

Inter-racial tension as a barrier to full development of Brazil's potential

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Introduction

“*Ordem e Progresso*”, “Order and Progress”, is the motto displayed on the Brazilian national flag. Brazil is a country in which the people believe they are progressing towards a better quality of life. Brazilians believe they live in a “racial democracy” free from racism and discrimination and are unlike countries, such as the United States, which has a rich history of racism. The belief in this “racial democracy” helps Brazilians feel a sense of pride in their country. The “racial democracy” existing in Brazil is not one of which to be proud.

Brazil has the fifth largest land mass in the world and is rich in natural resources such as oil, agriculture, and metals.¹ Brazil is also rich in population, having the fifth largest population in the world.² With all of these resources, Brazil has the potential to become an international power, if it were to utilize all of its resources. The underutilization of these resources is one of the many reasons for Brazil’s failure to be an international power. The most important resource which Brazil has failed to utilize is its Afro Brazilian population.³ The inequality and discrimination in Brazil takes away roughly half of the population for skilled work

¹ The World Factbook (CIA, 2007), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2147rank.html>.

² The World Factbook, supra, at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2119rank.html>.

³ Afro Brazilian is to include both the black and mulatto (mixed white and black) populations. The statistics in this paper include both groups.

force positions. Brazil can become an international power by reducing the racial tensions which have led to the under exploiting of its full potential.

This paper focuses on the inequalities which exist between the white and Afro Brazilian population in Brazil as well as how these inequalities have brought about an underachieving nation, one rich in resource and poor in utilization.⁴

II History of Racial Dynamics and Slavery

A. Indigenous People

Brazil has a history of many different ethnic and racial groups. Portuguese conquistadors found an indigenous people which consisted of roughly 2,000 distinct nations and tribes.⁵ These indigenous tribes, at their height, totaled four million in population.⁶ The population has decreased drastically, and in 2006, totaled 519,000 according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).⁷ The Portuguese conquistadors were only male and when they decided to colonize Brazil, took native women for companions. These relationships resulted in a new population of a mixed racial group called mestizos.

The sons of the conquistadors (mestizos) went throughout Brazil claiming land for the Portuguese crown.⁸ They sought to take advantage of the natural resources of the land, and therefore, enslaved the indigenous population.

⁴ Although there will be a brief discussion on the indigenous population, no discussion will be made on the relation of the indigenous population and the white population.

⁵ Indigenous Peoples in Brazil (Wikipedia ed., 2007), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_in_Brazil.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

The indigenous were not very good slaves, for most died from diseases brought over by the Portuguese and they were also hard to capture.⁹ Consequently, the Portuguese looked towards the African slave trade in order to be more profitable.

B. African Descendants

The change from indigenous slaves to African slaves was easy and more profitable for the Portuguese, who had practically monopolized the African Slave trade by 1500.¹⁰ The Portuguese started taking Africans over to Brazil in 1550 to work the sugar plantations.¹¹ The Africans were not as easily prone to the diseases as the indigenous people were; and accordingly, did not die as often from illness. In all, 35% of the eleven million slaves were taken to Brazil.¹² The number is staggering, considering the United States only took over 4.4% of the African slave population.¹³ In fact, by the middle of the seventeenth century, Brazil had a larger population of slaves than free men.¹⁴

At the beginning, the influx of slaves occurred primarily in the northeast area of Brazil, with the major port being Salvador, Bahia.¹⁵ With the discovery of gold as well as increased demand for coffee in the nineteenth century, slavery grew

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Origins of the trans-Atlantic slave trade (The New York Times Company, 2007), <http://africanhistory.about.com/library/weekly/aa101101a.htm>.

¹¹ History of Slavery (Wikipedia ed., 2007), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_trade.

¹² See Piero Scaruffi, The Origins of the African Slave Trade (2005), <http://www.scaruffi.com/politics/slavetra.html>.

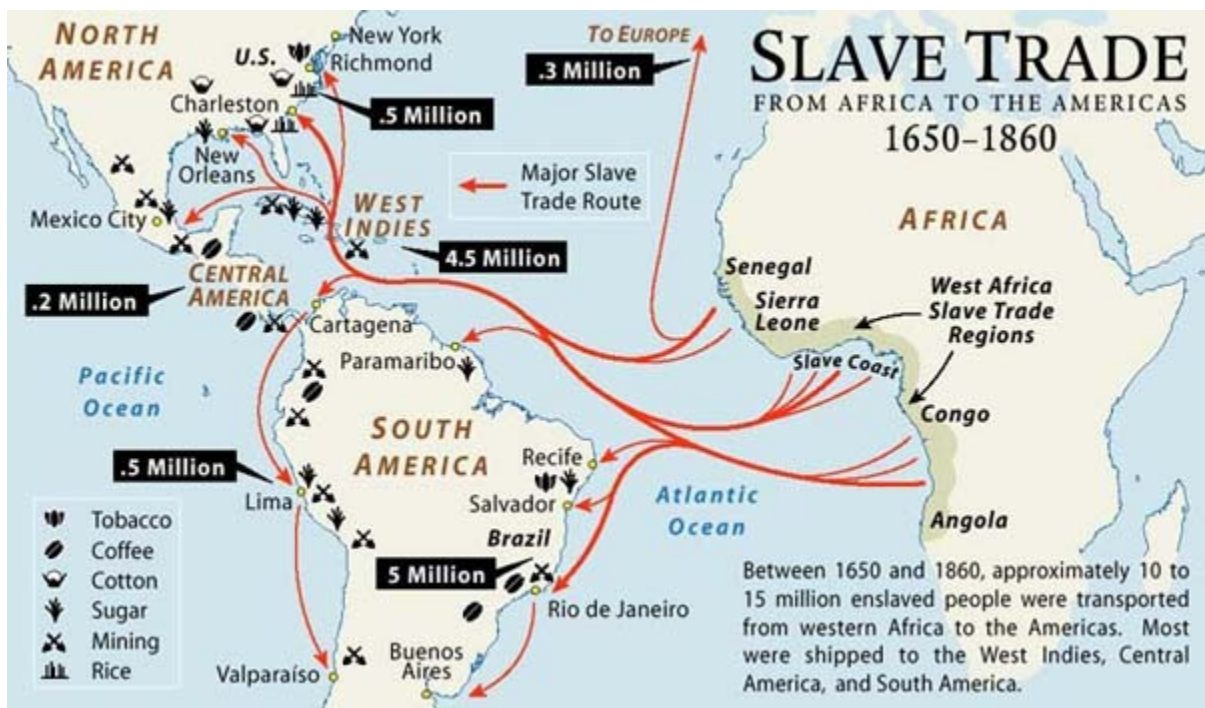
¹³ Atlantic slave trade (Wikipedia ed., 2007), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_slave_trade.

¹⁴ Slavery in Brazil, (The Library of Congress, 2007), <http://international.loc.gov/intldl/brhtml/br-1/br-1-3-1.html>.

¹⁵ Inside Africa, (CNN, 2007), http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0511/19/i_if.01.html.

in the eastern areas in Brazil; not to the extent of the northeast, however.¹⁶ As a result of the African slave trade, nearly half of the Brazilian population today is Afro Brazilian.¹⁷ Furthermore, the Afro Brazilian population is the largest black population outside of Africa and the second largest black population in the world, next to Nigeria.¹⁸

Map of Atlantic Slave Trade



Source:

Geography, (Slavery in America ed., 2007),
http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/geography/slave_trade.html

¹⁶ Slavery in Brazil, *supra* note 14 at <http://international.loc.gov/intldl/brhtml/br-1/br-1-3-1.html>.

¹⁷ Brazil, *supra* note 1 at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/br.html>.

¹⁸ Analysis: Brazil's 'racial democracy', (BBC, 2003),
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/719134.stm>. Black is defined as Afro Brazilian.

Slavery in Brazil has been characterized by some of the historians in Brazil as being less demoralizing and harsh, compared to slavery which occurred in other slave-owning societies, such as the United States.¹⁹ Slavery, however, was actually harsher in Brazil. The life expectancy of slaves in the United States was higher than the life expectancy of the Brazilian slaves. Furthermore, the slave trade was cheaper to the Portuguese; and therefore, the Portuguese had less incentive to provide for and keep slaves healthy because they could import new slaves inexpensively.²⁰

Brazil, unlike the United States, has no history of any major violent conflicts to end slavery. The lack of violent conflicts between races is a pattern in Brazilian history. Pedro II, who became emperor of Brazil in the early 1834, sought to end slavery. During the sixty years of Pedro II's rule, slavery was eventually abolished. Pedro II ended slavery gradually instead of all at once, most likely due to not wanting to alienate the rich slave owners. In 1850, Pedro II banned foreign slave trade coming to Brazil.²¹ In 1871, the Free Womb Law freed children of slaves born after the law was established; slave owners, however, were allowed to keep these children until the age of twenty-one as compensation for the law.²² In 1882, slaves over the age of 60 were freed. Finally, in 1888, slavery was

¹⁹ See Michael George Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power*, (1989), page 47 at <http://books.google.com/books?id=jl2VVDwPTQAC&pg=PA48&lpg=PA48&dq=slavery+in+brazil+harsh+living+conditions&source=web&ots=6y44CSREUn&sig=HdA4OckZefjIAPjHQA3MSM5azz4#PPA48,M1>.

²⁰ *Id.* at 48.

²¹ *History of Slavery*, *supra* note 11, at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_trade.

²² See Michael George Hanchard, *Orpheus and Power*, *supra* note 19, page 49 at <http://books.google.com/books?id=jl2VVDwPTQAC&pg=PA48&lpg=PA48&dq=slavery+in+brazil+harsh+living+conditions&source=web&ots=6y44CSREUn&sig=HdA4OckZefjIAPjHQA3MSM5azz4#PPA48,M1>.

abolished entirely, Brazil being the last country to do so. Slavery was abolished not only due to Pedro II's distaste for slavery; Brazil had also been pressured from other countries, namely Great Britain. The low cost of production because of slavery meant Brazil was able to sell sugar at a much lower cost than the British colonies. Great Britain pushed very hard for Brazil to abolish slavery so that the price Brazil would demand for sugar would rise and result in higher demand, and therefore, sales for the British colonies.²³

At the time slavery was abolished, many of the freed slaves and their families migrated from the northeast to the southern parts of Brazil looking for opportunities to work. Many migrated to the large cities in Brazil, namely Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. The freed slave population outnumbered the white population at the time slavery was abolished.²⁴ The freed slaves were jobless and many white Brazilians did not want these freed slaves to take over their jobs and thus many called for immigration from Europe to "whiten" Brazil.²⁵ Whites even discouraged the skilled black population from business relationships and developing trade routes, by not trading with them or building any sort of relationship with them.²⁶ Therefore, the freed black population found it very difficult to earn money.

²³ History of Slavery, *supra* note 11, at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_trade.

²⁴ Analysis: Brazil's 'racial democracy', *supra* note 18, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/719134.stm>.

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ See Michael George Hanchard, Orpheus and Power, *supra* note 19, page 49 at <http://books.google.com/books?id=jl2VVDwPTQAC&pg=PA48&lpg=PA48&dq=slavery+in+brazil+harsh+living+conditions&source=web&ots=6y44CSREUn&sig=HdA4OckZefjIAPjHQA3MSM5azz4#PPA48,M1>.

C. European Descendants

Several white ethnic groups other than the Portuguese came from Europe and immigrated to Brazil. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the Brazilian government, as well as many in the white Brazilian population, desired to “whiten” the society by starting communities and giving land as an incentive to the white immigrants.²⁷ Because of the government’s policy to “whiten” Brazil, a Brazilian scientist, Joao Batista de Lacerda, conducted a study, in 1912, in which he predicted the population of Brazil would be 80% white by 2012.²⁸ Two of the large white European ethnic groups which immigrated were the Italians and Germans.

During the late 1800s, several problems were occurring in Italy. Epidemics, such as cholera and malaria, diseases, and starvation were killing many Italians. Many poor Italians were unable to get work or provide for their families.²⁹ They looked to other parts of the world to take their families. One obvious place where many Italians immigrated is the United States; less obvious is Brazil.

Brazil opened areas in the south where land was given away and communities were set up for the Italians.³⁰ The population grew fast and more communities in the southeast were created by the Brazilian government for Italian immigrants. The Italians worked well as an unskilled workforce and took many jobs which could have been filled by freed slaves. Many Italians also became

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ Brazil Separates Into a World of Black and White, (Los Angeles Times 2006), at http://www.newamerica.net/publications/articles/2006/brazil_separates_into_a_world_of_black_and_white.

²⁹ Italo Brazilian, (Wikipedia Ed. 2007), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Brazilian.

³⁰ *Id.*

landowners when they migrated. By 1900, Brazil allowed all Italian immigrants to claim themselves to be citizens if they preferred.³¹ From 1884 to 1904, over one million Italians immigrated to Brazil, making a large population of white Europeans joining the skilled and unskilled work forces.³²

The Germans also immigrated in a large number to Brazil, over 250,000 from 1824 to 1969.³³ They migrated to the southern areas of Brazil. Like the Italians, the Germans were given land as an enticement to immigrate to Brazil.³⁴

In the south and southeastern parts of Brazil where the Germans lived is also where industrialization began. Those who benefited were the white Portuguese, Italian, and German descendants. In the early twentieth century, most of the German immigrants were middle class industrial workers and took many of the skilled positions in the industrialized south.³⁵ The Afro Brazilian population who had migrated to the cities, such as Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, still were not able to find employment even with the demand due to industrialization. The legacy of slavery and the resistance by whites to want to employ the free black population has led to the history of an underprivileged, discriminated class of people. Afro Brazilians were unable to find jobs because many whites would not offer apprenticeships to them. Therefore, it was hard for the Afro Brazilian population to become a skilled workforce. The inability to become a skilled workforce led to

³¹ *Id.*

³² Demography of Brazil, (Wikipedia Ed. 2007), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demography_of_Brazil.

³³ German-Brazilian, (Wikipedia Ed. 2007), <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German-Brazilian>.

³⁴ *Id.*

³⁵ *Id.*

the inability to find employment in the industry sector. Afro Brazilians, still, have not been able to rid themselves of the poverty or poor living conditions.

III Current Racial Dynamics

A. Discrimination

Brazil touts itself as a “racial democracy”, free from racism and discrimination. Brazil is in fact free from violent conflicts between the races, yet not free from racial discrimination. Brazil has not experienced the formal discrimination which has taken place in both the United States and South Africa, such as Jim Crow laws in the United States or apartheid in South Africa. Brazil, rather, has experienced informal discrimination: societal and cultural. A hierarchy of race exists in Brazil and the Afro Brazilians are at the bottom. The lack of formal discrimination laws may be a leading reason why no large uprising has occurred. The lack of formal laws is also one of the reasons why Brazil claims to be a racial democracy; at the same time, without the formal laws, the Afro Brazilians have not been able to unite and has in turn caused stagnation in the process for progression.

B. Inequality among the Races

Afro Brazilians have brought so much to the Brazilian culture, yet still are discriminated against in the society. Music, martial arts, and dance which are

unique to Brazil have come from the Afro Brazilian culture.³⁶ Yet the Afro Brazilians still find themselves in poorer communities, making less money, and having worse health conditions.³⁷ Education is less prevalent among Afro Brazilians.³⁸ Whites have more years of formal education than their counterparts for all age groups, not just older individuals.³⁹ If progress were taking place in Brazil, education statistics would be improving in the younger populations, and yet this is not the case.⁴⁰ The whites also live longer and have a higher quality of life. According to the United Nations' human development program, which rates the quality of life, the quality of life is far worse for the Afro population than the white population. If Brazil were a country of only white people, it would be ranked 44th in the world.⁴¹ On the other side, Afro Brazilians would be ranked 105th.⁴² The huge inequality exists in income levels as well. The gap between the richest twenty percent and the poorest twenty percent is fourth worst in the world, with the top twenty percent earning thirty times the amount the poorest twenty percent earn.⁴³ Only countries in Africa rank worse than Brazil.⁴⁴ Although the gap between rich and poor is not on its face a racial statistic, the fact that very few

³⁶ Inside Africa, *supra* note 15 at http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0511/19/i_if.01.html.

³⁷ Analysis: Brazil's 'racial democracy', *supra* note 18, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/719134.stm>.

³⁸ Race in Brazil: Data and Statistics, (World bank 2007), [http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/LAC/lacinfoclient.nsf/103a7711e57faad1852567360079a8ee/cdf69ad374c2879185256d9d005f3b2c/\\$FILE/race_poverty_exclusion.pdf](http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/LAC/lacinfoclient.nsf/103a7711e57faad1852567360079a8ee/cdf69ad374c2879185256d9d005f3b2c/$FILE/race_poverty_exclusion.pdf).

³⁹ *Id.*

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ Being black in Brazil vs being black in the USA – a perspective, (Black Britain 2007), <http://www.blackbritain.co.uk/feature/details/125/US/>.

⁴² *Id.*

⁴³ Gap Between Rich and Poor: World Income Inequality, (Pearson Education 2007), <http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0908770.html>.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

Afro Brazilians are in the top twenty percent makes this a racial statistic. Brazilians like to consider their country as a “racial democracy”, but the term does not fit when considering the inequalities between the races.

Employment statistics are far worse for the Afro Brazilians than their white counterparts. For those Afro Brazilians who are able to get employment, their average salary is fifty percent less than the white population.⁴⁵ Not only do Afro Brazilians make less on average, but employers pay them less for the same jobs.⁴⁶ The State Data Analysis System (Seade) did a study which reported that in management roles, Afro Brazilians seldom make 10 reais an hour, while whites make 17.8 reais an hour.⁴⁷ Whites are more than three times more likely to be in a high-level profession.⁴⁸ In the five hundred largest companies in Brazil, fewer than 2% of Afro Brazilians are in management roles.⁴⁹ Fewer than 2% of the 1,060 diplomats and one of over 100 generals are Afro Brazilian.⁵⁰ Unemployment is also much higher for the Afro Brazilian population than the white population.⁵¹ The statistics are staggering especially considering that half of the population is Afro Brazilian.

Poverty is also a major concern in the Afro Brazilian community. From 1992 to 2001, the total population in Brazil that was in poverty decreased by five

⁴⁵ Racial Disparities in Brazil's Labor Force, (Global Rights 2004), http://www.globalrights.org/site/DocServer/LA_Fact_Sheets.pdf?docID=2563.

⁴⁶ Lula condemns economic racial discrimination in Brazil, (Xinhua News Agency 2007), http://www.globalrights.org/site/DocServer/LA_Fact_Sheets.pdf?docID=2563.

⁴⁷ *Id.*

⁴⁸ Racial Disparities in Brazil's Labor Force, (Global Rights 2004), http://www.globalrights.org/site/DocServer/LA_Fact_Sheets.pdf?docID=2563.

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ *Id.*

⁵¹ *Id.*

million; the population, however, of Afro Brazilians living in poverty actually increased by five hundred thousand, showing the inequality of the living conditions in Brazil.⁵² Poverty in the white population decreased by five and a half million people, possibly showing the government's desire to lower poverty was focused solely on the whites. Another staggering statistic is that one third of the Brazilian population is under the poverty line and seventy percent of the one third is Afro Brazilian.⁵³ Wania Sant' Anna, an Afro Brazilian professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and ex-Secretary of State in Rio de Janeiro said, "Poverty has a color in Brazil, and that is our color."⁵⁴

C. Favelas

When arriving in the large cities, freed slaves did not have money to buy or build homes and so many built whatever dwellings they could and lived together in communities. Over the years many of these freed slaves were pushed out to the suburbs.⁵⁵ Many of the Afro Brazilians wanted to stay in the city because the slim employment opportunities were still better in the city centers than in the suburbs.⁵⁶ They built communities on unclaimed public land which has now become better known as favelas.⁵⁷ These slum areas did not and still do not have good sanitary conditions. Still today, many of the dwellings do not have bathrooms or showers.

⁵² Being black in Brazil vs being black in the USA – a perspective, (Americas Program 2005), <http://www.blackbritain.co.uk/feature/details/125/US/>.

⁵³ Brazil's Black Civil Rights Activists Achieving Overdue Policy Reform (Americas Program 2005), <http://americas.irc-online.org/amcit/731>.

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ Favela, (Wikipedia ed. 2007), <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Favela>.

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ *Id.*

Most of the people who live in the favelas die at an early age. Amazingly, only one in three males lives past the age of nineteen.⁵⁸ This is due to poor living conditions as well as the extreme violence which occurs in the favelas.⁵⁹ Favelas have grown large and in Rio de Janeiro, nineteen percent of the population still lives in the favelas.⁶⁰

IV Anti-discrimination Initiatives and the Government

Little has been done in Brazil to help reduce the inequalities between the Afro Brazilian and white populations. Brazilians do not like to admit a problem with race relations exists and most do not believe racism is present in Brazil.⁶¹ Although it is true that very little violent conflicts are known, racism and discrimination exist in schools and the work force.⁶² Many have spoken out against affirmative action legislation to help combat the discrimination present and believe affirmative action is an idea from the United States, which is “an antipatriotic attempt to import American-style racial hate.”⁶³ The idea that Brazil is not a racial democracy and needs affirmative action would mean there is a problem equal in magnitude and hatred as the problem in the United States, something the Brazilians do not want to admit. Politicians have discussed enacting affirmative

⁵⁸ Brazil's Black Civil Rights Activists Achieving Overdue Policy Reform, *supra* note 53 at <http://americas.irc-online.org/amcit/731>.

⁵⁹ *Id.*

⁶⁰ *Id.*

⁶¹ The difference between Black Brazil and Black US, *supra* note 61 at http://www.blackagendareport.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=402&Itemid=1.

⁶² Racial Disparities in Brazil's Labor Force, (Global Rights 2004), http://www.globalrights.org/site/DocServer/LA_Fact_Sheets.pdf?docID=2563.

⁶³ *Id.*

action laws, but only in education. The politicians failed to enact these laws, and instead, higher education institutions made the strides to help with the inequalities. In 2003, the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro was the first institution to start an affirmative action policy.⁶⁴ The university set a quota to have 40% of the enrollment be Afro Brazilians.⁶⁵ Over forty universities have followed suit and instituted the quota system.⁶⁶ The quotas have increased the Afro Brazilian population attending universities. Not all of these universities instituted affirmative action for the best of reasons. For example, the University of Sao Paulo, the largest university in Brazil, started setting quotas in 2005 for its masters in law program. The quotas were urged by the Ford Foundation, which in return gave the university money for scholarships.⁶⁷ Whatever reason a university practices affirmative action in Brazil, the result is still the same: more Afro Brazilian inclusion in higher education. The product of a higher number of Afro Brazilian population in universities, can be a larger Afro Brazilian middle class population and consequently a smaller gap in income inequality.⁶⁸

The Brazilian government, under President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva (Lula), has made some strides over the years to help the disparity between the races. Recently, Lula made a speech for the National Black Consciousness Day in

⁶⁴ The difference between Black Brazil and Black US, (Black Agenda Report 2007), http://www.blackagendareport.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=402&Itemid=1.

⁶⁵ *Id.*

⁶⁶ *Id.*

⁶⁷ The Color of Poverty, (Ford Foundation 2001), http://www.fordfound.org/publications/ff_report/view_ff_report_detail.cfm?report_index=282.

⁶⁸ The difference between Black Brazil and Black US, *supra* note 61 at http://www.blackagendareport.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=402&Itemid=1.

which he denounced discrimination in the work place.⁶⁹ The government has also recently, 2003, created the Office of the Special Secretary for the Promotion of Racial Equality to help promote racial equality in Brazil. This new department has implemented new programs and initiatives. These programs have constituted mostly seminars, such as the National Seminar of Health for the Black Population. The department has also created the National Black Consciousness Day.⁷⁰ Jose Vicente, president of Afrobras, calls the secretariat, "A minister without a ministry and a secretariat without budget. With the budget she has, she will not be able to do anything substantial."⁷¹ Lula also named the first black Supreme Court Justice in 2003.⁷² These few strides by the government have been progress towards more racial equality; more, however, needs to be done.

The Brazilian government must pass new legislation to help the Afro Brazilian community. Areas where Afro Brazilians live, such as the favela areas in large cities or the northeastern part of Brazil, have historically been under funded in education, health, and other areas of quality of life.⁷³ For example, in favelas, people do not have access to sanitation. The northeast also is deficient in sanitary measures in which the government has not had any focus. The only areas where

⁶⁹ Lula condemns economic racial discrimination in Brazil, *supra* note 46 at http://www.globalrights.org/site/DocServer/LA_Fact_Sheets.pdf?docID=2563.

⁷⁰ Office of the Special Secretary for the Promotion of Racial Equality, (President of the Republic 2007), http://www.presidencia.gov.br/estrutura_presidencia/seppir/acoos/saude/principalfolder_view/.

⁷¹ Brazil's Black Civil Rights Activists Achieving Overdue Policy Reform, *supra* note 53 at <http://americas.irc-online.org/amcit/731>.

⁷² World Briefing, Americas: Brazil: First Black Supreme Court Judge, (NY Times 2003), <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C0DE0DB163FF93BA35756C0A9659C8B63&fta=y>.

⁷³ Brazil's Black Civil Rights Activists Achieving Overdue Policy Reform, *supra* note 53 at <http://americas.irc-online.org/amcit/731>.

decent sanitary conditions are found in the northeast are the wealthy neighborhoods; which is predominately populated by whites.

The government has spent little on health care coverage for Afro Brazilians and many Afro Brazilians find it difficult to find adequate care. Not only has the Afro Brazilian population not seen adequate health care, but little research is being done for disease prevention in the Afro Brazilian community.⁷⁴

Funding in education needs to also become a focus in the Afro Brazilian communities. In the northeast where a large portion of the population is Afro Brazilian, the Afro Brazilians have well below the average years of education a white person has.⁷⁵ The author of this paper has experienced that schools are too often closed in the northeast for not being able to pay teachers. Students are unfamiliar with new textbooks, for they never have seen one.

The government also needs to help clean up the favela areas in Brazil. Favelas are mostly populated by Afro Brazilians and are a sore spot in the eyes of most Brazilians; many do not want to acknowledge its existence. The death rate per inhabitant in the favelas is worse than any other city in the world.⁷⁶ In fact, one study compared the deaths in favelas to deaths from war.⁷⁷

V Political Entrepreneurship and Movement

A. Distrust of Politicians

⁷⁴ *Id.*

⁷⁵ Race in Brazil: Data and Statistics, *supra* note 38 at [http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/LAC/lacinfoclient.nsf/103a7711e57faad1852567360079a8ee/cdf69ad374c2879185256d9d005f3b2c/\\$FILE/race_poverty_exclusion.pdf](http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/LAC/lacinfoclient.nsf/103a7711e57faad1852567360079a8ee/cdf69ad374c2879185256d9d005f3b2c/$FILE/race_poverty_exclusion.pdf).

⁷⁶ Brazil is a war zone, (Guardian Unlimited 2007), http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/conor_foley/2006/05/post_92.html.

⁷⁷ *Id.*

Afro Brazilians are very wary of trusting politicians because of the history of corruption.⁷⁸ Brazil has made strides to rid itself of the extreme corruption which has occurred. Brazil has a rich history of corruption, which has reached the highest levels in the Brazilian government. President Collor was accused of corruption and was in the process of being impeached, when he resigned.⁷⁹ Because of the corruption which has persisted in Brazil since 1985, when the military regime turned over the reigns to the political leaders, many Brazilians do not trust governmental leaders. Corruption, such as bribery, voter fraud, and embezzlement, has too often taken place.⁸⁰ Only recently have government leaders been convicted and thrown out of office as well as been put in jail. Furthermore, Brazilians dislike politicians saying, “Vote for me, I will help the black people”, Brazilians would believe the purpose of the politician was only to receive their vote to gain power.⁸¹

The author of this work spent two years living in Brazil, serving as a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The author lived in Alagoas and Sergipe, two northeastern states of Brazil. Alagoas and Sergipe are two predominately Afro Brazilian states.⁸² As a missionary, the author spent everyday talking with Brazilians about all aspects of life. It has been his experience through conversing with Brazilians of all racial classes that many

⁷⁸ Political Corruption in Brazil, (Zona Latina 2007), <http://www.zonalatina.com/Zldata245.htm>.

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ *Id.*

⁸¹ The difference between Black Brazil and Black US, *supra* note 61 at http://www.blackagendareport.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=402&Itemid=1.

⁸² Alagoas, (Wikipedia 2007 ed.), <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alagoas>.

Brazilians have a general distrust of politicians and believe many politicians only say things to be placed into power. The recent cleaning up of corruption has made people start to gradually believe that a true democracy can exist.

B. Political Entrepreneurship and Capital

Afro Brazilians have very little, if any, political capital in Brazil. With such a large population, roughly fifty percent of Brazil, the assumption should be that Afro Brazilians would have some sort of capital in that politicians would seek their vote and thus cater to their needs. Little, however, has been done to cater to the Afro Brazilian needs. The inequalities have not been improving and in some instances, such as poverty, the inequalities have worsened in recent years.⁸³

Reform is needed in Brazil to help the Afro Brazilian population. Reform is the “reorganization of interests.”⁸⁴ A group fighting for reform is only able to initiate reform by having some sort of political capital, which is wealth in the political realm. Afro Brazilians have had very little, if any, political capital. Political capital can only be gained by Afro Brazilians through political entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs, in business, are able to take new ideas and form them into innovation as well as create and react to changes in the market.⁸⁵ Political entrepreneurs follow the same process; they take new ideas and create reform. Entrepreneurship initiates change and gains the capital needed for power.

⁸³ Being black in Brazil vs being black in the USA – a perspective, *supra* note 52 at <http://www.blackbritain.co.uk/feature/details/125/US/>.

⁸⁴ See Jonathan Hiskey, Political Entrepreneurs and Neoliberal Reform in Mexico: The Salinas Requisa of the Port of Veracruz, *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Summer, 2003), at 106.

⁸⁵ See Thomas DiLorenzo, Competition and Political Entrepreneurship: Austrian Insights into Public-Choice Theory (Mises 2007), http://www.mises.org/journals/rae/pdf/RAE2_1_3.pdf, at 65.

Entrepreneurs look to transfer wealth and “wealth” in terms of politics is political capital.⁸⁶ Interest groups are formed because politicians will listen to them and then respond through legislation.⁸⁷ Many times money is a factor in the ability to get change done in politics; it can also come through the ballot box. The Afro Brazilian population is nearly 50% of the total population, and if united could have significant political capital.

Political Entrepreneurship first starts with a spirit to change, which has been lacking in the Afro Brazilian community. The belief change can occur has not been prevalent in the Afro Brazilian community. Afro Brazilians are starting to change their belief and become more optimistic that they can have a voice in the country. The author of this paper through his experiences in Brazil, has seen a gradual change in the mentality of many Afro Brazilians, because of the greater existence of a democracy. The belief that they can make a change is the first step for political entrepreneurship. Thomas DiLorenzo states the significance of political capital in relation to the political process, “Human nature in politics being what it is, [politicians] are able to fashion and, within very wide limits, even to create the will of the people. What we are confronted with in political processes is largely not a genuine but a manufactured will... [T]he will of the people is the product and not the motive power of the political process”⁸⁸

⁸⁶ *Id.*

⁸⁷ *Id.*

⁸⁸ *Id.* at 69.

The lack of Afro Brazilian political capital may lead to the conclusion that politicians have no reason to act and remedy the inequalities. Organizations, such as the Brazilian Black Movement and Educafro, have a voice in Brazil fighting for racial equality and some whites and elites are fighting against the inequality. The voice, however, is not loud. It has been growing over the years and has been getting stronger, yet is not strong enough to change the course of Brazil. Politicians have started to act recently and have done few acts to appease the voice.⁸⁹ These demonstrations include appointing the first Afro Brazilian to the Supreme Court and denouncing discrimination.⁹⁰ By demonstrations of small acts, political leaders are able to create a barrier for the voice shouting for equality. The barrier is created because when small acts are performed, change seems to be occurring and the acts performed pacify the people. Politicians are able to show the people the government does care for the struggling Afro Brazilian population by these small acts, without the actual change from the status quo. The effect of maintaining the status quo, is an extremely important reason why the Afro Brazilian population should become involved in the political process.

As Afro Brazilians become political entrepreneurs, they will gain political capital and will have power to make changes for their country. They must unite along with their white citizens and vocalize the change needed. By obtaining the

⁸⁹ The difference between Black Brazil and Black US, *supra* note 61 at http://www.blackagendareport.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=402&Itemid=1.

⁹⁰ Lula condemns economic racial discrimination in Brazil, *supra* note 46 at http://www.globalrights.org/site/DocServer/LA_Fact_Sheets.pdf?docID=2563.

belief that they can change and by making the voice dominant in Brazil, change will happen.

C. Political Movement

Historically, Afro Brazilians have had difficulty in organizing a black movement in Brazil. From 1930 to 1945, Getulio Vargas, was the dictator in Brazil.⁹¹ Under his rule, it became extremely difficult for the blacks to unite. He outlawed black associations as well as other organizations helping ethnic groups.⁹² Still today the black movement is small and lacks the organization needed to bring about change.⁹³ Brazil also does not have many black leaders, as Italo Ramos, a Brazilian reporter said, “We don't blame national black leaders for inefficiency or inaccuracy, because we don't have any.”⁹⁴ The lack of the leaders and lack of groups has made it difficult for the Afro Brazilian population to unite.

Organizations are now becoming involved and others are being formed to help with the inequalities existing in Brazil. The Ford Foundation, for example, helped convince the University of Sao Paulo to institute affirmative action policies so that the university would experience a higher Afro population. Educafro is an organization which is helping Afro Brazilian teens go to universities. Afrobras is another organization recently formed to help the Afro Brazilian population enter

⁹¹ Getulio Vargas, (Wikipedia ed. 2007), http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Get%C3%BAlio_Vargas.

⁹² Brazil's Black Civil Rights Activists Achieving Overdue Policy Reform, *supra* note 52 at <http://americas.irc-online.org/amcit/731>.

⁹³ The difference between Black Brazil and Black US, *supra* note 61 at http://www.blackagendareport.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=402&Itemid=1.

⁹⁴ *Id.*

universities. Organizations, such as Educafro, Afrobraz, and the Ford Foundation, are helping the Afro Brazilian people and many more can do the same.

The increased involvement of organizations in areas other than education is needed. As discussed previously in this paper, Afro Brazilians experience inequalities in almost every aspect of the quality of life, including health care and employment. A limited number of organizations are helping with these concerns in the Afro Brazilian community. The government could assist existing organizations and possibly help initiate the formation of more organizations by instituting incentives. Incentives could include more tax breaks and advantages for non profit organizations as well as government grants and funding.

VI Conclusion

Brazil will change its future and create a brighter future by narrowing the gap of inequality between the races. It is not easy and will not take place overnight; change, however, can occur. By improving the situation of the Afro Brazilian population, Brazil will have a larger, more educated, and better skilled workforce. This will bring in an increased number of large corporations which will stimulate the economy. Brazil can better utilize the people, its best resource, to make it an international power which, by all accounts, it should be.

