where many of the benefits will never have an actual market price, iterative evaluation can allow for a determination of the weights that reflects the degree to which the stakeholders involved value the programs. Participation and iterative processes go hand-in-hand for public decisions.

4.2.4.3 Complexity in dimension, scale, timeframe, and objective

Public decisions are complex, with high stakes, uncertain outcomes, and multiple value systems. Additionally, public decisions have effects in multiple contexts, increasing the complexity along axes of dimension, scale, time frame, and objective (Munda 2004). With Out-of-School Time (OST) programs, for example, there are possible effects in economic, educational, psycho-social, and public safety dimensions. An evaluation focusing solely on the educational dimension misses other important effects. Scale also matters, because benefits at one scale may be counted as costs at another, especially where there is a negative network externality to using a resource. For example, a community may value an increase in tourism, but too much tourism in the region may lead to overall negative effects. Additionally, benefits that manifest at multiple scales—individual, community, city, etc—will be lost if the focus of an evaluation is only on a single scale, such as the individual. Costs and benefits also occur in different time frames, which is captured in CBA through the use of the discount factor (typically

exponential). By discounting the future, and heavily discounting the distant future, long-term effects are collapsed to yield a present discounted value where they may not count much at all. This is particularly relevant to choices such as a young adult choosing to pursue an additional year of schooling, that involve costs in the short term, through decreased wages, but benefits in the long term through increased earning potential.

Although, there are many concurrent objectives when complex decisions are made, evaluations tend to focus on only a small number—such as the emphasis on grades, test scores, and teacher reports of behavior in evaluations of 21st CCLC programs. While some evaluations consider other objectives, large-scale evaluations generally focus on grades and classroom behavior because at this point in time there are data on these objectives for the largest number of programs. Data on other objectives are difficult to gather, as are data on different scales and time frames—especially if the data is to live up to some first-best experimental ideal. If after-school programs are considered in their educational dimensions alone, and are not recognized for their role in economic and social dimensions, data on these dimensions are likely to be unavailable.

4.2.5 Applying the Concepts

A methodology for adequate evaluation of youth programs, especially those funded by public money, must include the valuation of rights and values, such as equal opportunity. It also should include the participation of stakeholders—including youth themselves—through meaningful creation processes, beyond the disempowering façade of participation that is limited to verification. Because few of the benefits of youth programs can be reduced to a market price, evaluations need to include multiple measures of value. Decisions of youth should be contextualized in their immediate community and

the larger social system, so as to critically investigate the completeness of the maximization processes inherent in youth choice, as well as to determine the complexity of causes acting on youth outcomes. As many of the benefits of youth programs will occur only in the future, the uncertainty of future events is a central question of study. Lastly, because benefits of youth programs are manifest in multiple dimensions, scales, time frames, and objectives, ignorance of this complexity will always produce incomplete evaluations. Embarking on my study of youth programs, I was told by some Program Evaluation scholars that I would not be able to say anything because there was no ‘control group’ to which youth were assigned randomly. I would argue that the four problems with CBA discussed above offer a much more daunting challenges to the ability to do good research.

What does this critique of CBA mean for program directors attempting to prove that their programs are worthwhile? In the short-run, they are operating within a system where they are expected to prove certain specific benefits in order to maintain or increase their funding. Achieving a large-scale change in the way programs are evaluated is a long-term project. Because there are many non-quantified benefits to youth programs, there needs to be a shorter-term change in government policy that values qualitative research and broader measures of benefits to OST programs. The research for this study therefore does build upon the cost-benefit analysis framework, rather than reject it altogether, while attempting to live up to the prescriptions I make above. The research is participatory, incorporating the values and interpretations of participants in the study. I combine qualitative and quantitative data, following an iterative process to determine appropriate measures for benefits quantified through non-basic judgments. I also include

discussion of uncertain events. The lack of long-term, longitudinal research does not mean that uncertain events should be ignored, but rather that they should be proactively discussed in order to spur the necessary research. My analysis does not produce a new formula, but instead aims to provide an evaluation of costs and benefits that can contribute to a broad discussion to better empower decision-makers to make informed decisions. This evaluation can be used as a starting point for a larger, creatively iterative, participatory evaluation of publicly funded OST programs.

4.3 Costs of 21st CCLC OST programs in New York State

The 21st CCLC grant program in New York State provides substantial grants for running after-school programs in poor communities. Table 4.1 presents a general overview of the size of awards given to grantees—in New York State in 2006, the average award amount was \$116,600 per site per year, with each grantee operating on average 2.89 program sites (the largest number of sites was 12). 21st CCLC programs have other sources of funding as well, ranging from zero to 9, with an average of 1.53 additional sources of funding.

Table 4.1: Funding for 21st CCLC Grantees

N = 237	Mean	Std Deviation
Number of Sites	2.89	2.11
Award Yr 1	\$242,787	\$164,878
Award Yr 2	\$481,014	\$318,396
Award Yr 3	\$480,537	\$318,847
Award Yr 4	\$480,537	\$318,847
Award Yr 5	\$480,537	\$318,847
Average Per Yr	\$336,975	\$221,777
Total for 5 Years	\$1,684,876	\$1,108,883
Number of Other Funding Sources	1.53	1.88

The 21st CCLC programs mostly operate during the after-school time (three to six pm) during the school year, five days a week, but many also operate during the summer, on weekends, and on school holidays (see Table 4.2). Statistics for school year and summer operations were calculated excluding programs that offered no services during that time²³. Programs that operated during the school year run for an average of 16.22 hours per week (546.61 hours per school year), capturing the fact that many offer programming in addition to the fifteen typical hours of after-school time each week, including on holidays and weekends. Programs operating during the summer are open an average of 24.19 hours per week (162.80 hours per summer).

Table 4.2: Operations for 21st CCLC Centers

		Mean	Std Dev
School Year N = 705	Hrs per Week	16.22	9.92
	Days per Week	4.79	.83
	Weeks per year	33.70	6.58
Summer N = 278	Hours per week	24.19	15.47
	Days per week	4.76	.63
	Weeks per year	6.73	6.97
Total N = 729	Weeks per Year	35.20	11.08

Attendance data, which are available only for programs in their second or later year of operation, show that each center serves on average 198.35 participants, 99.77 of whom are considered regular attendees, meaning that they have attended 30 days or more

²³ It is important to note also potential errors in this data, as some programs report zero for hours, days, or weeks (but not for all three). Additionally, three programs reported that they operate 52 weeks in the school year and 52 weeks in the summer.

of programming. Considering only the school year, a program with an average award (\$116,600) would cost \$213.31 per hour (\$2.13 per hour per regular attendee).

Table 4.3 contains demographics for regular attendees at 21st CCLC programs for which data is available. Programs tend to serve mostly Hispanic and Black youth, with on average a large minority of youth for whom ethnicity is not reported, possibly including multi-racial youth (see Figure 5.1). The programs serve roughly even numbers of male and female regular attendees. On average, more than 40% regular attendees are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Large minorities of regular attendees are either identified as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP), or their LEP status is unknown, and the same is true for the more generic designation of ‘special needs.’

Programs serve youth from pre-kindergarten through high school, with slightly higher attendance in elementary and middle school programs—see Table 4.4²⁴. Additionally, there are more programs serving elementary and/or middle school youth than those serving high school youth, with the largest number of programs serving middle school youth, in reflection of the funding priority for middle school programs.

²⁴ In Table 4.4, programs serving no youth in that category were not included in the calculation of the mean or standard deviation (i.e. 281 programs serve some youth in elementary school, though they may not serve youth in every elementary grade).

Table 4.3: Demographics of Regular Attendees at 21st CCLC Centers, N = 522

Ethnicity N = 514	% Native American	1%
	% Asian	3%
	% Black	33%
	% Hispanic	32%
	% Pacific Islander	0%
	% White	15%
	% Unknown	16%
Gen.	% Male	46.7%
	% Female	46.2%
	% Unknown	3.3%
Other	% LEP ²⁵	11.8%
	% Unknown	26.0%
	% Free or Reduced Lunch	58.0%
	% Unknown	24.1%
	% Special Needs	8.0%
	% Unknown	10.8%

²⁵ Limited English Proficiency

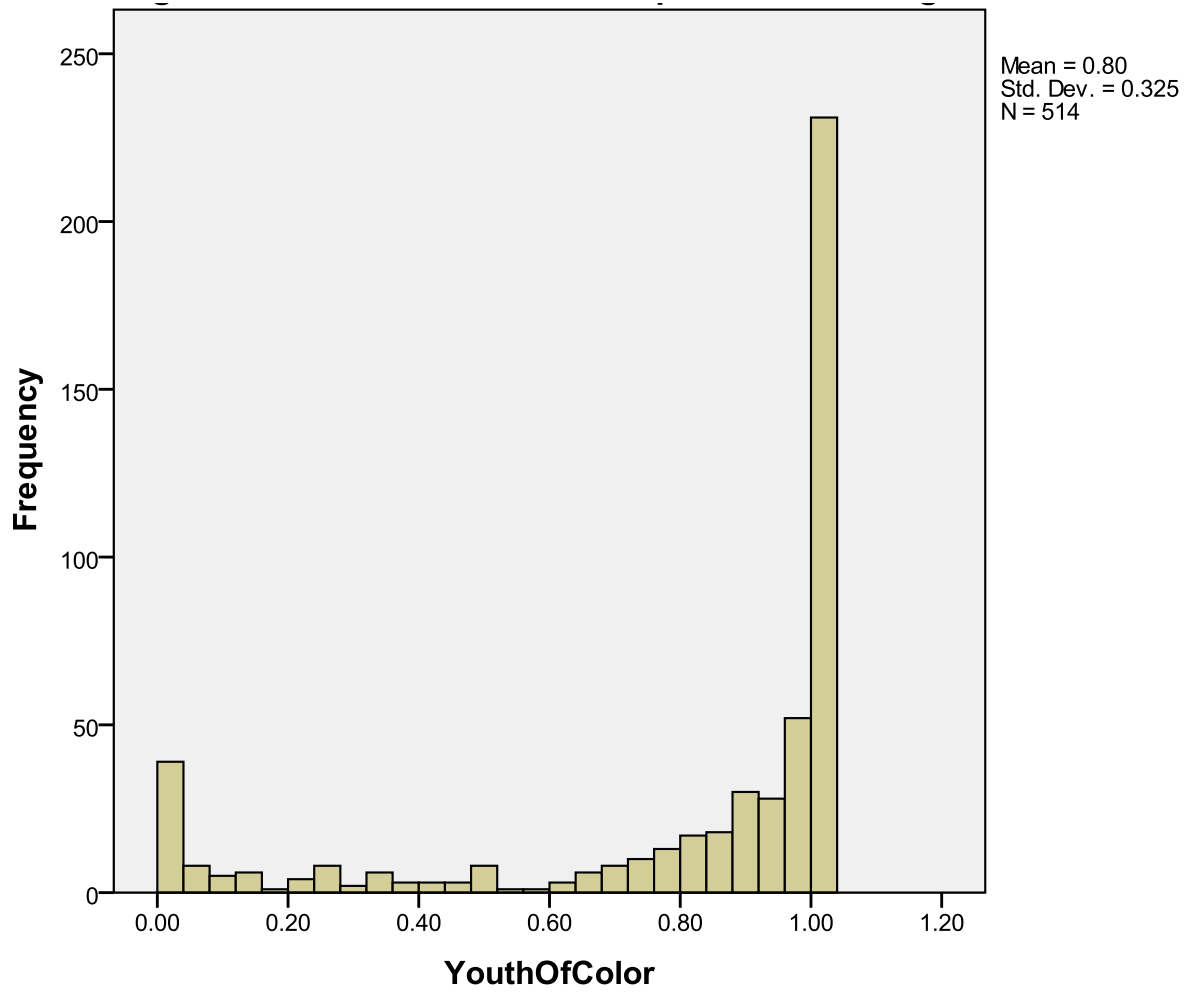


Figure 4. 1: Youth of Color as a Proportion of All Regular Attendees

Table 4.4: Attendance (Regular attendees) by Grade Level

		Mean	Std. Dev
Elementary Grades N = 281	Pre K	.35	2.205
	Kindergarten	6.99	10.692
	First Grade	11.27	15.104
	Second Grade	12.47	16.091
	Third Grade	15.96	18.532
	Fourth Grade	16.64	16.809
	Fifth Grade	18.00	17.202
	Unknown Elem	3.52	13.366
Middle Grades N = 340	Sixth Grade	20.27	22.269
	Seventh Grade	32.71	33.970
	Eighth Grade	28.71	36.357
	Unknown Middle	3.69	26.309
High School Grades N = 149	Ninth Grade	12.69	18.253
	Tenth Grade	10.61	14.169
	Eleventh Grade	8.61	13.270
	Twelfth Grade	7.30	11.817
	Unknown High School	3.17	9.925

Considering only school-year operations, 21st CCLC programs on average cost \$2.14 per regular participant per hour, or \$213.27 total per hour (see Table 4.5). Including participants who attended less than 30 days, programs on average cost \$1.08 per participant per hour. The average award of \$116,600, and the average cost per regular attendee per hour of \$2.14, are used below as a representative cost structure of a 21st CCLC center.

Table 4.5: Average Cost per unit of Operations for School Year Programs

per site per year	\$116,600.42
per hour (546.7 hours)	\$213.27
per day (161.3 days)	\$722.88
per week (33.7 weeks)	\$3,459.59
Per regular attendee (99.8)	\$1,168.68
Per total participants (198.4)	\$587.85
Per RA per Hr	\$2.14
Per Participant per Hr	\$1.08

4.4 An Exploration of Benefits of 21st CCLC Programs

The benefits of after-school programs are complex and difficult to measure. I will explore here three types of potential benefits to after-school programs, beyond the commonly cited individual effects mentioned in the introduction to this chapter:

- Providing safe supervision for children at a time when most families are in need of this service
- Providing jobs in low-income communities, including for youth
- Production of public goods related to the role of OST programs as a bridge between the family and the schools (i.e. the state).

The first two, both of which relate to the labor market, are the easiest to explore quantitatively. The third is explored through qualitative research, as these benefits directly related to building capabilities and promoting agency. As will be seen from the magnitude of the most easily quantifiable benefits to after-school programs, non-quantifiable benefits do not need to be highly valued to demonstrate that OST programs are a worthwhile use of money.

4.4.1 Child Care Provision

Even though OST programs are more than babysitting, they do provide the basic services provided by a babysitter—adult supervision and care to ensure the safety of youth. Each 21st CCLC center in New York state serves on average 122 elementary and middle school participants (78 regular attendees), for a total of 65,514 (41,871) in the state. Most of these children would require an alternative form of childcare in the absence of the OST programs. In interviews, some parents stated that they do not know

what they would do for child care without the after-school program, while others indicate that they would provide child care through family networks, a paid program (such as at a church), or by hiring a babysitter. One parent who was looking for a job stated that she would need to remain unemployed if her child was not in an OST program. The caring labor provided to these children produces important public goods, meaning that it is a collective rather than individual responsibility (Folbre 1994).

The costs for childcare vary by location, and in some locations it may be difficult to find quality paid child care at all. A babysitter in the informal market could charge anywhere between \$5 and \$15 per hour, or more. A daycare center, on the other hand, is likely to cost \$100 to \$400 per week for full-time care, between \$2.50 per hour and \$10 per hour—however, daycare centers providing school-age care may not be available. The New York State Office of Child and Family Services provides families receiving Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) a benefit for school-age child care of \$262 per week, \$54 per day, \$36 per half-day, or \$9.17 per hour (NYS OCFS 2008). If the school-aged care from a 21st CCLC program were replaced at the TANF rate, an average program during the school year is providing a net benefit of \$225.34 per week, \$28.76 per half-day, or \$7.03 per hour. Using the hourly rate, this adds up to a yearly benefit of \$3,843 per regular attendee, or \$383,561 for an average program.

One may assume that the child care services of a 21st CCLC programs would not be reproduced for all youth, especially older youth. There are, however, many other reasons why OST programs produce benefits for individuals and communities when older youth participate. Paramount among these are the reductions in juvenile crime associated with participation in OST programs. Researchers and practitioners in the field

recommend that programs targeting older youth focus on specific desires and needs of the target population, such as creative activities, internships, practical skills, help with college preparation, and, when possible, paid jobs (Wahl Moellman and Rosenbaum Tillinger 2004). As discussed below, programs that provide high school and college-aged youth with paid jobs working with younger adolescents and children are providing a benefit to both their young employees and the community.

Table 4.6 presents a sensitivity analysis for estimating a child care replacement cost for an average 21st CCLC program. In the table I assume that programs serving elementary and/or middle school youth each serve on average 82 regular attendees, while high school programs serve 39, all operating for the average 546.7 hours during the school year (summer operations are not included in this analysis). Regular attendees are assumed to attend all program hours, and participants (those who attended less than 30 days) are ignored in the calculation. The potential benefit is calculated for replacement costs of \$3.50, \$5.00, \$7.50, and \$10.00 per hour. I include replacement of 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, and 100% of the care they receive in the 21st CCLC program. The underlined entries are my suggestions for calculation of the replacement cost, assuming the replacement cost per hour is lowest for elementary school students and highest for high school students, and that elementary, middle, and high school students will need to replace 100%, 60%, and 40% of the care respectively.

Children of these ages need to be engaged in constructive activities during the after-school time. Elementary-aged children are not legally allowed to be left alone. While there are some children in 21st CCLC programs who have one parent at home, I do not have accurate data on how prevalent stay-at-home parents are for this population.

Considering all block groups in the state, an average of 60% of children under 18 are living in households with all available parents in the labor force. 21st CCLC programs operate in communities of concentrate poverty, and serve a majority of children from low-income families. OST programs like 21st CCLC have a long history of serving working parents, including both mothers and fathers (Halpern 2003). While I do not have specific data on how many children in 21st CCLC programs have a parent at home, I believe this number to be small.

The need for OST programming does not disappear for older youth. For example, a high school student may attend a music lesson, receive tutoring, or go to the movies with their friends—all viable alternatives to unsupervised time on the streets. It could be argued that high school students may be better served through paid employment – and some 21st CCLC programs do employ high school aged youth, as discussed in the next section. However, with high youth unemployment rates, low-income, urban youth attending an OST program may not have a real opportunity cost of paid employment, and some OST programs for high school students provide internship experience, an opportunity to learn job-related skills hands-on, and monetary stipends (Wall Moellman and Rosenbaum Tillinger 2005).

These estimated replacement costs, and the average program cost of \$116,600 per year, indicate a net benefit of \$107,547 for each elementary school program, \$85,132 for each middle school program, and -\$31,315 for each high school program, indicated for

selected entries in Table 4.6²⁶. However, if the replacement of high school OST programming is valued at 100%—meaning that all of the regular attendees at that program were engaged in some other, privately funded constructive activity for the same amount of time—an average high school program would produce a net benefit of \$96,613.

4.4.2 Job Creation

OST programs in poor communities provide job opportunities for high school and college students as well as other adults. In communities where there is unemployment, there are precedents for valuing this job creation by calculating ‘shadow wages’ based on the employment rate (Sen, Marglin, and Dasgupta 1992). Wages are generally treated in CBA as labor costs—when a shadow wage is calculated, this cost is reduced by some percentage based on the unemployment rate. Many 21st CCLCs have few expenses other than maintaining quality staff, as they operate in school buildings for which all maintenance costs are paid by the school district. One question is whether the part-time jobs provided by OST programs should be valued this way, and there is debate in the field itself over to what extent OST jobs are and should be “professional” (Miller 2005, Mott 2009). I would argue that jobs for youth provide important benefits.

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Table 4.6a: Net Benefit for Childcare Function for an Average 21st CCLC Program

	Elementary	Middle	High School (40%)	High School (100%)
Replacement Costs	\$224,147	\$201,732	\$85,285	\$213,213
Costs	\$116,600	\$116,600	\$116,600	\$116,600
Net Benefit	\$107,547	\$85,132	-\$31,315	\$96,613

Table 4.6: Estimated Costs for replacing childcare function of 21st CCLC programs, including only regular attendees²⁷

	Replacement Costs	Assumed Hourly Cost			
		\$3.50	\$5.00	\$7.50	\$10.00
Elementary (82)	20%	\$31,381	\$44,829	\$67,244	\$89,659
	40%	\$62,761	\$89,659	\$134,488	\$179,318
	60%	\$94,142	\$134,488	\$201,732	\$268,976
	80%	\$125,522	\$179,318	\$268,976	\$358,635
	100%	\$156,903	\$224,147	\$336,221	\$448,294
Middle (82)	20%	\$31,381	\$44,829	\$67,244	\$89,659
	40%	\$62,761	\$89,659	\$134,488	\$179,318
	60%	\$94,142	\$134,488	\$201,732	\$268,976
	80%	\$35,864	\$179,318	\$268,976	\$358,635
	100%	\$156,903	\$224,147	\$336,221	\$448,294
High School (39)	20%	\$14,925	\$21,321	\$31,982	\$42,643
	40%	\$29,850	\$42,643	\$63,964	\$85,285
	60%	\$44,775	\$63,964	\$95,946	\$127,928
	80%	\$59,700	\$85,285	\$127,928	\$170,570
	100%	\$74,625	\$106,607	\$159,910	\$213,213

There is disagreement over whether or not youth need jobs. The most common definitions of youth unemployment minimize the extent of the problem, because most youth do not report actively looking for a job and they are also enrolled in school, meaning that they are more likely to be counted as out of the labor force rather than as unemployed (Singell and Lillydahl 1989). Levin (1983, 231) identified that approximately 2% of youth are “lumpen-youth,” neither in school nor working, but this percentage may be much higher in some communities (see Figure 4.2). Moreover, most youth who work for a wage are not expected to contribute to family income, but use their money to fund extra consumption and entertainment (*ibid.*). In some circumstances,

²⁷ The average net benefit per program (replacement cost – cost of program) are as follows, assuming average program costs: Elementary (\$107,547), Middle (\$85,132), High School (-\$31,315 replacing 40% of services, \$96,613, replacing 100% of services)

however, youth are not only expected to contribute to the cost of their care, but must earn wages to cover their own subsistence needs. Many youth at Harvey Milk High School must balance high school with a full-time job because they are not welcomed at home due to their sexual orientation or gender identity—for example, one student in my class of six was working full-time at an upscale retail store to support himself after being kicked out by his parents subsequent to coming out. He dropped out of high school before the end of the year, prioritizing his job over his education. Even if low-income youth are not in such dire straights and have families that provide for their basic needs, they may use wages they earn to engage in activities with their peers, fulfilling important developmental needs. Youth themselves often state that they feel the need for jobs. Moreover, participating in an OST program as a staff member may be the only way they are willing to participate (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008; Wahl Moellman and Rosenbaum Tillinger 2004).

Experience is important for success in the labor market, and early work experience is especially important for young people who do not go on to college. Stereotypes and structural barriers like lack of transportation make it difficult for poor youth, urban and rural, to find jobs. The market fails to adequately provide employment for adults and youth in poverty trap communities. When young people would otherwise join the category of lumpen-youth—in which case it becomes difficult for them to provide for their subsistence without engaging in independent or organized crime—both the young person and the community benefit from youth employment. While any type of job will provide some degree of useful labor market experience, and indeed even the opportunity to flip burgers has been identified as important for youth (Sampson and Laub

1997), working at an OST program provides youth with experience of engaging in meaningful and important work, which is integral to living a good life (Townsend 2003).

The community may further benefit if more young people choose to become quality child

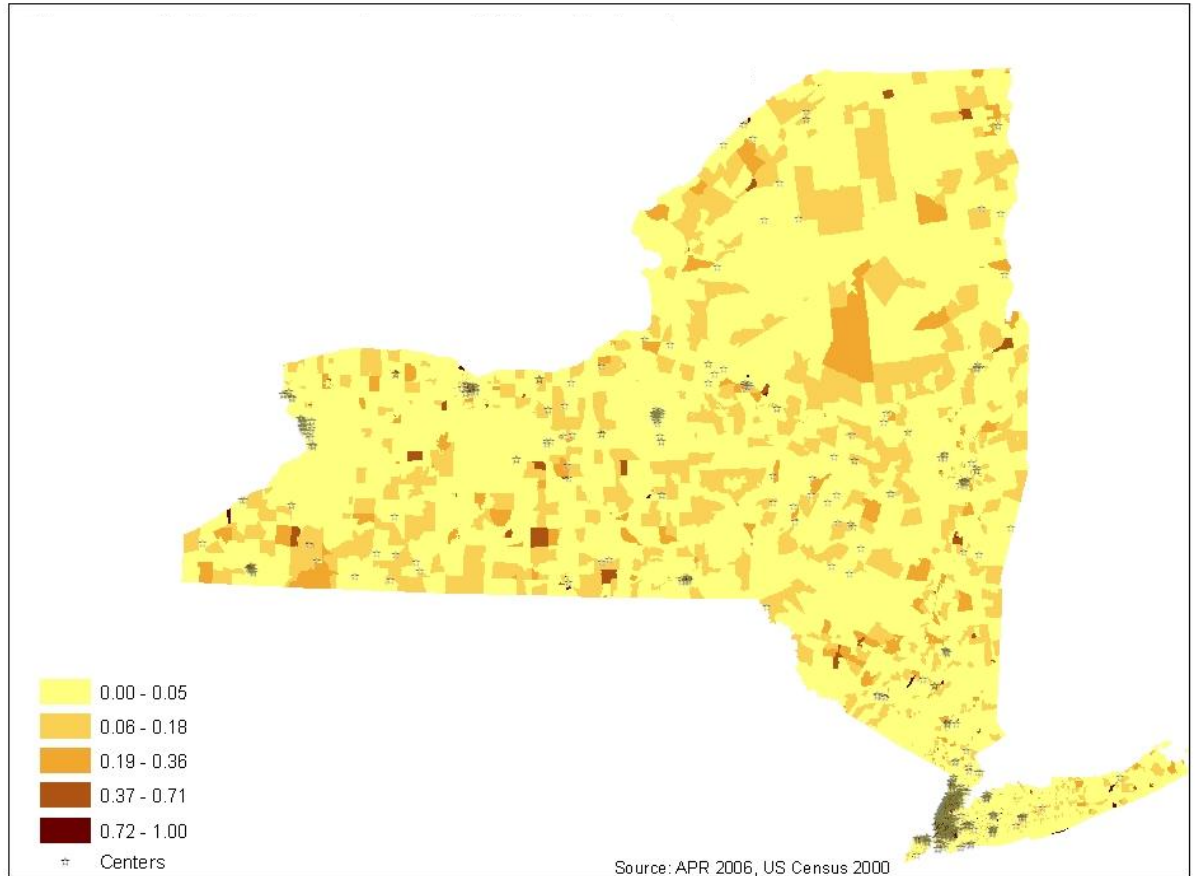


Figure 4. 2: Percentage of Youth between 16 and 19 in Neither School, the Labor Force, or the Military

care providers and educators themselves.

For these reasons, jobs for young people provided by OST programs should be valued through some type of shadow wages scheme, or alternatively by adding a job creation benefit. The fact that most jobs with after-school programs are part-time should not detract from their value to young people, because part-time jobs are more appropriate for youth enrolled in school. Staffing characteristics of 21st CCLC programs are reported in

Table 4.6, for paid staff and volunteers. On average, teachers make up 32% of paid staff, but this average conceals substantial variations. Many programs hire one main type of ‘line staff’ (i.e. group leaders and assistants), such as high school students or teachers, rather than a mix.

**Table 4.7: Staffing Characteristics for Programs Hiring some School Year Staff,
N = 533**

	Type of Staff	Mean	Std Deviation	Average % of total staff
Paid Staff	Teachers	6.4	8.1	32%
	College Students	2.3	4.2	12%
	High School Students	1.4	3.1	7%
	Participants	.4	2.3	2%
	Youth Development	3.4	4.2	17%
	Community	.5	1.9	3%
	School Staff	1.5	2.3	8%
	Other	.4	1.8	2%
	Other No College	1.8	4.5	9%
	Center Administration	1.6	2.1	8%
	Total	19.8	13.8	NA
	Non-Funded Staff	3.1	10.0	NA
Volunteers	Teachers	.3	1.3	7%
	College Students	.8	3.5	17%
	High School Students	.9	2.6	19%
	Participants	1.2	5.4	25%
	Youth Development	.2	.7	3%
	Community	.8	4.2	17%
	School Staff	.1	.7	3%
	Other	.2	2.9	5%
	Other No College	.1	.8	2%
	Center Administration	.1	.4	2%
	Total	4.7	12.6	NA
	Staff Replaced	1.6	3.1	8%

Calculating a shadow wage relies on the unemployment rate, which varied in 2000 in New York State from 6% in one block group all the way to 100% in other block

groups, with a mean 7% (see Figure 4.3). As 21st CCLC programs operate in communities of concentrated poverty, unemployment is likely to be high in communities where they operate. According to Sen, Marglin, and Dasgupta (1992), labor costs should be discounted by the same percentage as the unemployment rate, so a program in a community with 10% unemployment would include 90% of its labor costs in CBA.

Table 4.8 presents a sensitivity analysis of different parameters for a job creation benefit for 21st CCLC programs, considering all labor costs, labor costs for adult non-teacher staff, and labor costs for youth staff. Rather than discounting labor costs by the unemployment rate, I propose adding that percentage of labor costs as a benefit, as a means of highlighting the amount of the job creation benefit. Detailed data on the actual amount of each 21st CCLC award used for labor costs is not available, but the percentage is likely to be high. Some types of OST grants, for example, only provide funds for staff, under the assumption that a non-profit will be able to effortlessly cover other costs. The Table 4.8 is constructed using an average award of \$116,600, and the assumption that 47% of staff are adult non-teachers and 21% are youth. The underlined entries are what I propose as a reasonable approximation of the actual job creation benefit produced by such an average program – assuming 60% of the award is spent on staff, and unemployment rates of 9% and 16% among adults and youth in the community, respectively. This yields a total average benefit of \$5,310 per 21st CCLC center. Programs hiring more youth, especially those with staffs composed almost entirely of youth, are producing a much higher benefit, and are also investing significant amounts of time and resources in training their young staff. Were this benefit, along with the child care benefit calculated above, added to the funding for 21st CCLC programs, it could

support wage increases for program staff, additional materials, investment in the school building, or an expansion of capacity to serve more youth

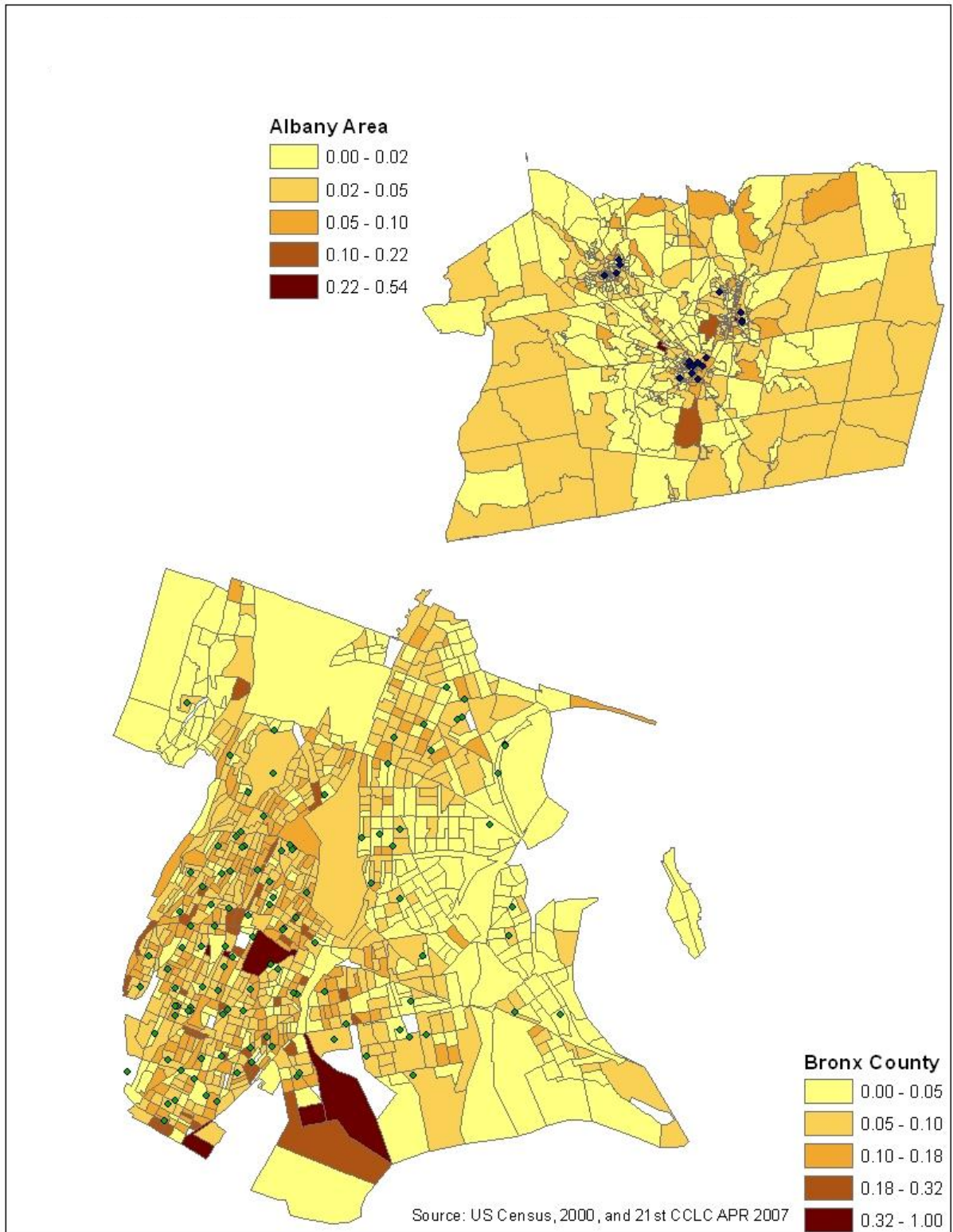


Figure 4. 3: Percentage of Population 16 and Over who are Unemployed, Bronx County and the Albany Area

Table 4.8: Sensitivity Analysis for Job Creation Benefit

		Percentage of award spent on staff				
		20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
Total Labor Costs		\$23,320	\$46,640	\$69,960	\$93,280	\$116,600
Costs for Adult non-teacher staff		\$10,960	\$21,921	\$32,881	\$43,842	\$54,802
Costs for youth staff		\$4,897	\$9,794	\$14,692	\$19,589	\$24,486
Unemployment Rate		Job Creation Benefit				
5%	Adult	\$548	\$1,096	\$1,644	\$2,192	\$2,740
	Youth	\$245	\$490	\$735	\$979	\$1,224
6%	Adult	\$658	\$1,315	\$1,973	\$2,631	\$3,288
	Youth	\$294	\$588	\$881	\$1,175	\$1,469
7%	Adult	\$767	\$1,534	\$2,302	\$3,069	\$3,836
	Youth	\$343	\$686	\$1,028	\$1,371	\$1,714
8%	Adult	\$877	\$1,754	\$2,631	\$3,507	\$4,384
	Youth	\$392	\$784	\$1,175	\$1,567	\$1,959
9%	Adult	\$986	\$1,973	\$2,959	\$3,946	\$4,932
	Youth	\$441	\$881	\$1,322	\$1,763	\$2,204
10%	Adult	\$1,096	\$2,192	\$3,288	\$4,384	\$5,480
	Youth	\$490	\$979	\$1,469	\$1,959	\$2,449
12%	Adult	\$1,315	\$2,631	\$3,946	\$5,261	\$6,576
	Youth	\$588	\$1,175	\$1,763	\$2,351	\$2,938
14%	Adult	\$1,534	\$3,069	\$4,603	\$6,138	\$7,672
	Youth	\$686	\$1,371	\$2,057	\$2,742	\$3,428
16%	Adult	\$1,754	\$3,507	\$5,261	\$7,015	\$8,768
	Youth	\$784	\$1,567	\$2,351	\$3,134	\$3,918
18%	Adult	\$1,973	\$3,946	\$5,919	\$7,892	\$9,864
	Youth	\$881	\$1,763	\$2,644	\$3,526	\$4,407
20%	Adult	\$2,192	\$4,384	\$6,576	\$8,768	\$10,960
	Youth	\$979	\$1,959	\$2,938	\$3,918	\$4,897

4.4.3 Public Good Benefits

OST programs occupy a space situated between the school and the family, fulfilling a bridging role in the lives of youth between these two institutions. Benefits they produce in this role are difficult to quantify, and they affect both individuals and communities. Measurable outcomes are difficult to link empirically to the OST program itself, due to lack of experimental design and the confounding influences of school, family, and other factors on youth. None the less, three such benefits are explored below:

1) increasing parent participation and social capital, 2) improving interpersonal skills and relationships with peers, and 3) exposure to activism. These benefits occur through spillover effects such as changes in the state of the population (i.e. increasing the density of a norm), changes in informal institutions, and changes in formal institutions. Individual spillovers also occur, such as when OST programs contribute to improved grades or attendance. Because of the existence of virtuous and negative cycles, changes may need to be of a large magnitude in order to create the eventual desired result, such as a change in culture. This means that even if OST programs are contributing to the creation of spillover effects, they may not be able to achieve their desired results in the short-run. However, their failure to reach critical mass for such a change implies, in this context, that there should be more investment in them and complementary institutions in order to achieve results. The benefits described below cannot be traded on markets, because no such market exists. They must be valued in ways that resonate with the OST stakeholders, including school personnel, OST staff, parents, youth, and other community members.

4.4.3.1 Parental Involvement

Because they are not identified with the State in the same way a public school is, OST programs provide a safe public space for parents to interact with each other and to practice skills of advocating for their children (McDermott and Rothenberg 2004). In this way OST programs provide a bridge between the private relationships of the family and the institutionalized relationships of the schools, facilitating increased parental involvement in their children's education. When parents participate in OST programs and other public spaces, they meet other parents in their community, building friendships and acquaintances, identified as important in mitigating negative effects of residential

turnover and improving social cohesion and social capital (Sampson 1988). This is especially important if parents are unable or unwilling to participate in the school itself, due to barriers such as immigration status, language, negative memories of school, or fear of authority figures. When parents have a positive relationship with educational institutions, they are better able to act as advocates for their children, better enabling their children to develop their human capital—thus the OST program, in complementarity with other institutions, can create many further benefits. Parental involvement in their children’s education improves not only educational outcomes but also family relationships (Search Institute).

Participation in OST programs also benefits parents themselves, both through their children and through the direct provision of services like family literacy, ESL, and enrichment opportunities. In the Bronx, for example, Spanish-speaking parents routinely mentioned learning to speak English, learning to read, and having homework help as important ways Youth for R.E.A.L. has impacted their children’s lives. During more than one interview with Spanish-speaking parents, a child jumped in to help their parent communicate with the interviewer, a task common for the children of immigrant parents. When OST programs and community schools provide ESL programs specifically for parents this effect—improving the ability of immigrant families to function outside of Spanish-only environments—is increased even further.

OST programs impact the relationships families have with educational institutions both because they may provide a friendlier atmosphere for parents to interact (especially undocumented immigrants worried about legal repercussions) and because the hours of OST programs are closer to time parents get out of work. During a focus group, for

example, parents agreed with one another that while they attend meetings at the OST program, they do not attend meetings at the school (and never have) and that moreover they have positive relationships with staff and parents connected to the OST program but not to the school day. Additionally, the lack of grades and standardized tests in OST programs can help children, especially struggling children, to be more engaged in what they are learning—and, according to parents, they come home wanting to talk about what they have learned: “you don’t have to ask,” says one parent. Another parent says *"Cuando llega a casa ya me habla todo que ha aprendido, actividades que hacen, mucho..."* These same parents who spoke freely about their kids’ activities at the OST program were unable to provide the same information about the school day.

A tension exists between family and OST program staff regarding homework help. While this is important to many parents, some OST staff members express negative opinions about their role with homework, indicating that helping children with their homework is a parent’s responsibility, and they are being asked to take on roles more appropriately played by parents. However, English language support Out-of-School that facilitates a mono-lingual minority language within the home may help children develop bilingual language skills. Providing a consistent mono-lingual language inside the home, where the minority language is the only language spoken, is one of the most effective means of raising bilingual children (Pearson 2008). Parents who are not lacking in English language skills may also value homework help because it allows them to spend the few hours between work and bedtime engaged in other activities with their children.

Some OST staff have made statements in interviews and focus groups highlighting the fear that their students are going home to dysfunctional families with

irresponsible parents who use drugs and are involved in crime. While this is true in some cases—for example, one parent explicitly stated that she valued her child learning not to use drugs because people in the child’s family were drug addicts—there are also many OST parents who simply have to work late. Other factors, such as staff inexperience facilitating parent meetings and lack of translation services, can make parental involvement difficult for many programs. The commonality of this problem is evidenced by the frequent inclusion and popularity of workshops on increasing parental involvement at OST training conferences. Overcoming these tensions is a challenge in promoting family involvement in OST programs.

4.4.3.2 Effects on interpersonal skills and relationships with peers

Durlak and Weissbaum (2007) have found that quality after-school programs (those with sequential, active, focused, and explicit programming) produce positive impacts related to interpersonal skills—decision-making and problem-solving, self-control, leadership, conflict resolution, etc. These skills are used in building social capital, and are important for economic activities in which children will engage throughout their lives. A positive change in interpersonal skills was echoed in many of my interviews with parents. When asked what their children had learned at the OST program, their responses included getting along with others, sharing (*a compartir*), and becoming less timid. One parent said, for example, "Well, basically she was very timid, very shy. Now I can't control her. I cannot say this is this, because she sort of knows it is this way. Now she is very opinionated." This woman’s daughter had gained confidence in exercising her voice. Interpersonal skills translate across settings for youth, enabling them to better succeed in school and later in the work place.

Moreover, OST programs are a place where low-income youth can safely interact with other children in a non-competitive environment to create work, accomplish goals, produce long-term projects, and prepare for performances. Parents and youth both identify opportunities for *expression* – music, dance, and art – as important components of their OST programs, at a time when these same programs often are being reduced or eliminated in the school. The importance of OST programs as a place where youth can interact with one another differently than they do during school was expressed in a focus group of staff members (all teachers) at Yonkers Middle School:

Teacher 1: The fact that there is less stress after school allows them the freedom to express themselves more openly and maybe even take some chances that they don't take during the regular school.

Teacher 2: Part of the reason is that there are not any grades assigned for OST programs. When the pressure of grades is removed, the use of grades as the motivating factor is removed, then a completely different atmosphere is created and a method of teaching. All of a sudden it is much more about the subject matter and the relationship between the teacher and the student, and less about the communal record or awards and records of the grading system.

Teacher 3: Again, due to being so comfortable, they are ok at making mistakes but they will take more risks, discover and learn through trial and error. The regular class setting, they have too much pressure: I better not raise my hand, what if I don't know the answer? So it is a whole different way of learning.

Teacher 1: Not just the pressure from the teacher, the pressure from the whole class. After school they get to know each other and they relax with people that are there. In the regular classroom setting there might be a little bit more competition and they don't want to fail in front of their peers.

4.4.3c Exposure to Activism

While teachers during the school day must prepare students for ever-increasing numbers of standardized tests, OST practitioners can make time for innovative projects

like the Community Change Project at Youth for R.E.A.L. in the South Bronx, in which students identify an issue they care about, work through six phases of the project, and end the year with a rally that involves their parents and other family members and friends. As one staff member describes the project, "I think one of the strengths of this program is that it really is trying to instill in young people a set of core sort of character development principles that we hope will lead them and stay with them through out their lives - and time will tell there." In their role as community programs, OST programs encourage children to participate in advocacy with law makers as well as direct activism (Austria 2006). The goal is to inspire children, expose them to activism, and teach them about setting realistic short-term goals for changing their world. When there is an experience of empowerment, this can lead to future activism and fundamental culture change (Weinbaum 2004).

At the most basic level, this project and others like it help kids to be aware of their location within a community. One elementary school participant at Youth for R.E.A.L. defined community as "people gathering and telling each other about projects," which identifies the community as a place of action. Other children used repeating themes of the community being 'all around' them or surrounding them—these children understand that their community effects them, and put themselves in the center.

Parents are involved in the community change project as well. Many parents interviewed at Youth for R.E.A.L. stated that they participate in the yearly rally, often bringing other relatives with them. This is not revolutionizing the community over-night, but it is bringing together a large number of people together to celebrate and agitate for community change on a yearly basis, with children at the forefront as powerful actors and

leaders. In a community where many residents are recent immigrants, and parents often monolingual in Spanish, French, or Wolof, one parent told me that Youth for R.E.A.L. is “teaching the kids how to come together in unity as black, Hispanic and multiple cultures.” Another parent, herself a recent immigrant with limited English proficiency, stated:

“Sometime we don’t think to go cleaning the parks of like the...they need protect...it is something to do. Something has to be done and other than that if we don’t do it so this is our community we are supposed to keep it clean and safe and drugs free stuff like that. *Sometime they are there, they are around you but you never really get to them until somebody really talks about it...*” (sic, my emphasis)

Youth for R.E.A.L. is getting people talking about these issues, and others. Children have started to attempt to instigate youth-led change in other ways, such as in regard to cigarette smoking and child abuse—they come home telling their parents why they have learned their behaviors should change.

The long-term effects of youth programs are difficult to predict, but many practitioners are doing what they do because these are the type of effects they want to produce. One staff member described the community change project this way:

"We have a project going on community change and that is a whole project to make sure they are getting involved in the changes of the community, then what they don't want to see happening when they get older, so they learn through a structured activity on how to accumulate those resources, who to talk to, how does it affect you. These are questions that stimulate them to think about what needs to happen because being in the South Bronx, it is very poverty stricken so they have to know, know what the resources are and how to get them."

Whether these community programs will achieve continuity and be able to build lasting relationships with their youth participants is an open question. Some youth express

interest in remaining actively involved, stating for example "I never want it to end. Until I grow up and I want to be a senior educator and even if I get old I am still gonna be senior." Others express no desire to engage in activism or continue to participate with their OST program or other CBO's. One difficulty is translating activism into age-appropriate activities, which requires adequate training and support of staff.

Achieving continuity among non-profit organizations operating in poor communities can be a major challenge (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008). While people may live near one another, a functioning community is a conscious creation—it does not occur spontaneously. In order to promote spillovers and complementarities, OST programs must facilitate the opportunity for youth to share what they are learning as well as provide opportunities for families and other organizations in the community to collaborate with youth. Due to the rigid structure of public education and a lack of trust between teachers, administrators, and community-based organizations, it can sometimes be difficult to cultivate meaningful relationships between the school and OST program, and these relationships often rely on the presence of specific individuals. Staff members at 21st CCLC programs gave specific reasons for positive relationships with the school such as sympathetic principal, one key CBO staff member, or an arrangement where one staff member is able to work at the school building during the day. While OST programs can experiment with new educational methods, public schools are obligated to prepare students for ever more standardized tests, which limits their ability to creatively adapt to new styles even if new methods are proven to be effective. It can also be difficult to coordinate activities with other community-based organizations, thereby using limited

resources most efficiently. Unless there are long histories of cooperation and communication, services are routinely duplicated by community-based organizations.

Beyond the difficulties mentioned above, there are contravening forces even less under the control of OST programs that limit the ability of spillover effects to spread. Institutions like a culture of violence in a community may have strong status quo bias and be supported by a number of other institutions. For example, the relationships between community members and law enforcement personnel, the prevalence of incarceration, and a strong gang presence—especially combined with a lack of labor market opportunities—can make it difficult to convince youth that non-violence and refusing black-market work are the way to achieve the highest payoff, particularly if they observe the opposite to be true. Educational and child-raising paradigms can also provide a contravening influence against cultural change (Dryfoos, Quinn, and Barkin 2005). Norms such as memorization versus critical thinking, authoritarianism and hierarchy versus egalitarianism, low expectations about the ability of children to make choices, the appropriateness of violence as a conflict resolution technique, and the appropriate response to bullying can all make it difficult to implement objectives of culture change. Even when a program adopts such an objective, as many 21st CCLC programs do, some of their staff will hold different values, and children may be experiencing the reinforcement of different norms in other settings. In interviews, some staff members offered definitions of youth empowerment that focused on expression, responsibility, and choice for youth, but others simply identified “providing youth with a structure” and providing them with fun activities as examples of youth empowerment.

Because of these challenges, even OST programs explicitly designed with objectives of promoting activism directly related economic development may fail in their direct objective, and yet may still be considered successful. For this reason, it is necessary to generate data related to the potential of achieving such objectives and to better understand what larger institutional forces may be brought to support such programs. Similar to the way common property rights programs need to be supported at every institutional level in order to succeed (Ostrom 1991), OST programs and other community-based programs need support from other institutions. Lack of support, however, has not stopped members of poor communities from engaging in activism for what they believe is right, especially opportunities for their children. There is a long history of such activism among working class people and people of color (Jones 1985, Kessler-Harris 2001, Austria 2006, Hill 2004, Boyce and Pastor 2001, Butcher 2004, Cleaver 2007). OST practitioners and other youth workers stand on the shoulders of the activists who came before them.

4.5 Conclusion

Given the limited resources allocated for OST programming, it is important to choose the right programs to fund—but doing so is complicated and full of unknowns. The competitive application process has been adopted as the way to distinguish between high quality and low quality proposals, but due to the tight competition, many high quality proposals go unfunded. It may also be that the communities with the greatest need are also the communities that have the most difficult time fielding quality proposals. Assigning resources to technical assistance for communities interested in applying for 21st CCLC grants can facilitate a distribution of funding that is based more on the quality

of the proposed program itself. For example, in the 2005 round of 21st CCLC funding, the Buffalo City School District prepared applications but failed to win any grants, despite a high degree of need. According to the state technical assistance provider at the time, this can be attributed to the lack of partnership between the schools and CBOs in the community, which was a requirement for funding. The technical assistance center worked with the Buffalo School District to help them identify and build relationships with partners. In the following round of funding, several 21st CCLC centers were funded in the district. Unfortunately, the state decreased its funding for technical assistance so that this type of pre-application assistance is no longer supported. The assistance necessary to help communities field quality applications is also different in rural districts, which are arguably underfunded, compared to urban districts like Buffalo. The CBOs existed in Buffalo, but the school district did not have a history of successful partnership with them. In rural districts, there may not exist adequate partners to support a 21st CCLC program at all, requiring much more community investment in order to build the organization capacity necessary to win competitive grants. Winning one funding competition, like 21st CCLC could also lead to positive feedback effects through its impact on the organizational capacity of programs in the area.

One parent described the benefits of an OST program in this way:

“They have more time to do things like different music, plays, and be creative. Because all the creative programs have been snatched out of the school because of the budget. Actually, all that creative work helps with the math and helps with reading. Art has been proven to help kids with math and reading and things like that. Having this program is like giving them a second chance to get creative play, a creative outlet, and being that we live in a ‘concrete jungle,’ there are no wide open fields for them to run around screaming. Cafeterias, and classrooms, and closed spaces, cause we live on top of each other. So this program gives them a chance to scream, holler and be kids and for us parents, we don’t have to panic

about I have a kid and it's 3:30. I have to sneak out get my kid and sneak back into work before the boss catches me. Or try to basically pimp a friend or neighbor to pick up your kid and god forbid who is going to pick up your kid tomorrow. This gives us piece of mind. This program does a lot.”

OST programs, when they are of high quality, produce benefits at the individual and community level. These programs provide free child care and jobs for youth—benefits that are more than enough to make them cost effective—but they can also foster capabilities and agency among youth and their communities. The potential benefits to OST programs presented in this chapter have implications for policy makers, evaluators, and practitioners to develop best practices, professional development curricula, and evaluation practices that take account of the development potential of OST programs.

CHAPTER 5

UNDERSTANDING THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDING FOR 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS IN NEW YORK STATE

5.1 Introduction

The central question in the allocation of funding for OST and other youth programs is: How do we decide the best locations for these programs in choosing among funding proposals? Empirically, this can be divided into two questions – the normative question of where should programs be located, and the positive question where they actually are located. The normative question, obviously, is a matter of debate. Policy makers in the Department of Education have decided that the programs should be located where they will serve a large proportion of low-income youth, using Title 1 eligibility at the school level to determine which proposed programs will serve eligible youth²⁸. Many would argue, however, that there are children in need of free or low-cost after-school care who do not attend Title 1 eligible schools, and also that there are other factors contributing to the need for OST programming. Answering the positive question stated above poses some empirical difficulties, which will be discussed in detail below.

I begin with a discussion of the problems of measuring eligibility of communities based on the income requirement, using available data. Second, I discuss other

²⁸ Title 1, “Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged,” is a federal funding stream for elementary and secondary schools dedicated to improving the equality of opportunity available to youth. See the US Department of Education Title 1 webpage - <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg1.html>.

demographic variables that relate to reasons why children, parents, and communities may need OST programs. Then, I pose the empirical question of how well these variables can explain variations in concentration of poverty. In other words, I analyze the relationship between income-based eligibility and other dimensions of need.

Moving to the positive question of where programs are located, and what explains this allocation of funding, I discuss ways of measuring access to 21st CCLC programs using GIS. Next I explore through regression analysis how well-correlated access to 21st CCLC programs is with both the eligibility requirement and the demographic variables discussed above. Finally, I discuss non-quantifiable factors that can help explain where funded programs end up being located, and the implications of my findings for communities, policy-makers, and youth.

The central finding of this chapter is that there are far too few programs to serve all communities of concentrated poverty in New York State. Furthermore, funded programs are not distributed in a systematic way; rather, idiosyncratic factors play a large role in the allocation of funding. Moreover, while income is a fairly good proxy for the need for OST programs, the eligibility standard as it is now used may lead to many kids in need of after-school care not having access to a 21st CCLC program. I argue that determining relative need for programs should be based not only on concentration of poverty, but also on measures related to labor force institutions and acute aspects of need such as high concentrations of ‘lumpen’ youth.

5.2 Measuring Eligibility

A proposed OST program is considered eligible for 21st CCLC funding if it will be serving children who attend a school or schools eligible for school-wide application of Title 1 federal money. Generally, this means that 40% or more of the students in the school must be eligible for free or reduced lunch, earning 1.85 times the poverty line or less²⁹. The income-based eligibility requirement is a proxy for need, with the rationale that communities with concentrated poverty are more in need of free OST programs, and the requirement is designed to fulfill the federal funding priorities of the 21st CCLC program. As discussed below, eligibility is important but inadequate to capture all of the dimensions of need for OST programs. Furthermore, detailed data on children by which school they attend is not available, and demographic data at neither the school district nor the block group level can perfectly capture this eligibility requirement.

²⁹ Schools may also be eligible if they are fed by lower grade schools that are Title 1 eligible, reflecting the fact that many high schools have inaccurate data on the free/reduced lunch status of their students. Additionally, schools may be considered eligible on an ad hoc basis at the discretion of the Department of Education.

Figure 5.1 depicts eligible public schools by district throughout New York State. Within a given district, there may also be non-public or charter schools eligible to apply for 21st CCLC funding, which are represented in the map as red triangles. The location of current 21st CCLC programs is represented by pale blue dots. It is important to remember that access to a 21st CCLC program is limited by both a child's school and school district. Furthermore, the physical location of a 21st CCLC program is highly indicative of the school it serves, because many programs are located in a participating school. Eligible schools are be served by a center physically located in another school district, although one center may serve multiple schools within a district.

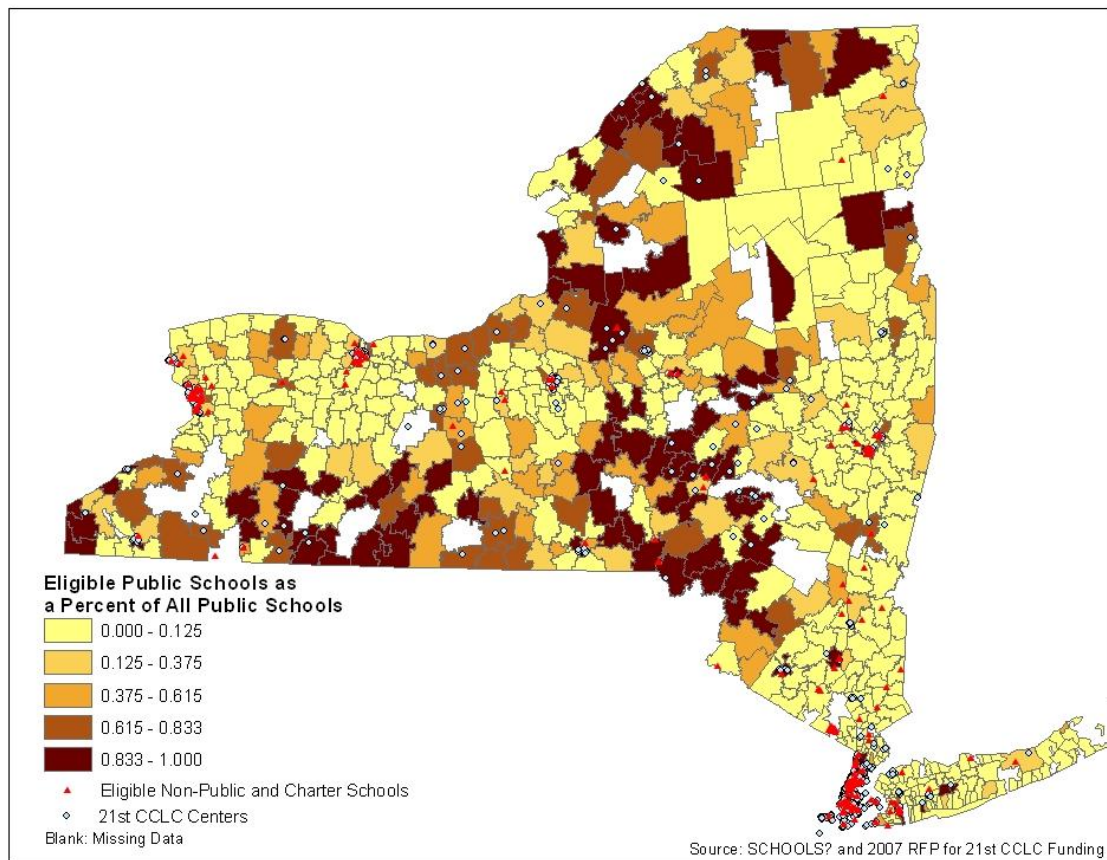


Figure 5.1: Schools Eligible for 21st CCLC Funding

Figures 5.2 and 5.3 use the Albany City School District (ACSD) as an example for a more detailed inspection of the distribution of eligible schools and 21st CCLC programs. ACSD contains sixteen eligible public schools (100% of all public schools), as well as twelve eligible non-public or charter schools. This school district was served by nine 21st CCLC centers in 2007. The eligible non-public schools, eligible charter schools, and 21st CCLC centers are mapped in Figure 5.3. The other 21st CCLC programs in the area are located in the Troy, Cohoes, and Schenectady City School Districts, with six of eight, five of five, and fifteen of fifteen eligible public schools, respectively. The Troy City School District also contains two eligible non-public or

charter schools, and the Schenectady City School District contains one. The distribution within the Albany area appears more correlated with the location of eligible schools than it does on the state level, perhaps indicating that, unlike New York State as a whole,

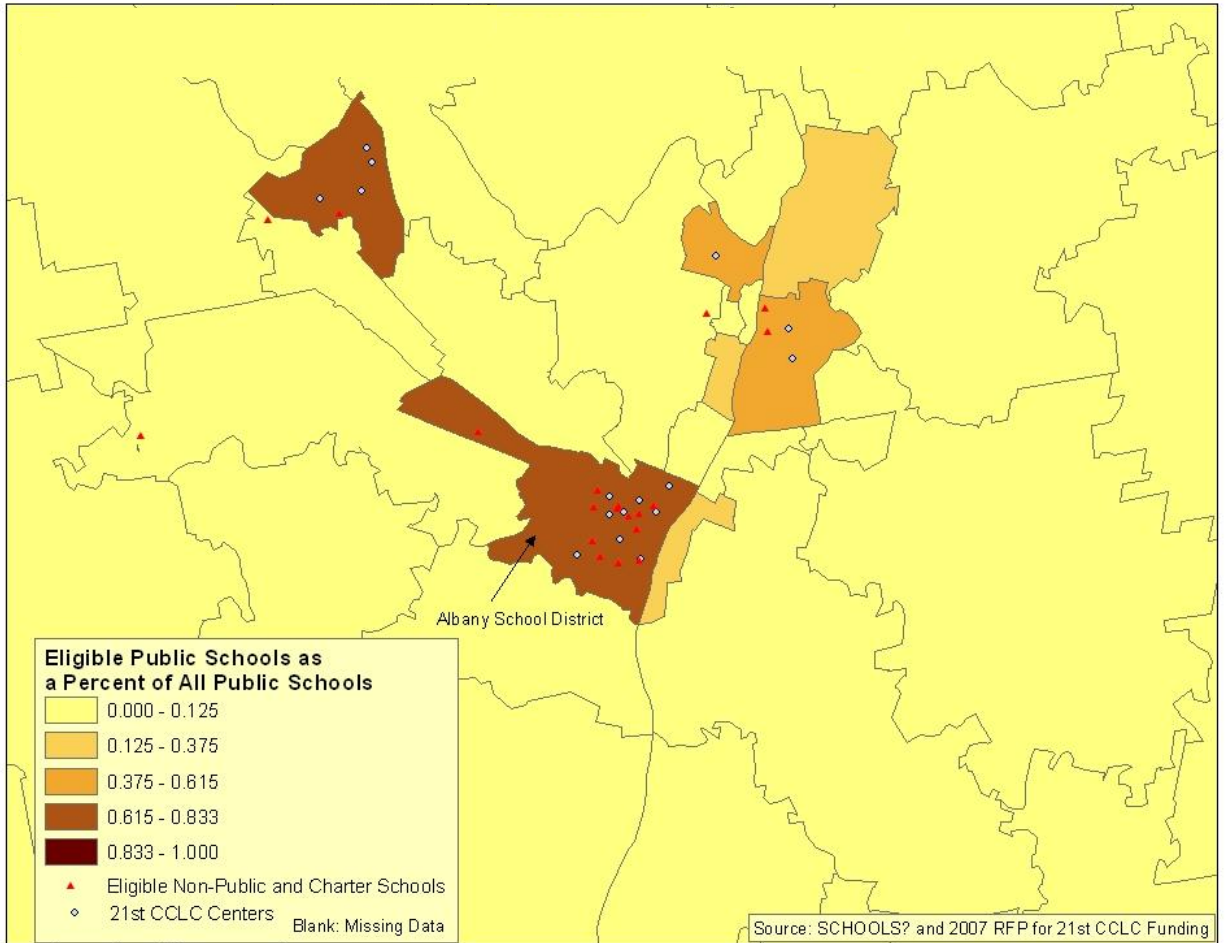


Figure 5. 2: Schools Eligible for 21st CCLC Funding

Albany area schools were receiving adequate funding for 21st CCLC programs in 2007. Funding to ACSDD programs has since ended, as the district was not successful in the most recent 21st CCLC competition.

Even within this (at the time) well-funded area, however, there were block groups with high poverty levels that did not have access to 21st CCLC programs. Figure 5.3 illustrates the distribution of poverty, delineated by block group. Rather than focusing on

eligible schools, as the funding guidelines do, this maps focuses on what could be



Figure 5. 3: Eligible Charter and Non-Public Schools and 21st CCLC Centers in Albany City School District

considered eligible communities – i.e. if a program were serving youth from this block group, that program would be eligible for funding. Youth living in these

block groups may be attending a school with less than 40% free or

reduced lunch rates, but they are still living in communities of concentrated poverty. The North Colonie Central School District, directly north of the Albany City School District in Figure 5.3, contains one block group (total population 1733) with 25% poverty (1.85 times poverty line), surrounded by block groups with under 20%³⁰. Because those districts do not contain eligible schools, youth living there would have no access to a 21st CCLC program under the current allocation of funding.

³⁰ The small school district next to North Colonie is Menands Union Free School District, which contains one block group with 100% DepthPov along with two other block groups and a portion of a third, with DepthPov ranging from 8% to 17%. However, the block group with 100% of the population at or below 1.85 times the poverty line only contains a population of 25.

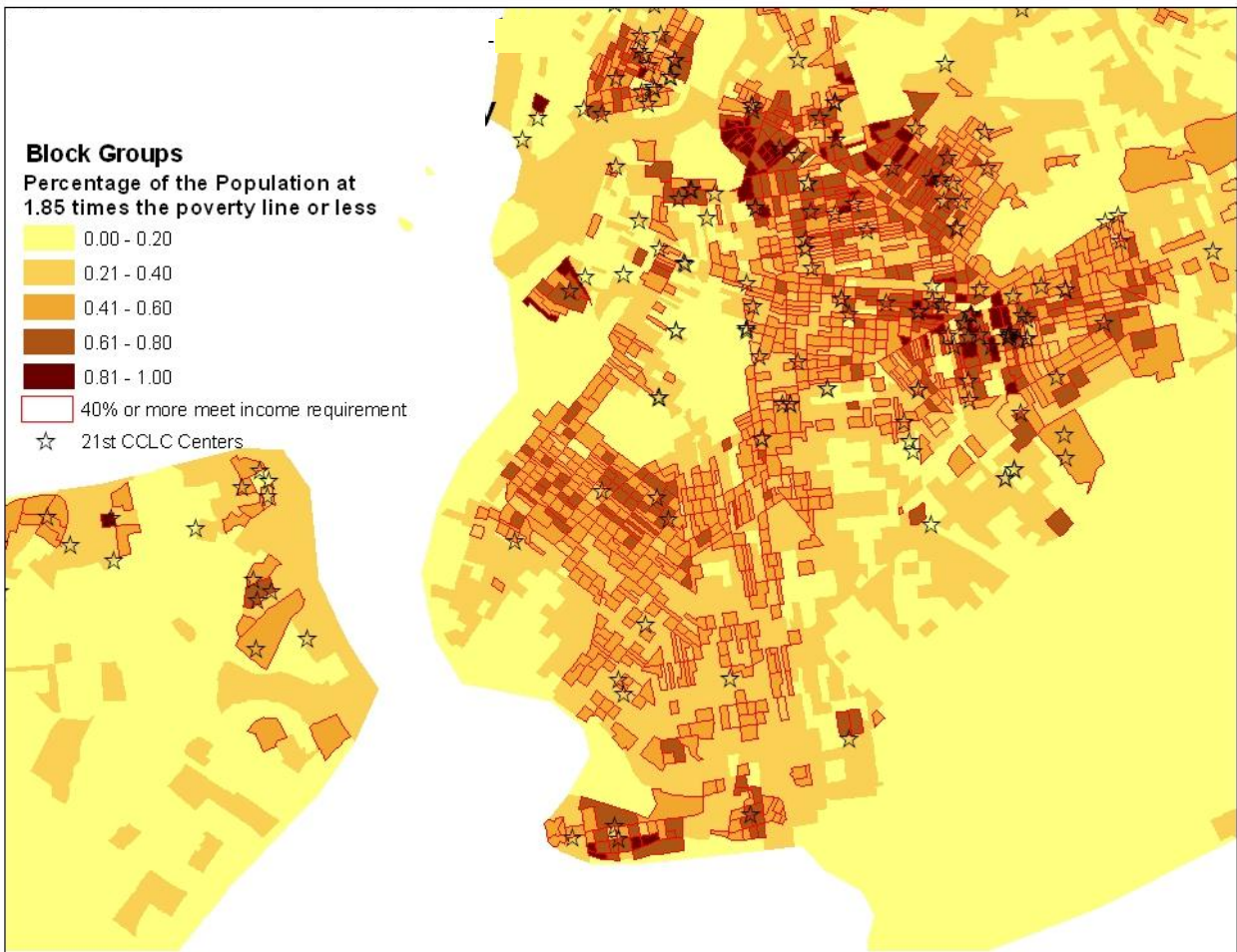


Figure 5. 4: Measuring Eligibility by Block Group for a Portion of Brooklyn County

As in the Albany area, the distribution of 21st CCLC programs in the Brooklyn area, shown in Figure 5.4, appears fairly well correlated with the distribution of poverty. In contradiction with this statement, however, is the concentration of programs in Staten Island, to the left of the map, where there is less concentration of poverty than in some unserved portions of Brooklyn. The school district boundaries in Brooklyn are more difficult to discern than in Albany, because nominally all of New York City is one school

district, and there are many schools that draw youth from multiple, non-contiguous neighborhoods in addition to schools that serve youth from a single Community School District. The overall concentration of programs, hence, is more important in this area, while the district-by-district concentration is more important outside of New York City.

Lastly, Figure 5.5 presents block group-level concentration of poverty combined with

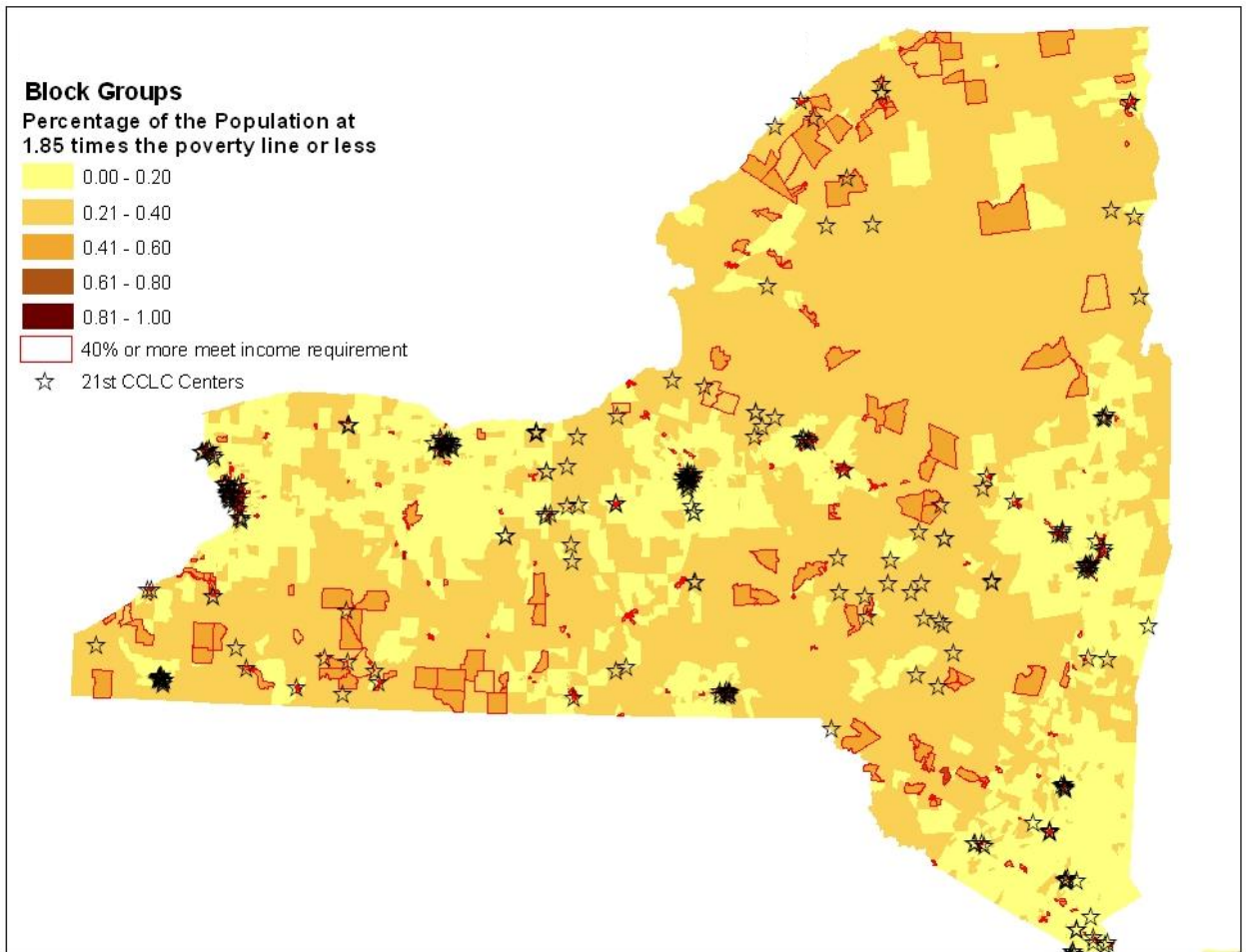


Figure 5. 5: Measuring Eligibility by Block Group

the location of 21st CCLC programs for the entire state. As with eligibility by school district, it is clear that there are many communities of concentrated poverty in the state without access to 21st CCLC programs. New York City is omitted from this map, as the large number of programs in the city make it difficult to discern any detail at this level of

geography. The funding stream for New York State is divided into three pools, one for New York City, one for the “Big 4” cities, and one for the rest of the state. The Big Four cities are easy to locate in the map below by their high concentration of programs – Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Yonkers. Several smaller cities, such as Albany, Utica, Glens Falls, Hudson, Binghamton, and Jamestown are also visible in the state-wide map by their clusters of programs. The distribution is thinnest in rural areas, despite the presence of both school districts and block groups containing eligible populations.

The available data limit the choice of geographic unit to the school district or to a Census designation like a Census tract or block group. Because there may be some eligible and some non-eligible schools in a school district, this level of analysis is not detailed enough for the empirical questions posed in this study. School district-level data do not provide any information on the variation within the district or on which schools are attended by which youth. Because it is the most detailed unit of analysis available, the block group is used throughout as a proxy for community. *DepthPov* is the percentage of the population at or below 1.85 times the poverty line.

Descriptive statistics for *DepthPov* at the block group level are in Table 5.1.

The larger sample includes all block groups with positive population. However, the size of block

Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics for DepthPov

	Valid	Mean	Std Dev	Min	Max
Sample 1	14916	.28	.20	.00	1.00
Sample 2	6399	.28	.19	.00	.94

groups ranges from one person to 24,473 people. The second sample, with 6399 observations, includes only block groups where the total population is no more than one

standard deviation below the mean, meaning block groups with fewer than 1187 people are excluded. The restricted sample still includes a large number of rural block groups. For the larger sample, 24% of block groups have *DepthPov* over 40%; the corresponding number is 25% for the smaller sample. An independent sample t-test indicates that the mean of *DepthPov* is the same for the two samples, with $t = 1.75$ at 21313 degrees of freedom. However, several other variables used in analysis below are found to have

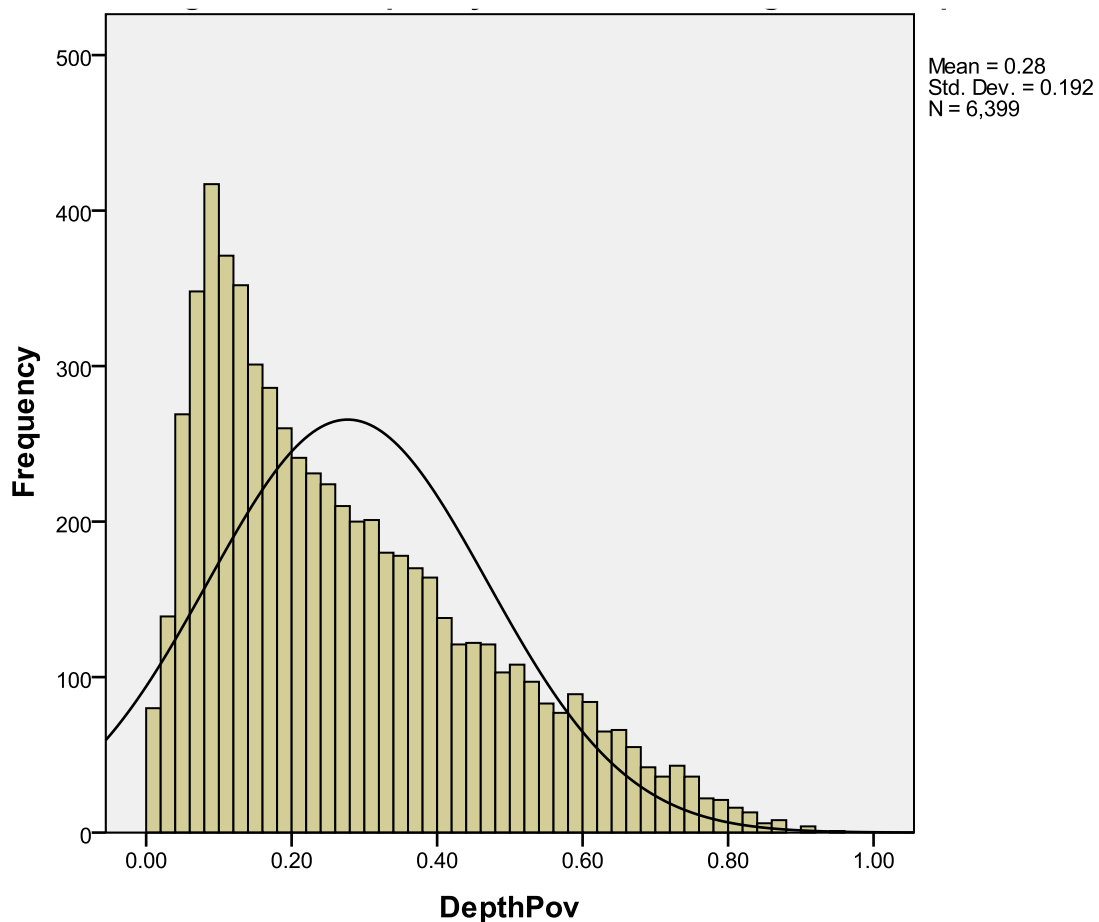


Figure 5. 6: Frequency Distribution Histogram for DepthPov

means statistically different for the two samples. The frequency distribution for *DepthPov*, using the smaller of the two samples, is in Figure 5.6.

5.3 Beyond Concentration of Poverty

While concentration of poverty within a school determines eligibility to apply for 21st CCLC funding, there are other demographic factors that contribute to a high potential pool of participants in OST programs. Parents, children, and communities may have other characteristics that contribute to a need for free, quality, OST programs to care for young people. The fourteen variables included in Table 5.2 below, derived from Census data, are chosen to represent some of these factors. They are used in Principal Components Analysis, Factor Analysis, and regression analysis below. Not all variables are included in every analysis.

Each of these variables relates to one or more aspects of the need for OST programs. They can be grouped into four categories (the *Cat* column in Table 5.2): 1) Lack of human, social, and other capital, 2) risk of negative outcomes for youth, 3) scarcity of adults (absolutely and after school), and 4) the total potential pool of OST participants. These categories, arguably, overlap.

RecentImmigrants, *ImmigrantPercent*, and *Language* are three variables that reflect comments made by parents during interviews about the importance of OST programs for recent immigrants with limited English proficiency. *RecentImmigrants* is the percent of the total population who entered the country between 1990 and 2000; *ImmigrantPercent* is the percent of the total population who are not citizens; and *Language* (Figure 5.7) is the percent of the total population who speak English “less than

Table 5.2: Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables

Description	Variable Name	Cat	N	Mean	Std Dev	Min	Max
Percent of population who entered the country since 1990	<i>RecentImmigrants</i>	1	6399	.10	.11	.00	.66
Percent of population who are not citizens	<i>ImmigrantPercent</i>	1	6399	.13	.13	.00	.69
Percent of population who speak English “less than very well”	<i>Language</i>	1	6399	.14	.15	.00	.76
Percent of poor families who have children under 18	<i>FamPov18</i>	1	6399	.16	.16	.0	.8
Percent of people between the ages of 18 and 24 with no college education	<i>NoCollegeYouth (tracts)</i>	2	6399	.50	.18	.00	1.00
Percent of population who are high school graduates	<i>HSGrad</i>	1	6399	.78	.16	.1	1.0
Percent of young people between ages 16 and 19 neither in school nor working	<i>LumpenPercent</i>	2	5929	.06	.10	.00	1.00
Percent of adult population who are grandparents taking responsibility for their grandchildren	<i>GranResponsibility (tracts)</i>	3	6396	.01	.01	.00	.25
Percent of grandparents living with grandchildren who take responsibility for those children	<i>PercentResponsible (tracts)</i>	3	6246	.33	.22	.00	1.00
Mean travel time to work	<i>Meantime</i>	3	6395	33.32	10.71	1.0	80.7
Percent of children under 17 with all parents in the labor force ³¹	<i>LFAllPercent</i>	3	6376	.61	.16	.00	1.00
Percent of workers working during the after-school time, based on time leaving for work	<i>ShiftPercent</i>	3	5959	.55	.12	.00	1.00
Percent of children enrolled in public school	<i>PublicPercent</i>	4	6386	.81	.18	.00	1.00
Total population as a percent of mean block group population	<i>PopPercentMean</i>	4	6399	1.00	.51	.63	12.94

³¹ This includes children living in single parent families with a parent who is in the labor force and children living in two-parent families with two parents who are in the labor force.

very well.” While many block groups have no residents facing isolation in this way, a large minority of block groups exhibit considerable concentration of language isolation. It could be argued that a large concentration of recent immigrants, or of immigrants facing language isolation, is important in understanding the need for OST programs, especially among communities of concentrated poverty. Immigrant adults may have difficulty accessing resources to support their children’s development, and recent immigrants may lack social capital that can help meet these needs within informal institutions of the community. However, immigrant communities may not face these challenges if the immigrants have proficient use of English, or if their community does have stocks of social capital that provide well-functioning informal institutions to care for youth. While these are clearly important factors in the need for OST programs, the variables available to measure them imply a degree of stereotyping, because not all immigrants are lacking in resources. Of the three, I would argue that language isolation is the most relevant to the need for OST programs because children of linguistically isolated parents attending public school are likely to be lacking in human and social capital that will support their success in that English-based institution, possibly reinforcing inter-generational linguistic isolation. Language isolation also has robustly significant coefficients in regression analysis with *DepthPov* as the dependent variable (see Table 5.7).

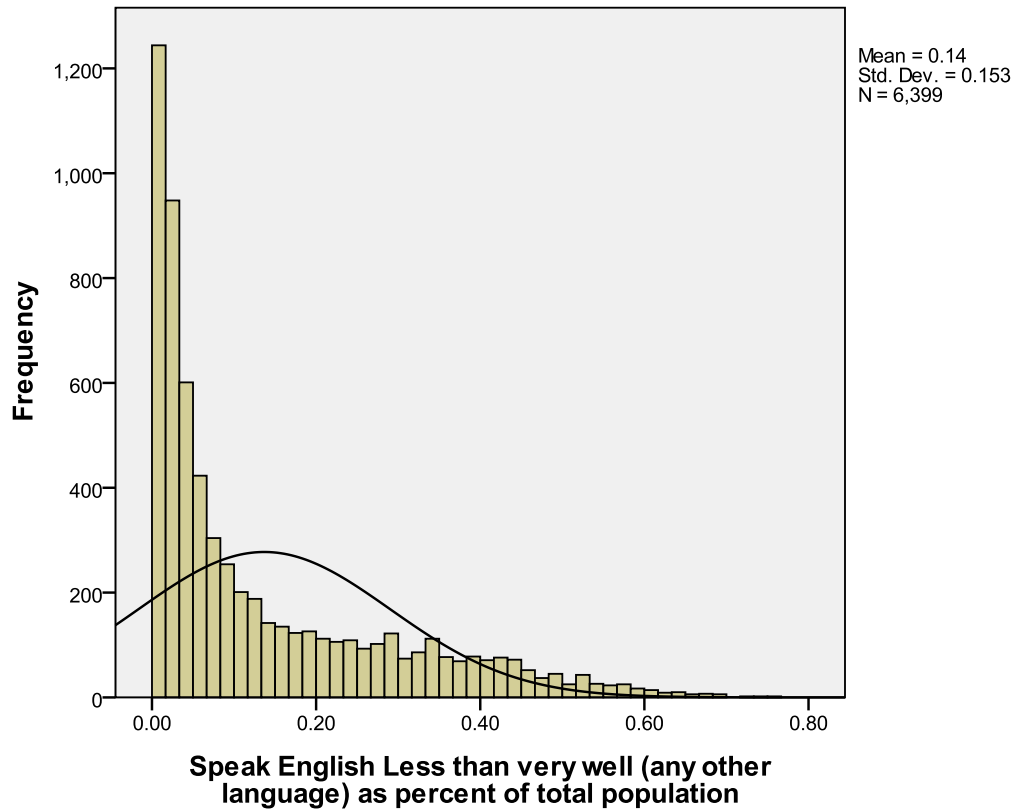


Figure 5. 7: Language Isolation

FamPov18 (the percent of poor families who have children under 18) is included to measure the degree to which poverty is concentrated among young people. Along with *NoCollegeYouth*, *HSGrad*, and *LumpenPercent*, this variable captures several aspects of scarcity of human and social capital among children in a community. *NoCollegeYouth*, the percentage of the total population who are aged 18 to 24 and have no college education, is measured at the Census Tract level rather than the blockgroup, because education data disaggregated by age are only available at the tract level. In the regression analysis that follows, each block group within a tract is assumed to have the same value for this variable as the entire tract (i.e. assuming a uniform distribution of youth without

college throughout the tract). While people under the age of 24 may go on to attend college later, this variable captures the prevalence of young people not continuing from high school directly to higher education. As *NoCollegeYouth* is the percentage of the total population who fall into this educational category, it indicates to some extent how visible they are to children in the community who are still in the process of making decisions about whether or not to graduate from high school.

HSGrad is the percentage of the population 25 and over with a highschool diploma—hence $100\% - HSGrad$ indicates a more severe lack of human capital than does *NoCollegeYouth*. The bivariate Pearson correlation between the two is $-.615$, $p = .000$. Both variables indicate a need for OST programs that provide other cultural messages and images to youth about what their lives can be like. Hence it is important both to professionalize the staff of OST programs as educational and caring professionals, and to have quality programming that includes an emphasis on enrichment (Birmingham *et al.* 2005). Lastly, *LumpenPercent* (Figure 5.8) is the percent of people between the ages of sixteen and nineteen who are neither in the military, in the labor force, nor in school, hence the title “lumpen”—they are unattached to any major institution that would structure their lives, making them more vulnerable to recruitment for gangs and other illicit institutions. Their presence in high numbers represents a lack of human and social capital available to help young people transition successfully to adulthood. Disconnected youth are considered important to those working in the field of youth services, as seen in published reports from the Furman Center at NYU³², and has also been identified as the

³² See the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, publications: <http://furmancenter.org/research/publications/>

most serious type of youth unemployment (Levin 1983, Singell and Lillydahl 1989). While it is uncommon for sixteen to nineteen year olds to be unattached to work or school—the mode for the variable is 0% (3,545 communities)—some block groups struggle with large numbers of lumpen youth, with a maximum value of 100%.

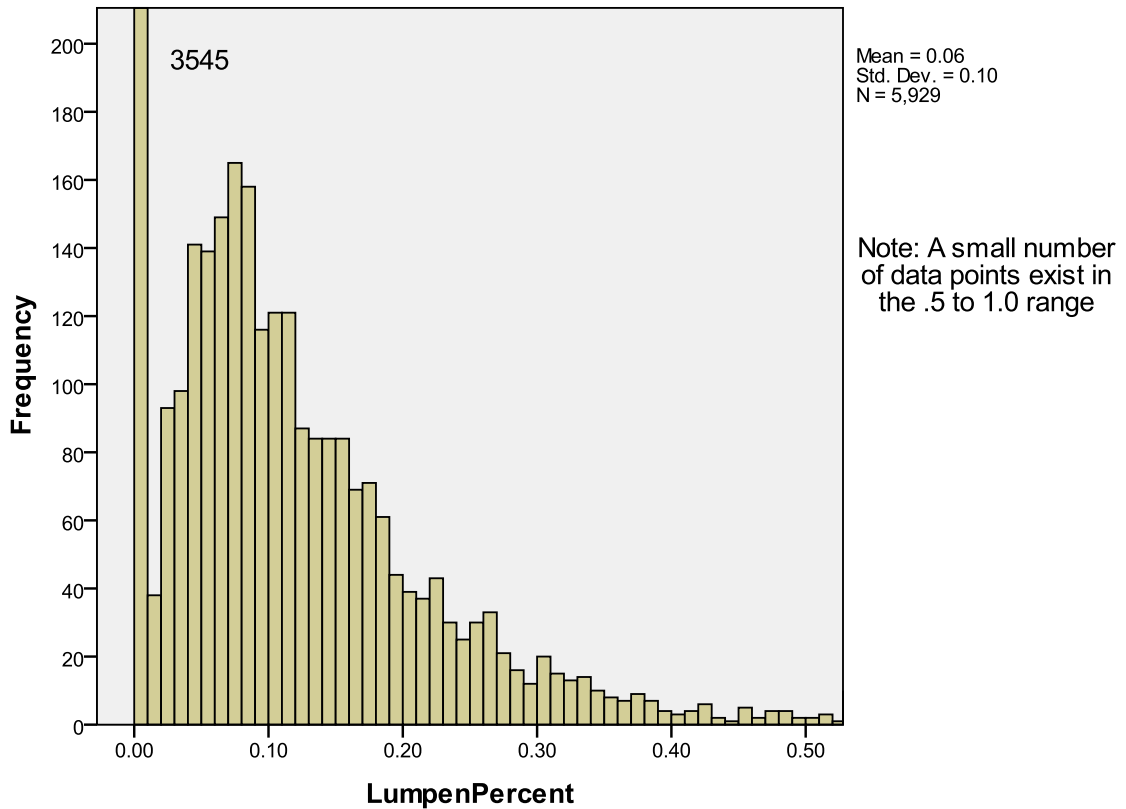


Figure 5. 8: Percent of 16 to 19 Year Olds Out of Work and School

The next five variables relate to the scarcity of adults available to care for children, the first two in an overall sense, and the other three specifically during the after-school time period. *GranResponsibility* and *PercentResponsible* again are measured at the Census tract level due to data availability. *GranResponsibility* measures the percentage of the total population over 25 who are grandparents with responsibility for

one or more own grandchildren under eighteen (responsible grandparents as a percentage of the total adult population). *PercentResponsible* can help to interpret this variable, as it measures the percent of all grandparents living with their grandchildren who claim responsibility for those grandchildren (responsible grandparents as a percent of all grandparents living with their grandchildren). Taking these two variables together is a better way to capture a community characteristic of scarcity of adults to care for children. The two variables capture not only a scarcity of parents, because more children overall are being raised by grandparents, but also a scarcity of grandparents, because those grandparents who are living with their grandchildren are in a primary rather than supportive care-giving role. Both parents and grandparent are important caregivers for children. High values of either variable are indicative of a scarcity of parents, and high values of *PercentResponsible* are indicative of a scarcity of grandparents available for supportive, rather than primary, care-giving roles as well.

Meantime is the mean travel time to work, which influences the ability of parents to care for children during the after-school time. *ShiftPercent* is the percent of workers over 25 who work outside of the home who leave for work at a time such that an eight-hour shift overlaps with the after-school time. While this variable does not guarantee that all workers included worked eight hour shifts, it does demonstrate the prevalence of non-traditional (i.e. non-9 to 5) work schedules in a community. *LFullPercent* (Figure 5.9) is the percentage of young people under the age of seventeen living in a family where all available parents are in the labor force (i.e. in a dual income family or with a single parent who is working). This is clearly a common family structure, with an average of .61 for the entire state. In fact, despite the common impression that women are only now

‘leaving’ the home, families with no parent working full-time in the home have been common in working-class communities since the Industrial Revolution (Kessler-Harris

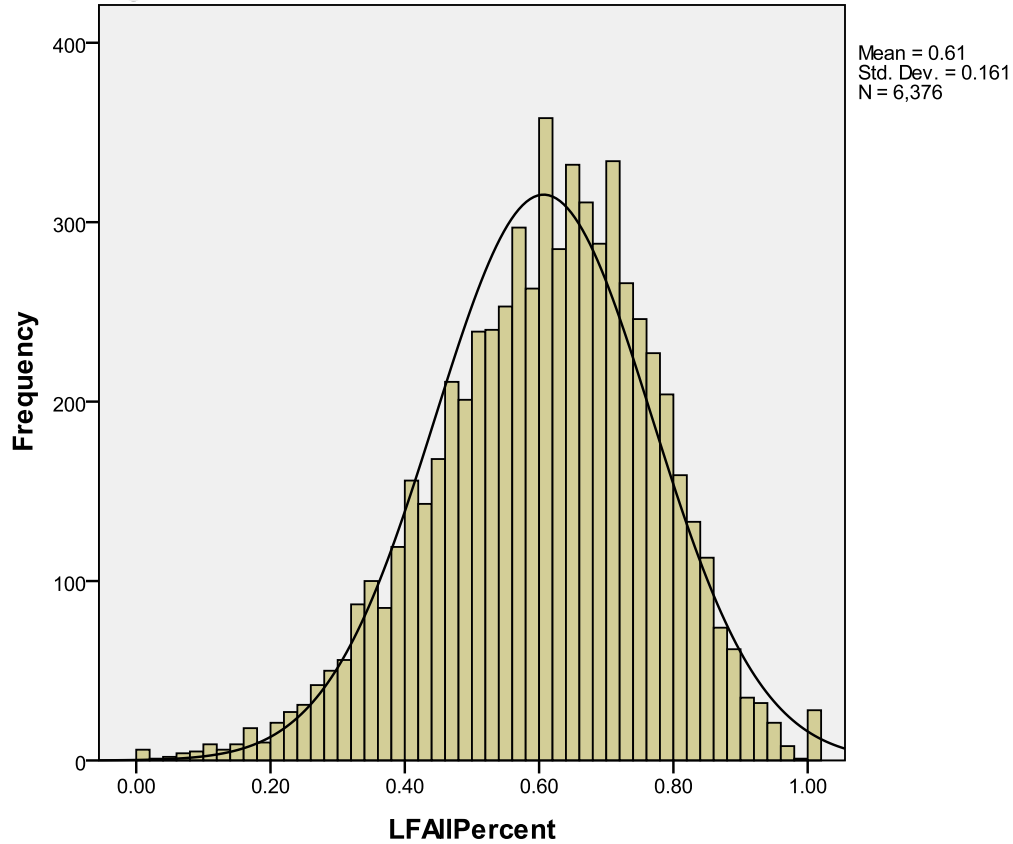


Figure 5. 9: Percent of Children with All Parents in the Labor Force (2001).

The last two variables, *PublicPercent* and *PopPercentMean* relate to the total potential pool for OST participants. There is precedent for judging the ‘demand’ or need for OST programs based solely on the population of children, with an assumption that 36% of all children would attend an OST program if available (After School Alliance 2010). *PublicPercent* is the percent of children attending public school. As can be seen in the frequency distribution in Figure 5.10, public school is the most common schooling option in most block groups. *PopPercentMean*, the population of the block group as a

percent of the mean block group population, is used as a weight variable in the WLS regressions that follow in section 5.7.

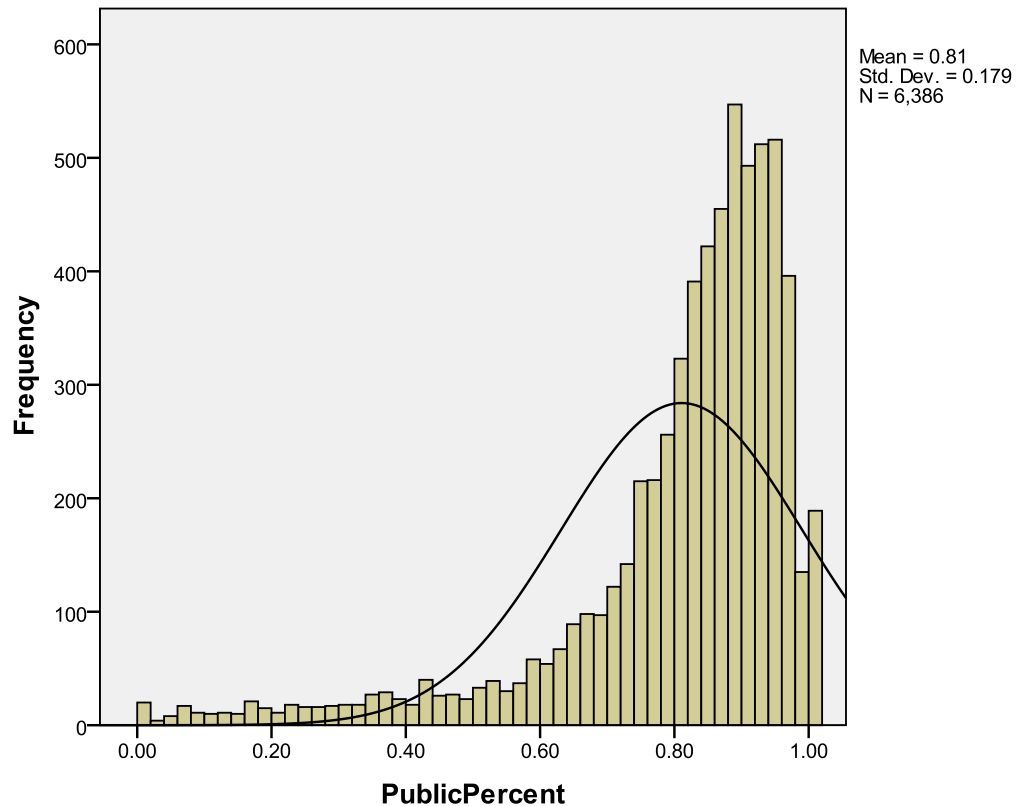


Figure 5. 10: Percent of Children over 3, Enrolled in School, who are in Public Schools

5.4 Index For OST programs

Taken together, these variables could be used to construct an index of need for OST programs. An index reduces a complex construct to a single, comparable number or rank, allowing simple comparisons among communities by assigning weights to different aspects of the construct. However, there is no universally accepted methodology for assigning index weights, which are an example of ‘non-basic judgments’ relying on many assumptions. Instead of the ‘arbitrary’ assignment of weights (i.e. weights not

determined through statistical analysis), as in the Human Development Index, techniques like Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Factor Analysis (FA), and multiple regression can be used to create indices, where the weights are determined endogenously to explain a large portion of the variation in variables. Using the first component from a PCA has been described as “an objective method of combining component indices in a fashion that maximizes the information content of the resultant index. This multivariate technique accounts for differences in variances of component indexes as well as interdependence among the component indexes, both of which are necessary for creating an operational development index” (Biswas and Caliendo 2002, 98). However, this does not mean that the weights are not arbitrary—there are in fact an infinite number of mathematically equivalent sets of principal components, which is why studies based on PCA are difficult to replicate (Kline 1994). Others advocate using multiple components from a PCA, by using a weighted average of as many components as there are indicator variables (Slotji 1991). It is important, however, to avoid explaining such a high amount of variation among the variables that the random error aspect of the variation is included in the index (Kline 1994).

Principal Component Analysis and the related methodology of Factor Analysis are typically used to test the validity of scales, where the indicators are viewed as the effects of a latent variable. Indices can be contrasted as different from scales, however, because indices are often measuring the causes of latent variables rather than their effects, meaning that indices are formative in nature—examples include the HDI, the index of sustainable welfare, and the quality of life index (Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer 2001). Formative indices are rooted in the concept of operational definitions, where a complex

concept is defined narrowly for the purpose of study, along with the belief that many concepts may be used to measure a latent variable. In this way, “the measures produce the constructs” (270). In contrast to Principal Component Analysis, Diamantopolous and Winklnofer advocate using multiple regression, where weights are determined through regression analysis with a dependent variable believed to be related to the underlying, unmeasurable, construct. The coefficients on indicator variables are taken as index weights.³³ The validity of the index is assessed through its correlation with yet another variable related to the underlying construct. Regardless of the technique, index creators often scale weights to add up to one, or else convert the index into ordinal rankings among the communities of interest. Multiple techniques may be combined:

We construct several different measures where the weights are alternatively determined by ranks of attributes, principal components of the attributes, and a hedonic representation of the attributes [using multiple regression]. We then present the relative rankings for each index to serve as a sensitivity analysis of the different weighting specifications. Finally, we take the average rank for each country over all the different indexes as the initial index of the quality of life. This procedure captures the multidimensional information content from *all* of the individual indices (Slottji, 1991, 687, emphasis in original).

It is interesting to note that a body of research on the Human Development Index indicates that statistical methods of index creation tend to corroborate the ‘arbitrary’ equal weights of the index components in the HDI (Biswas and Caliendo 2002).

³³ In the presence of strong multicollinearity, the authors advocate more complex methodology such as a Multiple Indicator Multiple Cause (MIMIC) model.

When 21st CCLC grant proposals are evaluated, they are essentially assigned an index value for the merit of the proposal (a proposal score) based on the degree to which the proposal aligns with program goals and the reviewer's opinion of the quality of the program proposed. Those proposals with the highest score receive funding – in 2009, the cut-off for funding was very high at 95 out of 100, and even some proposals receiving scores of 95 were unfunded. Regardless of whether this is the best way to allocate funding (a question further debated later in the chapter), the quality of the proposal may not be perfectly correlated with the need of the community. An index that captures some elements of this need can help in analyzing whether communities with the greatest need are putting forth high-scoring proposals, and can help target technical assistance to make sure the 21st CCLC program and other similar programs are effectively achieving their goal of providing quality OST programs to the communities that need them most.

For a data set to be suitable for Principal Components Analysis and Factor Analysis, it should have a large sample and a high degree of correlation among variables (meaning a large number of correlations above 0.3). The data in this study fit the first requirement, but are lacking in multicollinearity. Principal Components Analysis and Factor Analysis failed to produce statistically significant results, and so I turn to regression analysis below.

5.5 Regression Analysis with DepthPov as Dependent Variable

The lack of correlation among variables means that, while not ideal for PCA and FA, the data set is a good candidate for regression analysis. There is some degree of

heteroskedasticity in the data set, as is common in cross-sectional data, but the multicollinearity is very low (see Table 5.6). Regressing the demographic variables with the block group level measure of eligibility (*DepthPov*) addresses two questions – the selection of weights for index creation, and the question of how well income as an eligibility measure captures other aspects of need for OST programs.

Regression analysis was performed for nine models to both determine the best model and to test the robustness of the coefficient estimates. The R^2 values for the models range from 0.798 to 0.854, indicating that these variables ‘explain’ a good deal of the variation in concentration of poverty. Bolded coefficients are significant at the 0.05 level. All of the robustly significant coefficients are of the expected sign, except for those on *Meantime* and *PopPercentMean*. Clearly, the demographic variables have a statistical relationship with *DepthPov*. The variables that lack a robustly significant regression coefficient are *LumpenPercent*, *LAllPercent*, and *PublicPercent*. I would argue that in the case of *LumpenPercent* this is due to the generally low values and lack of variation in the variable, with a mode of zero. The lack of a robust relationship between *LAllPercent*, *PublicPercent*, and *DepthPov* is an interesting result, as is the negative and significant coefficient on *Meantime*. As argued above, *LAllPercent* is theoretically very important in understanding why parents feel the need for OST care, but parental work choices may also result from a desire to avoid poverty. The same could be said about *Meantime*—parents may be choosing longer commutes for better-paying jobs, but while this decreases poverty it increases their need for after-school

Table 5.3: Correlation Coefficients among Demographic Variables³⁴

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
PopPercentMean (1)	1	.014	-.003	-.022	-.023	-.032	.003	-.002	.056	-.031	.000
PublicPercent (2)	.014	1	-.085	-.002	.107	-.088	-.184	.387	-.094	-.048	.034
Language (3)	-.003	-.085	1	.011	-.239	.167	.252	-.281	.051	.079	.536
LumpenPercent (4)	-.022	-.002	.011	1	.019	-.066	.029	-.007	-.095	-.039	.110
Meantime (5)	-.023	.107	-.239	.019	1	-.282	.135	.156	.084	-.012	-.016
GranResp (6)	-.032	-.088	.167	-.066	-.282	1	-.103	-.016	-.132	-.138	.233
LFAIIPercent (7)	.003	-.184	.252	.029	.135	-.103	1	-.013	-.001	.244	.018
ShiftPercent (8)	-.002	.387	-.281	-.007	.156	-.016	-.013	1	.302	-.236	-.147
NoCollegeYouth (9)	.056	-.094	.051	-.095	.084	-.132	-.001	.302	1	-.163	.273
FamPov18 (10)	-.031	-.048	.079	-.039	-.012	-.138	.244	-.236	-.163	1	.464
HSGrad (11)	.000	.034	.536	.110	-.016	.233	.018	-.147	.273	.464	1

³⁴ The covariances among variables all had absolute values less than 0.000, except for Row 6, Column 6, for which the value is 0.0108.

care. While *PublicPercent* may not be related to the need for OST programs, per se, it is closely related to the potential pool for participants because most participants in 21st CCLC and other government-funded OST programs are drawn from public schools. Also, it is less likely in public than in private schools that there will be other options for after-school care in the absence of funding like 21st CCLC. The negative coefficient on *PopPercentMean* indicates that blockgroups with populations larger than the mean tend to have lower concentration of poverty, controlling for all the other variables in the model, than those with smaller populations. However, the simple correlation between *PopPercentMean* and *DepthPov* is positive, small (0.016), and not statistically significant.

The percentage of poor families that have children is highly correlated with the total percentage of families at or above 1.85 times the poverty line. High school grad is more correlated (negatively) with concentration of poverty than *NoCollegeYouth*, demonstrating some returns to a high school diploma. There is, however, a large gap between the returns to a high school diploma and a college diploma, exacerbated by racial and gender differences (McCall 2000). The deficit is even greater for high school dropouts: “On average, high-school dropouts earn 27 percent less than high-school graduates, and 58 percent less than college graduates” (Tsoi-A-Fatt 2008, 1). *NoCollegeYouth* could contribute to a lack of high school graduates because it would contribute to the perception that there is no benefit to getting a high school degree—if the young people who graduate from high school are staying in the area and not doing much better than the ones who didn’t graduate, it reduces the incentive for HS graduation.

It is also interesting to note that the inclusion of *PercentResponsible* leads to a much lower coefficient on *GranResponsibility*. When we control for the likelihood that a grandparent living with their grand children will be responsible for those children, there is a smaller correlation between concentration of poverty and the total proportion of the population who are grandparents taking responsibility for their grandchildren.

The results below indicate that income as an eligibility requirement captures many aspects of need for OST programs, but that some aspects of need are negatively correlated with concentration of poverty, and therefore are ignored in the eligibility requirement. In parsing communities or schools into eligible and non-eligible groups, this discrepancy would most affect working class communities and children who were living just above poverty. Regression model 7, which is the base model with the added inclusion of *PercentResponsible*, is used in further analysis

5.6 Measuring Access to 21st CCLC Programs

Because children must have access to adequate transportation to get to OST programs, the physical distance from where they live to the nearest center is one aspect of access. Additionally, the density of centers near a child's home is another measure of access, because the more centers there are nearby, the more likely it is that a child will

Table 5.4: Regression Results with DepthPov as Dependent Variable

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
N	5912	13080	13080	5912	5901	5912	5796	12759	12759
Constant	.317	.409	.390	.314	.314	.319	.309	.376	.357
Standard Error	.017	.012	.012	.017	.017	.017	.017	.012	.012
RecentImmigrants	---	.185	---	---	---	---	---	.174	---
		.014						.014	
ImmigrantPercent	---	---	.068	---	---	---	---	---	.067
			.012						.012
Language	.143	-.011	.055	.145	.145	.148	.140	.004	.065
	.010	.012	.012	.010	.010	.010	.010	.012	.012
FamPov18	.720	.641	.643	.675	.675	.752	.713	.669	.668
	.010	.007	.007	.015	.015	.012	.010	.011	.011
FamPov5	---	---	---	.041	---	---	---	.007	.008
				.010				.007	.007
FemPov5	---	---	---	---	---	.019	---	.014	.014
						.004		.003	.003
FemPov18	---	---	---	---	---	-.045	---	-.032	-.032
						.006		.004	.004
NoCollegeYouth	.101	.104	.105	.101	.041	.102	.104	.105	.107
	.008	.006	.006	.008	.010	.008	.008	.006	.006
HSGrad	-.267	-.383	-.370	-.267	.101	-.261	-.281	-.364	-.352
	.013	.010	.010	.013	.008	.013	.013	.010	.010
LumpenPercent	-.008	.028	.029	-.009	-.267	-.008	-.010	.031	.032
	.011	.007	.007	.011	.013	.011	.011	.007	.007
GranResponsibility	.956	.629	.615	.957	-.009	.917	.377	.034	.002
	.104	.077	.077	.104	.011	.103	.121	.090	.091
PercentResponsible	---	---	---	---	---	---	.048	.052	.053
							.006	.004	.004
Meantime	-.001	-.001	-.001	-.001	.957	-.001	-.001	-.001	-.001
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.104	.000	.000	.000	.000
LFUnder6Percent	---	---	---	---	-.001	---	---	.011	.011
					.000			.004	.004
LF6to17Percent	---	---	---	---	-.010	---	---	-.013	-.011
					.007			.005	.005
LFAllPercent	-.010	-.002	.000	-.010	---	-.012	-.015	---	---
	.008	.005	.005	.007		.007	.008		
ShiftPercent	.030	.045	.047	.031	.031	.026	.031	.038	.039
	.011	.007	.007	.011	.011	.011	.011	.007	.007
PublicPercent	-.007	.022	.024	-.007	-.007	-.007	-.002	.021	.023
	.007	.005	.005	.007	.007	.007	.007	.005	.005
PopPercentMean	-.004	-.003	-.003	-.004	-.004	-.004	-.004	-.004	-.004
	.002	.002	.002	.002	.002	.002	.002	.002	.002
R Squared	.849	.800	.798	.850	.850	.851	.854	.814	.812
F	3024	4361	4299	2780	2780	2591	2825	3272	3230
Sigma/MSE	.006	.007	.008	.006	.006	.006	.005	.007	.007

attend a school that participates with one. Lastly, the capacity of centers, compared to the population of the community, measures access because programs without adequate capacity to serve the population may exclude young people even if they do have geographic access and adequate density of programming.

The first two aspects of access are measured in the variables reported in Table 5.8. Distance is the distance in meters from the center of the block group to the nearest 21st CCLC Center. The count variables, from *Countblgr* (block group) to *Count_10Miles*, are the number of 21st CCLC programs within a buffer of that size from the borders of the blockgroup. The sample is slightly smaller for *Count_5Miles* and *Count_10Miles* due to the extreme high density of population in some areas of New York City and computing constraints. This smaller sample accounts for the reduction in mean from *Count_5Miles* to *Count_10Miles*, because along with being the most densely populated part of the state, New York City is also the most densely served part. However, this high density of population means that children are likely to be served by centers closer to their homes than in rural parts of the state. The low mean of the count variables demonstrates an overall lack of access to 21st CCLC programs in the state due to funding constraints.

Table 5.8: Center Location by Block Group

Description	Name	N	Mean	Std Dev	Max
Distance from the center of the block group to the nearest 21 st CCLC program	<i>Distance</i>	15074	5315.08	7951.70	59497
Number of 21 st CCLC programs in the block group	<i>Count_Blgr</i>	15074	.05	.26	5
Number of 21 st CCLC programs within 0.25 miles of the block group boundaries	<i>Count_Pt25Miles</i>	15074	.53	1.22	13
Number of 21 st CCLC programs within 0.5 miles of the block group boundaries	<i>Count_Pt5Miles</i>	15074	1.39	2.77	25
Number of 21 st CCLC programs within one mile of the block group boundaries	<i>Count_1Miles</i>	15074	4.00	7.40	63
Number of 21 st CCLC programs within five miles of the block group boundaries	<i>Count_5Miles</i>	15038	47.07	64.04	239
Number of 21 st CCLC programs within ten miles of the block group boundaries	<i>Count_10Miles</i>	7164	17.02	36.08	208

Measuring the third aspect of access requires operationalizing the definition of center capacity, as data on the actual capacity of centers is available only qualitatively through each individual program. This operationalized measure of capacity (using attendance) is then compared to the estimated population within the same buffer. The population is estimated through an area weighting scheme, assuming equal distribution of population geographically in each blockgroup. The GIS Data Model for geoprocessing in this estimation is shown in Figure 5.11. Figure 5.11 illustrates the buffers around one block group in Albany City School District, along with center capacity. For illustrative purposes, the blockgroups

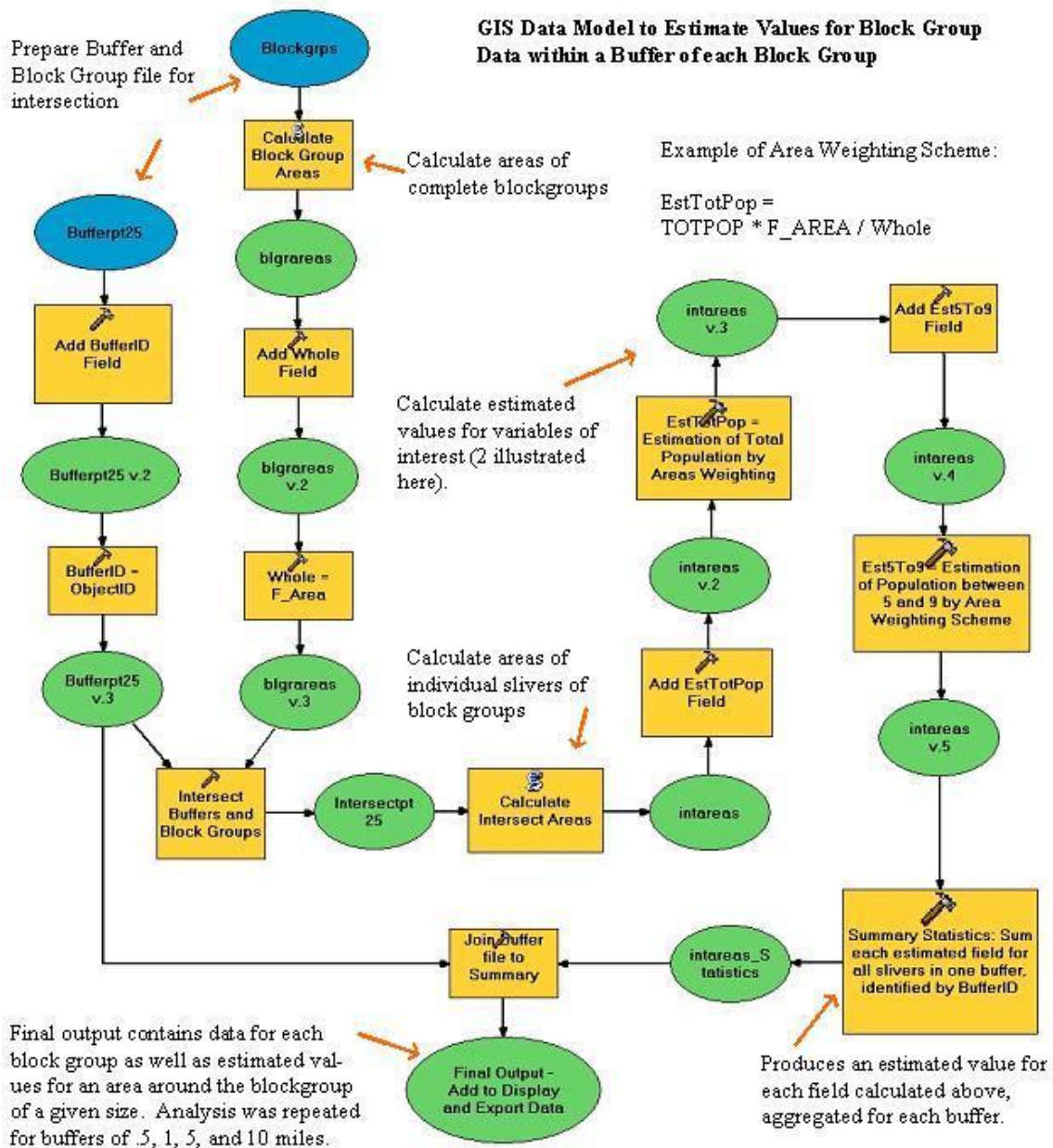


Figure 5. 11: GIS Data Model

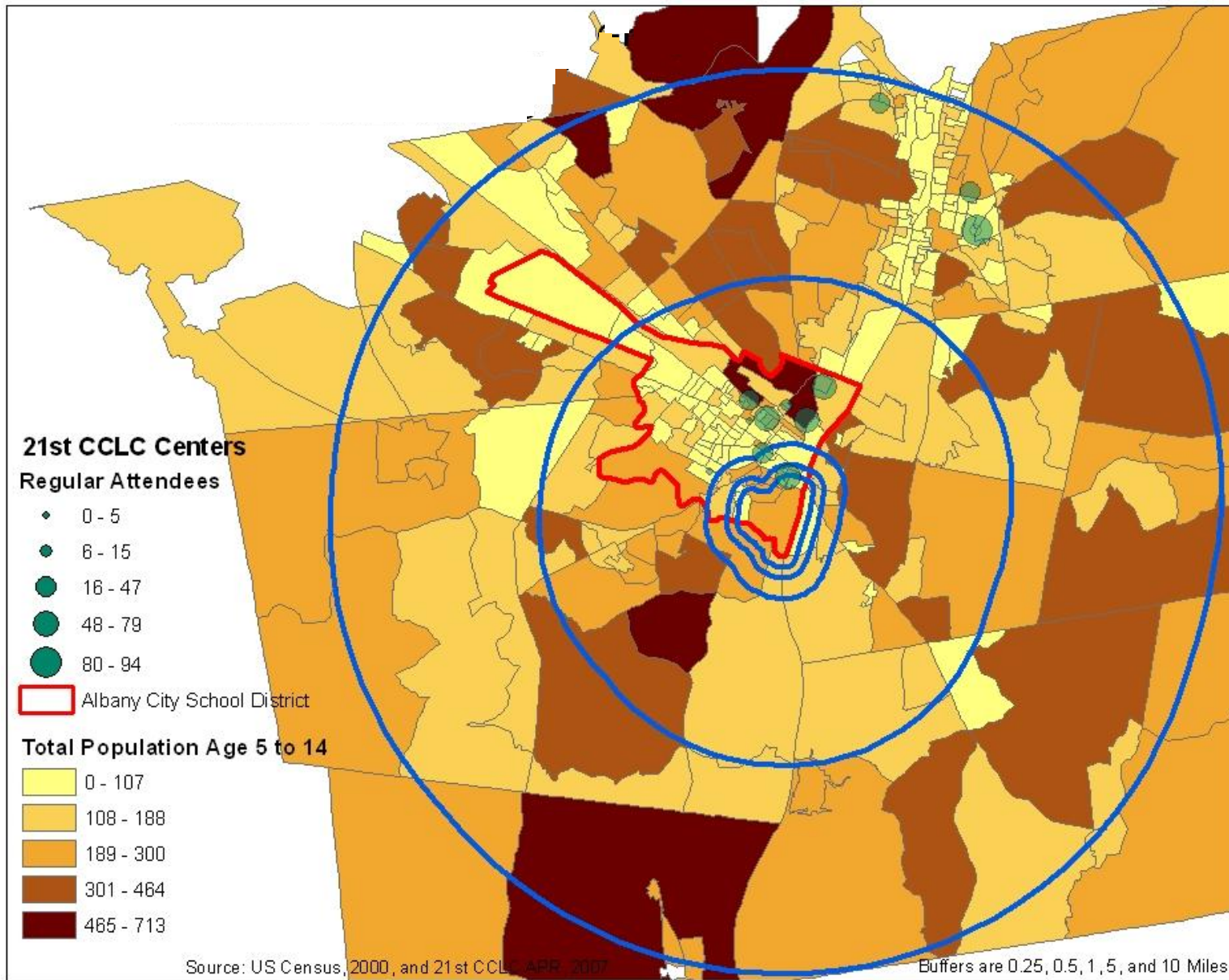


Figure 5. 12: Buffers around one Block Group in Albany City School District, with 21st CCLC Centers

While capacity is difficult to measure directly, center attendance data are available through the Annual Performance Report. Many centers do operate at full capacity, and carry waiting lists, but this varies by program and community. Descriptive statistics for attendance data, for the entire state, are presented in Table 5.9. The estimated total population within the buffer is limited to the Albany City School District. The last set of variables, comparing regular attendees to the total population between five and 14, includes only this small sample³⁵.

Table 5.9: Capacity for Centers by Block Group

	Distance in Miles	N	Mean	Std Dev	Min	Max
School Year	0.25	15074	77.11	217.87	0	2319
	0.5	15074	207.84	488.44	0	5043
	1	15074	603.70	1284.86	0	11438
	5	15038	7178.74	10594.77	0	40200
	10	7164	2049.99	5941.65	0	33634
Summer	0.25	15074	2.87	21.52	0	819
	0.5	15074	7.38	35.60	0	819
	1	15074	21.06	71.87	0	819
	5	15038	243.70	359.96	0	1283
	10	7164	101.36	177.96	0	819
Both Summer and School Year	0.25	15074	5.65	34.97	0	405
	0.5	15074	13.55	58.02	0	676
	1	15074	38.43	112.69	0	932
	5	15038	422.87	550.50	0	2302
	10	7164	183.24	397.42	0	2329

³⁵ As mentioned in Chapter 3, computing constraints necessitated limiting the sample for this complex geoprocessing to a small portion of the state. The GIS Data Model in Figure 5.12 illustrates how block groups are broken into tiny slivers in order to estimate the population living with buffers of different sizes around the borders of each block group (the *Intersect* tool). This creates many millions of individual observations that must be then recombined to create the whole of the buffer – Bronx county, for example, contained more than 40 million observations after the *Intersect* step of the Data Model. Sadly, the computers available in the GIS Lab at Skidmore College were not able to handle datasets this large, nor the large number of iterations required to complete the geoprocessing in a repeating loop, without computing errors and crashes. I chose Albany City School District as a case study for the comparison of population to center capacity because, at the time of the 21st CCLC data, it was a relatively well-served area.

Total Participants	0.25	15074	85.63	234.44	0	2453
	0.5	15074	228.77	525.50	0	5485
	1	15074	663.19	1386.67	0	12505
	5	15038	7845.31	11401.82	0	43042
	10	7164	2334.59	6437.98	0	36525
Regular Attendees	0.25	15074	41.56	117.73	0	1251
	0.5	15074	109.44	264.35	0	2998
	1	15074	314.75	690.46	0	6654
	5	15038	3646.43	5294.89	0	20566
	10	7164	1183.82	3077.59	0	17432
(Total Population 5 to 14 - regular participants)/total population 5 to 14	0.25	89	.9355	.11539	.34	1.00
	0.5	89	.9578	.04866	.78	1.00
	1	89	.9672	.02660	.88	1.00
	5	89	.9831	.00142	.98	.99

5.7 Explaining Variation in Program Access

While demographic aspects of program need are highly correlated with concentration of poverty, neither of these is highly correlated with access to 21st CCLC programs.

Regressions with each measure of access as the dependent variable were found to have highly heteroskedastic errors, and so the regressions were done using Weighted Least Squares, with a least likelihood estimation of the power on the weight variable, *PopPercentMean*, using uniquely determined weights for each dependent variable. The dependent variables used below are *Distance*, *CountX* (block group through 10 miles), and *RatioX* (block group through 10 miles). *Distance* is the distance in meters from the center of the block group to the nearest 21st CCLC program. The *Count* variables are the number of 21st CCLC programs with the given distance of the borders of the block group – *Count* is the number of programs within the block group itself, *Count10* is the number of programs within 10 miles of the block group. It is important to note that throughout the state, most block groups have no centers located within their borders. The *Ratio* variables are the result of the GIS data model in Figure 5.12. They are restricted to the

Albany City School District because of computing constraints (explained in Chapter 3).

They are calculated as:

(Total Population 5 to 14 - regular participants)/total population 5 to 14

Each *Ratio* variable corresponds to different geographic size – *RatioPt25* includes the population and regular participants within 0.25 miles of the borders of the block group, and *Ratio10* includes centers and people within 10 miles of the block group borders.

The model of demographic variables does the best at explaining *Count_5* ($R^2 = .57$), *RatioPt5* ($R^2 = .71$), and *Ratio1M* ($R^2 = .59$). In the regression with *Count_5*, which includes most of the state (low population block groups and some of the densest block groups in NYC excluded), all of the coefficients are statistically significant, although they do not all have the expected sign. Specifically, the coefficients on *NoCollegeYouth* and *PublicPercent* are negative, while they exhibit a positive relationship with the need for OST programs. The regressions with *RatioPt5* and *Ratio1M* as the dependent variable are statistically significant as a whole—i.e. the hypothesis is rejected that none of the variables have a relationship with the dependent variable—but few individual variables have statistically significant coefficients. *DepthPov* has a bivariate correlation of $-.647$ ($p = .000$) with *RatioPt5* and of $-.727$ ($p = .000$) with *Ratio1M*.

Regression analysis with the three measures of access to 21st CCLC programs used above is dissatisfying in explaining where 21st CCLC programs are located, with mostly low R^2 values. Demographic variables associated with need for OST programs, which are highly correlated with eligibility to apply for funding, can explain 57% of the variation in the number of 21st CCLC programs within five miles of each blockgroup.

However, two of the variables, including *NoCollegeYouth*, which is an important variable for understanding community-level need, are negatively correlated with the number of programs. When the size of the school-age population is taken into account, for the Albany City School District where there was at the time of data collection a relatively strong concentration of programs, the explanatory power of the model goes down significantly.

5.8 Conclusion

The analysis above raises several important issues to consider when making public decisions about the allocation of funding for OST and other youth programs in the future—about determining eligibility for funding, and about allocating that funding. 21st CCLC programs are specifically targeted at children living in concentrated poverty. Additionally, there is a funding priority for Schools in Need of Improvement (SINI), which, due to the extremely tight competition for grants, is practically an essential requirement to win funding. The school-based eligibility requirement, as currently used, leaves out children who are living in concentrated poverty but do not attend schools where the poverty is as highly concentrated as in their home neighborhoods. Moreover, poor children living in communities of less concentrated poverty may share the same child care needs as children in more highly concentrated neighborhoods, but these children would not have access to 21st CCLC OST funding. Working class communities and schools that serve these communities may be ineligible if parents are making choices—such as both working for a wage, taking a longer commute, or choosing some shifts over others—that raise their income above poverty but at the same time increase their need for OST care. Due to the overall lack of 21st CCLC programs in rural

communities, both of these problems—poor children living outside of concentrated poverty and working class communities just above the cut-off point—are likely to be increased outside of cities.

The current eligibility requirement shares the same problems as any poverty-line measure of poverty. There is a cut-off point. Those individuals and communities who fall just above the cut-off do not have lifestyles or ecological conditions that are drastically different than those just below it, but they are ineligible for funding. In the case of 21st CCLC, this includes schools with slightly lower poverty rates and communities with slightly higher average incomes. As with any social program that targets the poorest of the poor—here, 21st CCLC could be described as targeting the poorest of the poor schools through its funding priorities of Title 1 eligibility along with SINI status—schools, communities, and families who escape that classification lose access to services, contributing to the stability of poverty and inequality equilibria. With the limited amount of 21st CCLC funding available, as reflected by the lack of service in rural areas, perhaps targeting the poorest of the poor is the right decision. But, an ideal OST policy would include programs for working class communities, schools with large minorities of poor children, and schools that have made necessary improvements in quality but still serve needy and deserving youth.

Table 5.7: Weighted Least Squares Results for Access to 21st CCLC Centers

Dependent Variable	Distance	Count	Count Pt25	Count Pt 5	Count 1	Count 5	Count 10	Ratio pt 25	Ratio pt 5	Ratio 1	Ratio 5
N	5796	5796	5796	5796	5796	5776	2062	83	83	83	83
Constant	7703.66	0.08	0.03	-0.52	-1.35	32.46	20.47	0.60	0.82	0.95	0.98
Standard Error	1512.50	0.06	0.26	0.53	1.28	10.37	14.88	0.22	0.07	0.04	0.00
Language	-10136.81	-0.10	-0.60	-1.38	-4.81	54.18	151.56	-0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00
	843.99	0.03	0.15	0.30	0.72	5.87	13.31	0.39	0.12	0.07	0.00
FamPov18	-2404.17	0.16	2.36	5.94	16.87	111.66	0.94	-0.02	-0.03	-0.03	0.00
	880.81	0.03	0.15	0.31	0.74	6.01	9.03	0.10	0.03	0.02	0.00
NoCollegeYouth	5539.44	-0.01	-0.14	-0.37*	-0.65	-23.75	-32.83	-0.08	0.01	0.00	0.00
	689.36	0.03	0.12	0.24	0.57	4.66	5.70	0.09	0.03	0.02	0.00
HSGrad	5595.49	-0.15	-1.85	-4.67	-12.82	-102.34	-29.04	0.37	0.17	0.05	0.00
	1137.21	0.05	0.20	0.40	0.97	7.87	10.94	0.17	0.05	0.03	0.00
LumpenPercent	-105.06	-0.04	0.12	0.77	1.83	13.77	10.58	-0.11	-0.03	-0.01	0.00
	968.04	0.04	0.16	0.33	0.80	6.54	9.34	0.10	0.04	0.02	0.00
GranResp	-114377.07	0.41	9.49	25.74	85.82	392.58	810.18	2.97*	-1.21	-0.95	0.05
	10536.93	0.42	1.81	3.67	8.88	72.09	159.02	1.74	0.44	0.31	0.02
PercentRespon	1806.98	0.01	0.26	0.67	1.50	30.71	-10.98	-0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
	481.60	0.02	0.08	0.17	0.41	3.32	4.32	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.00
Meantime	-153.13	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.10	1.52	0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	9.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.07	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
LFAAllPercent	-810.84	0.02	0.21*	0.87	2.57	16.40	4.83	0.13	0.04	0.02	0.00
	669.83	0.03	0.11	0.23	0.55	4.48	6.68	0.07	0.02	0.01	0.00
ShiftPercent	-10454.92	0.04	1.83	5.18	14.15	123.23	19.92	-0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00
	925.22	0.04	0.16	0.32	0.77	6.30	9.22	0.12	0.04	0.02	0.00
PublicPercent	5970.31	0.02	-0.03	-0.27	-1.51	-74.18	-10.16*	-0.03	-0.01	-0.02	0.00
	588.98	0.02	0.10	0.20	0.49	3.99	6.74	0.07	0.02	0.01	0.00
PopPercentMean	-226.71*	0.04	0.18	0.42	0.82	4.31	1.19	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00
	121.53	0.01	0.04	0.07	0.18	1.47	1.80	0.03	0.00	0.01	0.00
Rsquared	0.32	0.02	0.28	0.39	0.47	0.57	0.20	0.33	0.71	0.59	0.36
F	223.22	11.76	187.56	310.79	427.16	640.42	43.45	2.85	14.51	8.43	3.32
Root Mean Sq Error	40702184	.076	1.30	5.35	31.31	2062.95	1119.93	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00

The eligibility requirement is designed to identify the communities most in need of free OST programs, but there are many aspects of need that go beyond merely concentration of poverty. While the demographic variables used in this analysis do a fairly good job of explaining the variation in *DepthPov* at the block group level, two variables related to labor force choices and/or imperatives, the percent of children with all parents in the labor force and the average travel time to work, are negatively associated with the poverty measure. Again, this indicates that working class communities are likely to be underserved, as choices about who works and where may be meeting explicit goals of avoiding poverty. Aspects of labor force participation, especially work schedules, are important to parents when considering how to care for their children during the after-school time, and should be included in assessing the relative needs of communities. Due to the inappropriateness of the variables above for creating a single aggregate index, by virtue of their lack of multicollinearity, it might be valuable to determine the need of a community by using the concentration of poverty along with a narrower index of variables related to labor force institutions that affect families served by proposed programs. A measure of acute or intensive need for OST programs, including high risks of poor outcomes for youth, could be included to add a third dimension to the analysis of relative need.

These demographic variables explain less of the variation in access to 21st CCLC programs than they explain of variation in the eligibility measure. The allocation of 21st CCLC programs matches concentration of poverty well in many local areas, especially in city school districts, but the allocation across the state as a whole is more capricious. Much of this arbitrariness can be explained by the overall shortfalls in funding for 21st

CCLC programs (and other youth programs), such that only a minority of proposals can be accepted and only a minority of eligible schools, communities, and youth will be served. Some of it, however, is also due to the grant application process used to distribute 21st CCLC funding. Only extremely high scoring applications win funding, and both the writing process and the scoring process introduce non-needs-related factors that affect the allocation of funding.

In 2009, due to funding constraints, the process of scoring applications and choosing which programs to fund was altered from the previous process in which three-person peer review committees met over a series of days to assign scores to each proposal. Instead, three individual scores, completed at a distance and submitted electronically, were averaged to determine the final score. The result of this change was a high variance among the three scores used to determine the final score for each application. With a funding cut-off of 95, two scores in the high nineties and one score in the seventies would result in an unfunded proposal. The competition was already fierce for a limited number of grants. Several programs launched an official complaint at the conclusion of the process, on the grounds that data with a high variance are not well represented by the average. In its response to the complaint, the state argued that the new process was a more reliable method of scoring an application because individuals with strong personalities would be able to intimidate other reviewers. While intimidation is theoretically possible in a group of three, there was no evidence to indicate this had happened in past years in the consensus-based process that was nationally recognized as a model for funding allocation.

Rather, the arguments given by the state Department of Education highlight a lack of consensus culture among the governmental agency. The Comptroller's Office eventually over-ruled the Department of Education, reducing the previously five year grants to three years so that another round of funding will be distributed sooner. The 21st CCLC grants were deemed too important to postpone altogether by running another peer review process. This result is not ideal because programs that were funded in 2009 must now aggressively plan for sustainability, which is a drain on the resources of newly created programs. Clearly, the way that decisions are made affects their outcomes, both because decisions may be poor and because stakeholders with process-regarding preferences may challenge the decision, diverting resources to dealing with complaints. A change in the decision-making process in this case greatly altered the eventual distribution of funding, though nothing was changed about the relative needs of the communities involved and, as programs argued in their complaint, this funding allocation also did not reflect differences in program or proposal quality. Rather, subjective differences and possible misunderstandings or mistakes among reviewers had increased sway over the eventual funding allocation.

The grant-making process, especially when it is extremely competitive, means that the presence or absence of grant writers accessible to a community, because of cost or geography, may have undue influence on the success or failure of an application. For example, there are four programs clustered in rural Otsego County, unlike other rural counties, proposals for which may have all been written by a single successful grant writer (see Figure 5.13). Communities without a history of successful grant seeking,

especially rural communities, may also lack histories of active community-based organizations and partnerships between schools and CBOs.

While after care is recognized as important, there is inadequate funding and programs are not distributed in a systematic way. The data presented in Chapter 4 indicate that OST programs are cost-effective, and research is clear that the programs produce important benefits above and beyond those amenable to cost-benefit analysis. The community role of these programs is important for youth, producing developmental assets uniquely available at the community level. These considerations suggest that we should (i) increase funding for OST programs, (ii) base programming in the community, (iii) provide technical assistance to communities to ensure that needy communities are able to develop programs, and (iv) allocate funding by the quality of the proposed program, and not the quality of the grant application.

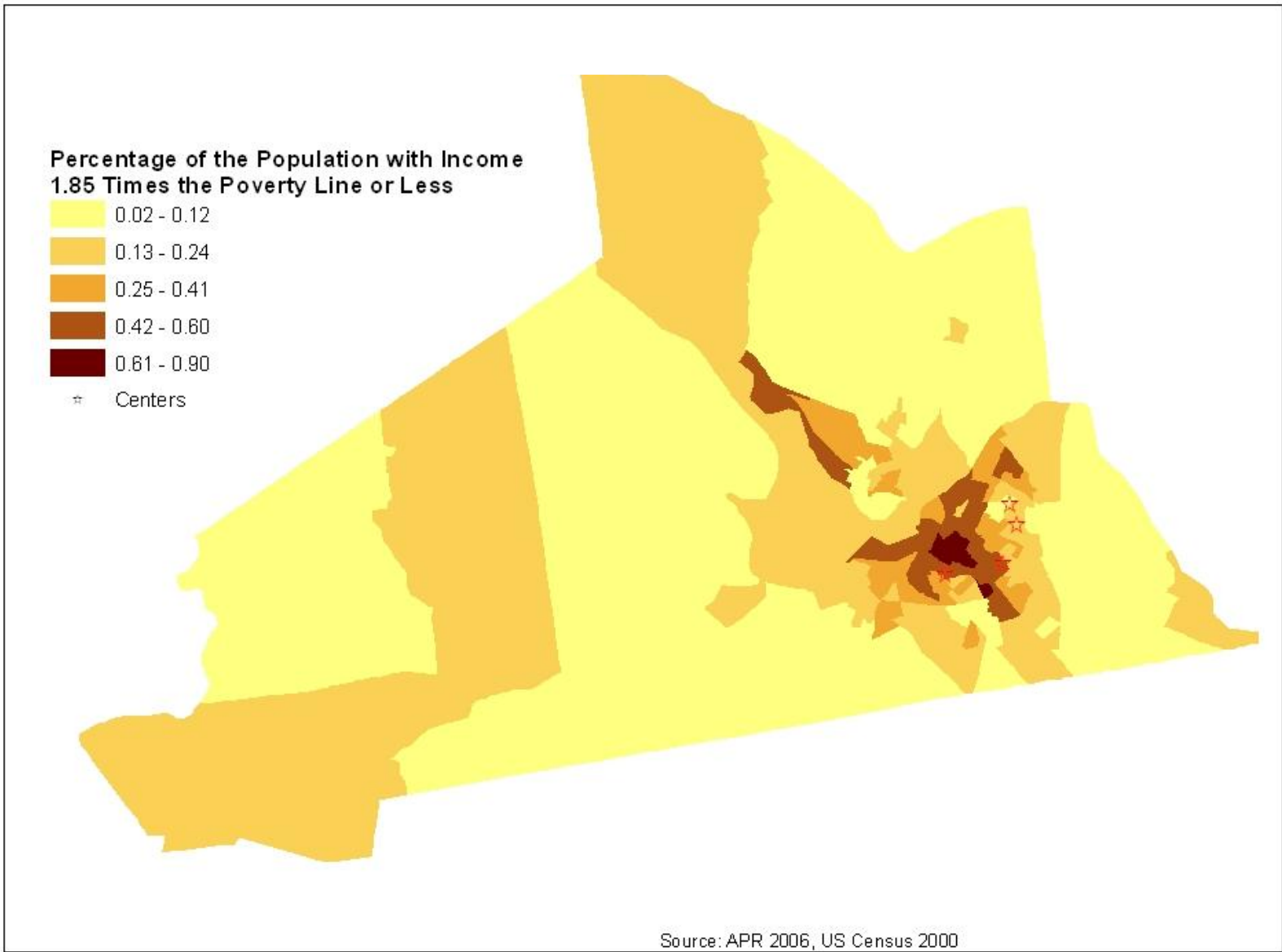


Figure 5. 13: 21st CCLC Programs in Otsego County

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

While the fact that youth need some adult supervision after school implies that youth need *any* OST program (i.e. any safe place), the need for developmental assets indicates that youth need *high quality* OST programs. Furthermore, the need for public goods and social capital indicates the need for *community-based* OST programs. Lastly, when parents earn low incomes, this indicates a need for *free* OST programs (or extremely low-cost programs). Overall, poor communities are in need of *free or low-cost, high quality, community-based OST programs*—programs of the type that are meant to be funded by the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant program. The degree to which OST programs, including 21st CCLC programs, exist, are of high quality, and are connected with the community in a way that builds social capital determines the unmet need in a community.

Economic development, a controversial subject in itself, is a long-term project. Communities change over generations. During this time, children are born, grow, have children of their own, and eventually die leaving behind the next generation of adults who were once children. Economic development involves children both as the recipients of care and as actors themselves. An understanding of the way young people contribute to economic development is important, especially at the community-level.

Young people are embedded in families and communities. They learn and act in the context of multiple settings. Children who are not home-schooled spend all day in

school, and go home in the evening—between, they are often in OST programs, for three or more hours a day. OST programs are a between time in other aspects as well, acting as a bridge between the school and the family. They serve this between function in the summer and on school holidays as well, stepping in to care for children when school is closed and work obligations limit the ability of parents to spend time with their children. OST programs may not be ideal, but they are real, and they do play a role in the development of children throughout the United States. When OST programs build capabilities and social capital, they contribute to economic development at the community level and in the long-term. From a public goods perspective, quality OST programs that produce these benefits should be promoted, and technical assistance should be provided to practitioners to ensure that OST programs live up to their full potential.

Even when OST programs do little more than provide safe childcare, they are cost effective. Parents state that they need OST programs because of their child care function, and by providing a safe place for youth to be they contribute to other benefits such as reduced juvenile crime and increased feelings of safety among participants. OST programs also create jobs, although many of these are part-time. While an overabundance of part-time jobs contributes to underemployment, part-time jobs are also important for older youth and college students, as well as for others such as elderly workers who do not want full-time jobs.

Beyond these, there are many other potential benefits created by high quality OST programs that are difficult if not impossible to adequately measure and include in a purely quantitative cost-benefit analysis. These benefits, produced in complementarity with other settings for youth activities, are difficult to assign to a single cause, difficult to

measure quantitatively, and difficult to assign probabilities to. Because of these complexities, they may simply be assigned an effective value of zero in a traditional cost-benefit analysis. Some of the benefits produced by OST programs have no price. Assigning a price may not adequately capture the benefit, yet neither does leaving it out of evaluations altogether. These youth programs, with the difficult-to-quantify potential to produce long-term benefits, are an example of the type of complex problem that highlights the weaknesses of Cost-Benefit Analysis as it is practiced in the real world of imperfect data.

If one believes that the benefits of OST programs outweighs the costs—that it is an efficient allocation of resources to fund these programs—it is important in turn to understand the factors that relate to the distribution of funds for OST programs. Using 21st CCLC programs as a case study, it is clear that there are not enough programs funded in order to serve all eligible children. Eligibility—that 40% percent of children in a school served by a 21st CCLC program are eligible for free or reduced lunch—is important, but other factors, such as a high portion of parents commuting long distances to work and a low level of human capital in the community, are also relevant indicators of the need for OST programs. Some of these indicators are negatively correlated with eligibility, as parents make decisions such as whether or not to participate in the labor market in part to avoid poverty. Especially when a broader concept of need is taken in account, beyond the simple eligibility requirement, there are not enough programs to serve all children who need them and the distribution of OST programs is not largely determined by eligibility or need. Other randomly distributed factors—such as the

presence of good grant writers in a community—also play a role. Should this be the case? It is a difficult question.

Youth need to be central to policy on economic development, especially when a long-term view is taken. They certainly cannot be ignored, or treated as passive non-subjects. Young people are people, and they make choices with long-term consequences in the presence of institutions they did not create. OST programs are one cost-effective way that young people can be included in economic development, bringing capability-driven development to a setting that is already important throughout the US. Based on the study of OST programs in this dissertation, more funding should be provisioned to support existing programs and to encourage the creation of new programs where there is unmet need. In addition to simply funding free OST programs for low-income youth, communities need assistance to develop the capacity to successfully propose fundable projects. New and existing programs also need support to improve their quality, including a focus on the development of capabilities and social capital.

Lastly, it is important to note that while OST programs are contributing to development on a micro scale, they exist within a larger macro institutional environment. In order to succeed at promoting economic development through building the capabilities of youth, those youth need to be growing into an adult world that provides them with real opportunities to use their capabilities. OST programs are one piece in the complex puzzle of positive coevolutionary change at different levels of human organization.

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