MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: LESSONS FROM BRAZIL AND VENEZUELA (2000-2015)

LUSU BOOI

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

MAGISTER ARTIUM IN POLITICAL STUDIES (RESEARCH)

From the Department of Political and Conflict Studies

In the Faculty of Arts

at the

NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

April 2017

Supervisor: Professor Gary Prevost

Co-supervisor: Professor Joleen Steyn-Kotze
# Table of Contents

ABSTRACT: .................................................................................................................................v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................................................................................ vi
List of Abbreviations ................................................................................................................... vii

## CHAPTER ONE

**Introduction**

- Problem Statement .................................................................................................................. 1
- The Aim and Objective of the study ....................................................................................... 2
- Creating unequal societies: Colonialism and SAP in Latin America .................................. 4
- The Question of Race .............................................................................................................. 4
- Power and Coloniality ............................................................................................................. 5
- Structural Adjustment Programs ............................................................................................ 9
- Democracy, Authoritarianism and the Political Climate ...................................................... 10
- Democratic Transitions ......................................................................................................... 12
- Poverty .................................................................................................................................. 13
- Poverty Alleviation ............................................................................................................... 14
- Research Design and Methodology ...................................................................................... 16
- Case Study as Research Strategy ......................................................................................... 18
- Quantitative Research ......................................................................................................... 19
- Qualitative Research ............................................................................................................ 19
- Unit of Analysis ..................................................................................................................... 20
- Collection of Data and Evidence .......................................................................................... 21
- Limitations ............................................................................................................................. 22
- Breakdown of the study ......................................................................................................... 22

## CHAPTER TWO

**Transformative Justice: A Contested Concept**

- Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 24
- Liberalism and the Foundations of Justice ............................................................................ 25
- On Hegemony ....................................................................................................................... 28
- On Justice ............................................................................................................................... 30
Theories on Development ................................................................. 33
Human Development as Transformative Justice ................................ 35
Leaders and Political Society .......................................................... 40
Conclusion ...................................................................................... 42

CHAPTER THREE

MDGs to SDGs

Introduction .................................................................................. 43
Multilateralism ................................................................................ 43
A Short Description of the United Nations (UN): ............................... 48
The Making of the MDGs ............................................................... 51
   The Millennium Development Goals ........................................... 54
Sustainable Development Goals: Background .................................. 55
G 77 + China and Climate Change .................................................... 57
Sustainable Development Goals ..................................................... 58
Conclusion ...................................................................................... 60

CHAPTER FOUR

Political Party Analysis and Political Rhetoric

Introduction .................................................................................. 62
Brazil and the Workers’ Party .......................................................... 62
Venezuela and the PSUV ................................................................. 71
On Populism .................................................................................... 72
On culture and Representation ....................................................... 73
On leadership .................................................................................. 74
MVR to PSUV ................................................................................ 75
Venezuela’s Multi-fold Response ..................................................... 77
Conclusion ...................................................................................... 78

CHAPTER FIVE

Advancing Social Justice through Education and Health: Venezuela

Introduction .................................................................................. 79
## CHAPTER SIX

**Advancing Social Justice through Education and Health: Brazil**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazilian Government Commitment</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Structure in Brazil</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Education</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Programmes under Lula</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bolsa Familia</strong></td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How it works</strong></td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bolsa Escola</strong></td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CHAPTER SEVEN

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

General Conclusions .................................................................................................................. 157

Recommendations: ....................................................................................................................... 163

Bibliography ............................................................................................................................... 165
ABSTRACT:

This research looks at social policy making in Venezuela and Brazil with the objective of alleviating poverty, with special focus on meeting Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that were set in 2000. Considering the leftist democratic governments that have been established in Latin America since Hugo Chávez was elected president in 1998, and later with Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in 2002, the research seeks to understand and illustrate what nuances exist in strategy, ideas and implementation of social policy that would positively affect the underprivileged for a more equal and just society. The two countries have deep historical and structural inequalities from slavery, colonialism, imbalanced distribution of resources and like most developing nations of the Global South, have had to endure structural adjustments that have entrenched poverty levels further. Arguments in the past have been made for economic prosperity and economic growth as good indicators for development, however, the research takes a comparative analysis on how Venezuela (through Barrio Adentro and multiple state driven Missions) and Brazil (state supported Bolsa Familia and Universal Health System), have targeted health and education as the primary sectors not just to transform society but also because it is through these sectors that the most effective and efficient manner to measure human development which has thus far been neglected. The research also examines the leadership of the countries which speaks to the differing approaches adopted, style, rhetoric and political realities; and how they have been received not just domestically, but also internationally. The outcomes of the research illustrate a good link between literacy, education and health and a healthy level of state intervention that requires reciprocal social participation for programmes to succeed. Brazil and Venezuela have shown notable creativity and effectiveness in this regard.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisors, Prof. Gary Prevost and Prof. Joleen Steyn-Kotze for the patient support, the reassurance and advice during the years of my studies. Thank you both for your persistent support especially during the research and writing process that has resulted in this study.

I would like to thank my Unako family, our work transcends individual accomplishments. Tarryn, a thousand times over, thank you!

To my parents Mr and Mrs Booi, and my brother, Lwazi, your love and guidance pulled me through. Silwile!
### List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACS</td>
<td>Community Health Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALBA-TCP</td>
<td>Bolivarian Alliance for the People of Our America-People’s Trade Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>Brazil, South Africa, India and China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAED</td>
<td>Education Issues Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Advanced Technological Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCT</td>
<td>Conditional Cash Transfers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDI</td>
<td>Integral Diagnosis Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELAC</td>
<td>Community of Latin American and Caribbean States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHD</td>
<td>Coronary Heart Disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAS</td>
<td>Social Assistance Reference Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Commission on Sustainable Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUT</td>
<td>Communist Party and Unified Workers Confederation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELAM</td>
<td>Latin American School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FHT</td>
<td>Family Health-care Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTAA</td>
<td>Free Trade Area of the Americas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNDEB</td>
<td>Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and for enhancing the Value of the Teaching Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNDEF</td>
<td>Fund for the Development of Elementary Education and Teacher Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>Group of 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G77</td>
<td>Group of 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>Human Development Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBGE</td>
<td>Brazilian Institute of Geography Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICJ</td>
<td>International Court of Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEB</td>
<td>Basic Education Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDGs</td>
<td>International Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of the Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMCI</td>
<td>Integrated Management Illnesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMR</td>
<td>Infant Mortality Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPEA</td>
<td>Institute of Applied Economic Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IUCN</td>
<td>International Union for the Conservation of Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVSS</td>
<td>Institute of Social Security of Venezuela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASM</td>
<td>Latin American Social Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDB</td>
<td>Law of Directives and Bases for National Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCs</td>
<td>Least Developed Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERCOSUR</td>
<td>Common Market of the South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MST</td>
<td>Landless People’s Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDS</td>
<td>Ministry of Food Security and Fight against Hunger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNU</td>
<td>Unified Black Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVR</td>
<td>Fifth Republic Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIEO</td>
<td>New International Economic Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEEC</td>
<td>Organisation for European Economic Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSF</td>
<td>Operation Smile Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACS</td>
<td>Community Health Agents Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAHO</td>
<td>Pan-American Health Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAIF</td>
<td>Family Full Care Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDVSA</td>
<td>Petroleum of Venezuela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDP</td>
<td>Production Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PITCE</td>
<td>Industrial, Technological and Foreign Trade Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSUV</td>
<td>United Socialist Party of Venezuela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>(Partido dos Trabalhadores) Workers Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAEB</td>
<td>Sample Based Student Assessment System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAMU</td>
<td>Emergency Mobile Medical Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Structural Adjustment Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIDS</td>
<td>Small Island Developing States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STIs</td>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Illnesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUS</td>
<td>Unified Health System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UBV</td>
<td>Bolivarian University of Venezuela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference for Trade and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCHR</td>
<td>United Nations Commission on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDR</td>
<td>United Nations Development Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNGA</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UERJ</td>
<td>University of the State of Rio de Janeiro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNRISD</td>
<td>United Nations Research Institute for Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCED</td>
<td>World Commission on Environment and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSF</td>
<td>World Social Forum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Reducing poverty and inequality is one of the most difficult challenges that new democracies face. In the early 1990s with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Wave of Democracy as Huntington (1991) called it, democracies were forced to adhere to key governance mechanisms that steered away from redistributive policies or transformative instruments that democracy promised. Developing countries especially were hampered by the framework set out by the Bretton Woods system in the form of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund which enabled free markets to pervade and normalise the global financial framework. Fukuyama (1989) had indeed noted that it was the End of History. This, of course, is only half-baked as the triumphalism does not quite last. As Castañeda (2006) rightfully asserts; “the combination of inequality and democracy tends to cause a movement to the left, everywhere.” This is to say that democratisation without substantive measures is likely to be curtailed or meet stern resistance that alters it to what it envisions as a just and fair representation of their society.

In 2015 the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations. It is a means to target inequality and poverty and to advance human development in a manner that lifts human capabilities and human rights in order to improve the quality of life. Substantive democratisation is closely linked to transformative justice, particularly as we look at transitioning governments from conservative to social justice oriented governments. The countries of Latin America have illustrated this phenomenon and this study is concerned with how they have fared in the last 15 years since the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted.

Problem Statement
This study assesses social policy aimed at poverty alleviation with a specific focus on Venezuela and Brazil. I investigate the leftist democratic wave of Latin America over the past
15 years. Since the election of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and the inauguration to Presidential office in 1999 and election of Brazil's Lula Ignacio da Silva in 2002, we saw a newly found impetus to achieve transformation towards a more socially just society framed under the banner of the MDGs. This study seeks to reveal the lessons we can learn from Venezuela and Brazil in reducing inequality between 2000 and 2015 in a frame of transformative justice in relation to what would be the more comprehensive Sustainable Development Goals adopted in 2015.

This study focuses on health and education and is based on the United Nations declaration of Universal Human Rights. Article 25 (1) of the declaration asserts that:

> Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowed, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Article 26 (1) highlights that:

> Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit...

Furthermore, Article 26 (2) highlights that:

> Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**The Aim and Objective of the study**

The main objective of this study is to explore the various social policies that Venezuela and Brazil have applied in the last fifteen years with a particular focus on health and education. Health and education were part of the MDGs that were concluded in September 2015. These sectors are important because they play a key role in human development and the eradication of poverty especially since they are introduced as rights within the UN Human Rights Charter. The objective is to explore the lessons that one can learn from the two Latin American countries in order to address poverty alleviation towards the newly adopted SDGs and to achieve meaningful social and transformative justice.
This study reflects on Brazil and Venezuela’s approach to achieving the MDGs in health and education through an analysis of their specific government programmes, specifically the *Bolsa Família* and the *Barrio Adentro*. In order to explore the impact of these social policies driven through meaningful state intervention, I contrast current health and education statistics with the benchmarks that were in place when the current programmes began in each sector. I also look at racial redress as an element of social and transformative justice. To this effect I argue that the importance of both health and education are essential tools for the full development of human rights and human development and in the process for the alleviation of poverty and the eradication of inequality.

Thus this study is a comparative analysis of the poverty reduction and racial redress strategies of Venezuela and Brazil. The primary purpose of the study is to reveal the lessons we can learn from these case studies as we progress to the era of the Sustainable Development Goals. Venezuela and Brazil are often seen as leading proponents of pro-poor leaders that search for alternatives to combat the historical ostracism of political and economic deprivation democracy has induced for their respective states, particularly for the poor. Regarding Castañeda’s assertions on the proclivity of the combination of inequality and democracy to move leftwards, it became apparent that a historical moment in both countries was occurring. Traditional governments in Latin America lost out primarily as the elite driven policies were not universally beneficial for all citizens. The alternative mechanisms to combat inequality in the region have also been undertaken through multilateral organisations where Venezuela and Brazil seem to play a coordinating role in advancing regional integration towards sustainable development. For instance, while realising their own domestic imperatives to meet the MDGs, Venezuela persuaded its regional neighbours towards the formation of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-People’s Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP), which has seen progressive policymaking that is holistic in the quest for human development and also as a substitute to the US-promoted bilateral Free Trade Agreements (Muhr, 2010; Lopes Cardozo & Strauss, 2013). The joining of Brazil in 2011 in the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States (CELAC) – also co-founded by Chávez – illustrated political and economic integration that not only seeks to strengthen cooperation but is also benefitting in the field of health where it benefits from Cuban Social Medicine (The Economist, 2014). It would therefore seem that
Brazil and Venezuela "did something right" to address high levels of inequality and poverty. Therefore, as we attempt to achieve the new agenda of the SDGs, it is necessary to reflect on poverty alleviation policies in Brazil and Venezuela to determine what we can learn in order to advance social and transformative justice.

Creating unequal societies: Colonialism and SAP in Latin America

The Question of Race

How Brazil has dealt with the question of race is rather unique and notably peculiar due to their approach of “racial democracy”. Racial democracy is centred on their history of miscegenation which is racial mixing between European, Indigenous and Black peoples of Brazil. This was illustrated by Gilberto Freyre’s *The Master and the Slave* doctrine which has often emerged as a unifying call for multiculturalism (Cleary, 1999) and a purported belief of “not seeing” race. This has been a very contentious subject in Brazil as it has a definitive social stratification that is defined by race and where it continues to play a role in determining upward mobility (Andrews, 1996; Skidmore, 1992). The Workers’ Party was a vocal supporter and principle vehicle of anti-racism policies, particularly as its history around mobilisation in public sectors including through grassroots efforts and civil society to combat the problem of racism, inequality and the pressure that it exerted on the military en route to democracy.

While Venezuela may not bear explicit scars of race as it does in other nations; it is something that was widely acknowledged, particularly by leader Hugo Chávez, who regarded himself as a *pardo* - mixed of European and African and to lesser degree Indigenous descent. He often spoke of his black ancestry when identifying that discrimination is along racial lines: “my Indian roots are from my father’s side,” he remarked, “he (my father) is mixed Indian and Black, which makes me very proud” (Kozloff, 2005). Chávez fostered the development of a more serious discussion of race than existed previously in Venezuela; for example, the 1999 Constitution states that Venezuela “is a multi-ethnic and multicultural society which guarantees the right to life, to work, to culture, to education, to social justice and equality without discrimination or subordination”.

4
With the newly found impetus regarding the recognition of race and culture was also the expediting of the Presidential Commission for the Prevention and Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination in the Venezuelan Educational System. The primary role of the Commission was to scrutinise, counsel and recommend reforms on racially and culturally appropriate education, including but not limited to literacy programmes which were championed via the *Misiónes* or Missions. Chávez understood the role of racism in perpetuating inequality and thus for the first time in Venezuela, Afro-Venezuelans and indigenous peoples were enabled to recognise their heritage and to incorporate it through education (Carlson, 2007).

This historical reference is important because from here on we can see the premise on which Brazil and Venezuela base their understanding for the need for social justice in transforming the political and socio-economic democratic environment including being racially aware of their realities. This effect, it would seem, says that race is acknowledged as a key component of economic, social, and political inequality, the extent of which will also be assessed by the study.

**Power and Coloniality**

Quijano (2000) introduces us to the term “coloniality of power” where the idea of race (as a human construct) and the global structure of control of labour is regarded as far too intrinsic and insidious to ignore in the Americas. He feels that the new model of power associated with a pervasive global structure meant two fundamental axes were created, the idea of race – between the conquered and conqueror justified the biological structure that placed some in a natural situation of inferiority to the others (of Indigenous, African and *Mestizos* to Europeans). He argues that the conquistadors understood this design as the constitutive, original component of the relations of domination that the conquest imposed (Quijano, 2000, p. 533). From the 16th century on, the principle of domination (between dominant and dominated) which existed between sexes or was gender-related was encroached on and surpassed by effective division of labour by inferior/superior racial classification; this is to say that the phenotypical peculiarities as well as cultural features were a determinant of inferiority.
The Latin American colonial experience cannot be understated, especially when the continent played a central role in contributing to capital formation in Europe and later the United States (Galeano, 1971). While the Iberian conquerors were in power for much of the initial colonial period, they were swiftly replaced by a colonial bureaucracy who set in place sophisticated economic systems to ensure their colonial elites exercised political and economic control. While Britain would lead both politically and economically the French, Germans, Dutch, and the Belgian, had equally well entrenched banking systems thus ensuring Western Europe ascertained full control and advantage over much of the modern financial world (Clark, 2007, p. 147 & p. 175), were prominent in the funding of the expeditions once old monarchies of Spain and Portugal were unable to aid their own explorers. Further interest was the unearthing of precious minerals, such as gold and silver, where, by the last quarter of the 16th century silver bullion accounted for about 90% of Latin American exports (Vanden & Prevost, 2015). In addition, primary goods like sugar, cocoa, cotton, tobacco, coffee and other agricultural and mining products were sought after by the United States and Western European powers, all of which necessitated slavery to be fully exploited. The resulting mid-Atlantic slave trade brought millions of Africans to the Western Hemisphere over a period of three hundred years. The fall of both the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies was felt at an economic level but competition of rising US trade and European banks moved to replace the former colonial masters.

Whereas modernity is associated with literature, art, the history of ideas and philosophy which locates its origins from ancient Greece to eighteenth century Europe, the conceptualisation of the modern world system, articulated by Quijano, locates its origins at the beginning of the 15th century and links it to capitalism; this is the essence of “Coloniality of Power” (Mignolo, 2002, p. 60) which is hegemonic in orientation. It is an articulation of spatial relations of power, since the 16th century and the emergence of powerful states. For Foucault (1986), power lies in individuals (e.g. industrialists, professionals and other contributors to capitalist production), however it must be seen as something which functions in the form of chain “employed and exercised through a net-like organisation” whereby individuals are the vehicles of power (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). Imperialism was achievable, as assessed by Arendt (1951), when the bourgeoisies in capitalist production were pinned against national restrictions for their economic development. The ruling class
thus turned to politics out of economic necessity, for it refused to surrender the capitalist system whose inherent law is continuous growth. This then becomes the birth of multinational corporations, which not only indulged in trade activity enabled by an industrialised Europe and fast growing US economy, but the voracious nature by which it takes place is unprecedented. It had to impose this law upon its home governments to proclaim expansion to be an ultimate government foreign policy (Arendt, 1951, p. 126).

Brass (2000) highlights the extent to which Foucault underlines the importance of power which functions with knowledge. This intimate relationship between knowledge and power is because all the disciplinary practices that permeate societies, radiating out from institutions and the systems of knowledge that support them, have one central focus: knowledge of man. He further assesses that the modern knowledge of man itself originates in institutions that focus on man, such as the hospital, the asylum and the prison. These disciplines are closely linked with studying human behaviour and indeed this curiosity was also linked to racist assumptions when Europeans would make contact with the indigenous people of Latin America and Africa in the exact manner to which Quijano refers.

Capitalism, imperialism, colonialism and racism are prime instances whereby the avarice and plunder associated with these occurrences transformed genocide and slave labour into poverty and desolation for the indigenous people and the African slaves brought through for labour. Of Brazil Eduardo Galeano asserts that;

Not even Indians isolated in the depths of forests are safe in our day. At the beginning of this (referring to the 20th century) 230 tribes survived in Brazil, since then 90 have disappeared, erased from the planet by firearms and microbes. Violence and disease, the advance guard of civilisation: for the Indian, contact with the white man continues to be contact with death (Galeano, 1971).

*Open Veins to Latin America* would be the same book on the occasion of the Summit of the America’s in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009, where Hugo Chávez symbolically gave Barack Obama a copy to not only remind him of past atrocities that took place due to US and Western Imperialism and exploitation, but perhaps to seek to mend relations with the newly
elected U.S president\textsuperscript{1} who would now have the opportunity to engage with less antagonism.

It should be highlighted however, that while Europe had internal strife of its own, people struggling for identity and political power reverberated through its colonies. When Haiti’s revolt led by Toussaint L’Ouverture followed a mere two years after the French Revolution of 1789, it would inspire much of Latin America bound by colonialism to Western Europe to seek their own political emancipation. It subsequently witnessed Simon Bolivar as liberator of the Spanish speaking nations and signalled a new political dawn for the modern states of Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Venezuela. Bolivar spoke directly to the economic, social and national frustrations of the general public (Fitzgerald, 1971).

Contemporary leaders, like Hugo Chávez, embraced Bolivar’s philosophy whole-heartedly, inducing the movement that would be known as the Bolivarian Revolution but influencing regional leftist leaders to embark on a progressive policy that sought to reintegrate the Latin American states. On a domestic level this is illustrated by Ellner and Salas (2005) who in their analysis of the perceived exceptionalism of Venezuelan democracy pre-Chávez, demonstrate how elite Venezuelans modelled their society after developed countries, disparaging everything that came before the onset of modernity in 1936. Furthermore, they assert that Latin American positivists extolled American and European styles and not only shunned but were repulsed by Latin America’s cultural and political heritage which they often equated with barbarism (Ellner & Salas, 2005, p. 7-8). In 1822, Brazil gained independence from the Portuguese. However, it soon fell under the neo-colonial influence of France and Britain. This foundation of enforced inequality was further accelerated by

\textsuperscript{1}During this period Hugo Chávez was seen as a pariah statesman who had turned Venezuela into a rogue state in Western states’ eyes in general (viewed in the opposite by developing nations and countries of the Global South) but had especially strained relations with the US. In 2006 at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), he referred to former US President George W. Bush as the devil during his speech based on his administration’s foreign policy in Iraq, Afghanistan and its history of Imperialism and neo-colonialism in Latin America and much of the developing world. The speech read; “The Devil is right at home. The Devil, the Devil himself, is right in the house. And the Devil came here yesterday. Yesterday the Devil came here. Right here and it smells of sulphur. Yesterday, ladies and gentlemen, from this rostrum, the president of the United States, the gentleman to whom I refer as the Devil, came here, talking as if he owned the world. Truly. As the owner of the world.” At UNGA 2009, he welcomed the Obama administration with the following words; “It doesn’t smell of sulphur anymore. No, it smells of something else. It smells of hope, and you have to have hope in your heart.”
globalisation in the 20th century with the rise of a distinct hegemonic international political economy which favours multi-national corporations and a free market (Galeano, 1971).

Structural Adjustment Programs²

As an oil producing nation with the largest reserves outside the Middle East and North African (MENA) states, Venezuela was quite affected by the Oil Crisis that had been targeted against Western nations (Lander & Fierro, 1996). It leveraged Venezuela and other oil producing countries outside of the MENA states but also put pressure on that sector because the respective governments had to embark on SAPs that would ensure limited government intervention and the utilisation of oil for anything other than to maximise profits of those who control it. With the fall of the Shah in Iran 1979, a rentier state, as Venezuela is – structural adjustment programmes were formerly introduced in the period 1981-1989, to ensure that the oil sector could not be hindered. The assumption of these financial institutions to force implementation for such policy was closely linked to the fanaticism by which powerful economies led by Reaganism and Thatcherism in the 1980s was demanded. Such implementation endeavoured to ensure that what had previously worked in Western states would also work in developing nations. Much of the continent, including Chile suffered from these economic experiments (Klein, 2008).

Morley (1995) highlights that SAPs in Latin America had a severe impact on income inequality and poverty levels increased. For Venezuela, for example, we note increased inequality during the decade of 1980s and Brazil had greater inequality but increased per capita income (Morley, 1995, p. 43). He also highlights that Brazil had a peak in 1987. However, what economists tend to ignore is that for growth to occur, it does not necessarily suggest that wealth is being positively distributed to all citizens. During this period Brazil was not a democracy. While their military dictatorship had ended in 1985 the new

² Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) are economic policies for developing countries that have been promoted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) since the early 1980s by the provision of loans conditional on the adoption of such policies... SAPs policies reflect the neoliberal ideology that drives globalisation. They aim to achieve long-term or accelerated economic growth in poorer countries by restructuring the economy and reducing government intervention (World Health Organisation, 2015)
constitution that would be inclusive of all citizens was only in effect from 1988. The increase in inequality in both states also serves to suggest that it is the poor and, by definition in the Brazil and Venezuela, mostly Black and Indigenous communities that are consumed deeper into the abyss of poverty. In his chapter on Venezuela, however, Morley (1995) further illustrates that the impact of adjustment was not just affecting the poor, in that, the need for austerity measures (in the form of SAPs) that caused downward mobility, high unemployment, or very poor entry-level wages for the educated was prevalent. Thus it is in line with what Geyer (1999) alludes to when she asserts that the middle class in Venezuela pre-Hugo Chávez also diminished due to neoliberal policies. The uprising of the Caracazo in 1989, and subsequent coup failure led by Hugo Chávez as general in 1992 were responses to the inequality that permeated society. Lula da Silva as leader of the Workers’ Party would also run for President for the first time to defend the gains the Workers’ Party had made in defeating the dictatorship and move towards an inclusive government. The criticism on SAPs is that it ignores how the majority of the population in a given country is affected by such a policy, it diminishes people’s standard of living, and concomitantly undermines ways by which the public and governments together can contribute to transforming the economy creatively.

Democracy, Authoritarianism and the Political Climate
A military regime is typically associated with militarised leadership plagued by coup d’états as witnessed in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America for a greater part of the 20th century (Malloy & Seligson, 1987; Stepan, 1988). The main aim of an authoritarian regime is to safeguard state interests through a single individual or party (Lewis 2006). It is a state with political institutions which function mainly to contribute to a patron-client system benefitting selected elite groups (Bangura, 1992, p. 53)

The Latin American case is interesting because authoritarian military regimes were the norm for a large part of 20th century and were looked on historically from a cultural perspective (Lewis, 2006). For example, Augustos Pinochet established a coup against Salvador Allende on 11 September 1973 to stay in power until 1990 (Klein, 2008). Brazil had dictatorship rule from 1964-1985. The caudillo in the Latin American case, “regarded his county as a fief”
(Morse, 1992) which coincides with the absolutist tradition of the Portuguese and Spanish monarchs. Morse (1992) further highlights important features of Caudillism as:

1. Patron-client groups determined to secure wealth by force of arms;
2. Use of violence in political competition;
3. Lack of institutionalized means for succession to office;
4. The failure of incumbents to achieve lasting tenure

Such unrestricted power by the latifundistas, or land owners created gross disparities in income (Vanden & Prevost, 2015), entertained a military discourse and were emblematic of a Machiavellian tradition (Morse, 1992). This tradition of the “strong man” would greatly affect the quality of democracy in such a region because military discourse becomes legitimised. Until the last twenty-five years these cultural arguments seem to consign Latin Americans to authoritarian rule. The ability of Chávez to survive two coup attempts perhaps attests to the pervasive climate of military infused politics and the topsy-turvy environment of transitioning towards a social democracy, but democratic openings beginning in the 1980s have changed that perception of the region. With the death of Chávez in 2013, there has been increasing pressure on Nicolás Maduro, who in many ways carries the same message in the ‘strong man’ mould, but particularly drawn towards social justice. Hugo Chávez was also labelled a Caudillo in the past by his detractors (Starr, 2013). In his country this was done so precisely to portray an individual who was anachronistic and unintelligible that merely adopted principles of tyrants of Latin America’s past. His hero, the political figure and Venezuela’s liberator Simon Bolivar had no relevance, as far as they were concerned. This is consistent with the idealism that elite Venezuelans had adopted as previously mentioned by Ellner and Salas (2005). His former life as an army general also pointed to the penchant he had for dictatorial tendencies in the same manner that Castro had achieved in Cuba. Chávez was disliked because he was pardo or zumba (of African and Indian heritage); he represented a community that had been outside of Venezuela’s traditional European oriented circles; he was pro-poor. He personified the backwardness that they had associated with pre 1934 with added racial undertones. Chávez as Caudillo was also illustrated in the manner in which the constitution was changed, through what the opposition believed, to be an undemocratic process (Wilpert, 2003a; Sánchez, 2013).
Democratic Transitions

This change from dictatorship to democracy in the late 1980s becomes the basis of literature on the transition to democracy headed by theorists like O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) and Huntington (1991). Huntington illustrates three major processes towards such transitions:

1. The process of transformation requires a transition in which government is stronger than the opposition. In such openness or *abertura*, Stepan (1989) elaborates that the incumbent regime controls the discourse in a dialectical manner for two important reasons; the first being “what is given might be taken.” The second includes “boundaries of what might be liberalisation but not democratisation.” Reform happens in a top-down fashion. States that went through such transformation include Brazil, Chile and Peru.

2. The process of replacement is synonymous with Sultanic authoritarianism or personal ruler-ship. It takes place with a *ruptura* i.e. a break with the existing institutional arrangements associated with an oppressive regime. Before regime collapse, there is an immense united front by opposition groups who desire such a change. It is not uncommon for the ousted leaders to flee the country; as did Somoza in Nicaragua, the Shah in Iran and Duvalier in Haiti.

3. The process of *transplacement* requires a mixture of the above-mentioned transitions. It is a negotiated settlement which far outweighs the potentially crippling effects of a further protracted deadlock, including the uncertainty of confronting of risks between both government and opposition. South Africa’s transition was marked by such a process, as was the transitions of South Korea and Poland. “When in doubt, negotiate” is the mentality of the old rulers (Horwitz, 2001).

The promise of a new orientation of Latin American politics had been awakened by the election of Hugo Chávez whereby the possibility of deepening democracy and inclusivity could be achieved. Geyer (1999) highlights that Venezuelan democracy had been enclosed to the elite few with a middle class that shrunk considerably with an unemployment rate that reached 80 percent. Similarly, in Brazil, the ascendancy of the Workers’ Party to government was significant, because, as the biggest economy in the region, the left leaning leader in the form of Lula da Silva elevated the status of the poor and placed it in the middle
of everyday politics. The culture of militarism had in essence been diminished with growing faith shown towards institutions and procedural mechanisms utilised to transform society and their unequal societies. One manner in which Venezuela sought to change society was through the constitution, in the same manner that Brazil’s own road to democracy entailed an inclusive society through their constitution of 1988. This is to say that while, Bolivian President Morales, Venezuelan President Chávez and Ecuadorian head statesman, Correa believe the state should play a more intrinsic and heavy-handed role in the economy, including making calls for the nationalisation of key industries to fund policy programmes that address inequality. Brazil and Argentina have been less critical of the global economic structure and adhere to liberal ideas. What one may see as undesirable in the current surge towards a “democratic wave” (Huntington, 1991) is that these nations are leftist in orientation which is unprecedented and slipping away from traditional hegemonic US/Western influence in their subsequent economies.

Poverty

During a critical period of democracy in South Africa Deputy President Thabo Mbeki made one of the most poignant remarks openly critical of the space in which the country had found itself. The ‘Two Nations’ speech read;

One of these nations is white, relatively prosperous, regardless of gender or geographic dispersal. It has ready access to a developed economic, physical, educational, communication and other infrastructure... The second and larger nation of South Africa is black and poor, with the worst affected lives under conditions of grossly underdeveloped economic, physical, education, communication and other infrastructure. It has virtually no possibility to

---

3 “Fundamentally, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means a lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one’s food or a job to earn one’s living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households, and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation” (ECOSOC, 1998).
exercise what in reality amounts to a theoretical right to equal opportunity
(Mbeki, 1998)

The above quote by Thabo Mbeki also hints that much of the issue with poverty lies in the access to equal opportunities. One can make the assessment of poverty in this manner primarily as it is concentrated in the Global South and thus understood in the context of the antagonistic relationship with the Global North (Roy & Crane, 2015). This is particularly so when we observe the nature of the Millennium Development Goals at the United Nations and assess for whom they are likely to benefit and indeed the politics manoeuvred in the quest to achieve them. The improvement or augmentation of the MDGs to the SDGs is thus linked with developing nations while the latter pertains to developed countries which are predominantly in the Global South as illustrated in the context of European states accumulating wealth from the exploitation.

It is generally understood, however, that poverty is linked to inequality and unemployment which, if it were to be eradicated or alleviated, should find mechanisms to combat with equal veracity the two components to which it is linked. In less abstract terms, the effects of poverty have a further demoralising impact of hunger, malnutrition, ill health and morbidity, shortened life expectancy, illiteracy, social exclusion and a constant struggle for survival (Barrientos, 2010). Thus, for the purposes of this study, the two key sectors accessed are arguably the most fundamental. It is social policy aimed at health and education that will be addressed.

**Poverty Alleviation**
The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) highlights numerous redistributive and transformative social policies that states can adopt to address inequality and abject poverty whereby the protection of the vulnerable is achievable; essential investments that perform a redistributive function that contributed in turn, to social cohesion and nation building (UNRISD, 2010).

Furthermore, the UNRISD (2010) present the following mediums that states have chosen to intervene with for maximum redistributive policy include;
• Provide the poor with greater access to productive assets, such as land, and reform inequitable tenancy arrangements;
• Stimulate investment in irrigation and rural roads, create public works programmes for infrastructure development and increase access to credit;
• Initiate fiscal reforms to improve tax administration, prevent tax evasion and avoidance, and limit opposition progressive taxation and redistribution;
• Generate employment opportunities;
• Enhance the welfare of the poor through sound social policies; and
• Help create a stable global economic environment that responds to the needs of poor countries

Inequality is also linked to income poverty. This suggests that the division of national income within a country affects the country’s welfare because of its unevenly distributed wealth. There are certain sectors which have intense control and as a result benefit in a manner that disadvantages those that are excluded as there is a considerable lack of recognition and representation. High levels of inequality have a particular impact on political, social and economic rights which, in an uneven state undermines the social wellbeing of the citizens if they remain unaddressed.

The role of that state then becomes increasingly important in a developmental context. State interventions shape the conditions for the involvement of other actors, directly through regulations and subsidies or indirectly through the design and scope of public interventions (UNRISD, 2010). What was accentuated with the Workers’ Party coming into power is the vacillation between appeasing a highly liberalised economy contrived and facilitated by President Henrique Fernando Cardoso, and identifying social development and poverty alleviation as the corner stone of its development strategy (Paiva, 2006). This conundrum necessitated that the Lula administration assert a new foreign policy paradigm which spoke to fundamentally altering the social conditions of the poor majority in Brazil. Their economic development strategy through the unveiling of its Industrial, Technological, and Foreign Trade Policy (PITCE) and later, the Production Development Plan (PDP) suggested a consolidated multi-agency policy agenda which revitalised government’s role as an investor in the economy (Talkington, 2011). It was recognisable that limitations linked to the complexities of substantially elevated interest rates, and further seeking to mitigate the
inherited debt burdens would lead to the necessary space for government’s spending. It is for this reason that the Workers’ Party was only able to fully assert itself as a “social developmental state” in the 2nd term of the Lula administration (Ricz, 2014). Venezuela’s state intervention and developmental agenda was less glacial in speed in comparison to Brazil, primarily as it initiated what would be termed the Twenty First Century Latin American Radical Left or “socialism of the 21st century.” Though not without structural hindrances owing to the ebb and flow of their primary commodity, oil (Scaglione, 2008), the Chávez administration was exceedingly polarising in its anti-market stance (Corrales, 2005). The opportunity, having been created by a natural disaster (underscored in Chapter 5), gave government the platform to assert itself in a manner that would be convincing that its methodology was state driven, participatory in nature and emphasized a radical departure from socially exclusive policies promoted by the Puntofijismo government. With this in mind, there is room to argue that a social policy is best applicable when the state is in control of the public space in which various actors in the form of business, household, community, NGO etc. are enabled to contribute.

**Research Design and Methodology**

There are three basic philosophical approaches for social research that exist. They are Positivism, Interpretive Social Science and Critical Social Science. Positivist social science has been frowned upon by Turner (1992) primarily as it is viewed as out-dated because it focuses on a single logic that seeks exact measures, testing hypothesis by carefully analysing numbers from the measures. Positivist researchers prefer precise quantitative data and often use experiments, surveys and statistics (Neuman, 2006). Taken from the thought of early sociologist Auguste Comte and Emile Durkheim, the basic understanding of the environment in which man functions is one that observes behaviour in a mechanical manner with very little contradiction. Positivists see the social science research space as “an organised method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity” (Neuman, 2006).

Interpretive Social Science was driven by Max Weber who, in the quest for an empathetic understanding or *verstehen* of the human environment, developed a theory of
‘rationalisation’ of the everyday lived experience of humans (Lôwith, 1993; Turner, 1992). Weberian thought seeks to probe deeply into the position of humans, not just from a subjective point, but seek to contemplate its many hidden messages, particularly of text, whereby hermeneutics are closely considered (Neuman, 2006). Furthermore, the interpretive approach is ideographic (provides symbolic representation) and inductive, which means it provides for a more meaningful everyday experience. This suggests that interpretive social science has a strong connection with qualitative research methodology. Runciman (1991) describes this as a “science whose object is to interpret the meaning of social action and thereby give a causal explanation of the way in which the action proceeds and the effects which it produces.” “Action” in this definition means the human behaviour when and to the extent that the agent or agents see it as subjectively meaningful (Runciman, 1991).

The third approach is Critical Social Science. Closely associated with Karl Marx and developed later on by compatriot Jurgen Habermas and Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire among others, critical theory advocates for radical social change and the inevitability and desirability of social transformation. The critical researcher is action oriented and teaching and learning is the reducing of illusion and ignorance and works towards mobilising political action in the name of social justice. The approach to engaging society is usually from the bottom up and is closely associated with Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology. They argue that radical social change is built into the nature of societal structures and that change will result from the political and economic crises when the contradiction of these structures that seek to contain inevitably explodes.

This study is rooted in the qualitative research tradition and underpinned by the interpretative social science approach. Since the researcher is exploring an area that is “foreign” to his own, he has to interpret the social reality by revealing how they conduct themselves in given situations. The researcher should further ensure that he does not depart dramatically from the experience and inner reality of the people being studied. In a Weberian sense, the researcher should remain neutral and objective in the analysis of data and material providing detailed description and limited abstractions. The interpretive researcher’s description of Brazilians’ and Venezuelans’ experiences is a secondary account, thus the closer the account of everyday happenings to the Latin Americans, the better.
Research design pertains to the plan or structured framework which the researcher intends to formulate to solve the research problem and research questions. It is a scientific enquiry which indicates as much as possible both major and trivial characteristics which are an integral part of that enquiry. Research methodology relates to the methods, techniques and measures that are undertaken in the process of implementing the research design and research plan (Neuman, 2011).

**Case Study as Research Strategy**

The case study is preferred when examining contemporary events and when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated. It answers the *how* and *why* questions. The case study relies on many of the same techniques as history, but it adds two sources of evidence not usually included in the historian’s repertoire: direct observation and systematic interviewing (Yin, 1994). However, in light of this study, the researcher will not be conducting direct observation but will be building on quantitative data on which to base his conclusions. The researcher will thus be utilising secondary data. Furthermore, it is said that researchers use case studies to develop and evaluate theories, as well as to formulate hypotheses or explore a particular phenomenon by using theories and causal mechanisms (Bennett and Elman, 2006). Case studies are also tailor-made for exploring new processes of behaviour or ones that are little understood (Hartley, 2004).

The decision to use a case study approach is a strategic decision that relates to the scale and scope of an exploration which does not necessarily dictate which method or methods should be used. Case study is often seen as prime example of qualitative approach however, De Vaus (2001) cites Yin (1993) in illustrating the futility of making distinctions between the qualitative and quantitative approach and subsequently limiting the researcher to a specific method.

A point of confusion... has been the unfortunate linking between the case study method and certain types of data collection – for example those focusing on qualitative methods, ethnography, or participant observation. People have thought the case study method required them to embrace these data collection methods... on the contrary, the method does not imply any particular form of data collection – which can be qualitative or quantitative, (De Vaus, 2001, p. 11).
The researcher will be utilising a multiple-case study approach which is also known as a comparative case study. The researcher uses multiple countries, in this case Brazil and Venezuela, to reveal the lessons learned for achieving the SDGs. A multiple-case study utilises certain generalisability (Meyer, 2001), that is, assumptions that theory may be useful in making sense of similar persons or situations. The advantage of this is the ability to replicate findings from one case to another. In essence the researcher seeks not just to illustrate the realistic situation for Brazil and Venezuela but also to replicate the findings; if there are any available that could be beneficial in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Quantitative Research**
Mouton (2001) defines quantitative research as a method that uses numerical data from a selected subgroup of a population to generalise the findings and can be easily quantified. Quantitative data is relevant for this study, because there is a use of statistics for illustration of Human Development Indexes and Gini-coefficient comparisons which are useful in assessing social policy impact on the countries’ inhabitants over a specific period. Data will also be captured to assess perceptions of democracy in the countries concerned, including perceptions of quality of life, perceptions of reduced inequality.

**Qualitative Research**
Babbie and Mouton (2001) describes qualitative research as the type of research in which researchers seek to understand human behaviour, perceptions and attitudes. The researcher employed a descriptive and exploratory qualitative approach for much of the research in seeking to understand the Brazilian and Venezuelan’s psyche in the direction that has been taken in the quest for poverty alleviation. It is also argued that qualitative research is inductive rather than deductive in nature which suggests that qualitative researchers develop their understanding in the course of the research process (Winberg, 1997). This is particularly important because the researcher investigates human behaviour and meaningful social action in the two countries that are analysed. Thus it can be said that qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretative and grounded in the lived experiences of people.
Babbie (1999) depicts the following key features of qualitative research:

- Research is conducted in the natural setting
- The focus is on the process rather than the outcome
- The actor’s perspective is emphasised
- The qualitative researcher is seen as the main instrument in the research process
- The primary aim is an in-depth understanding of the actors and events

The characteristics of the research methodology that the researcher has utilised are in line with interpretive social science. The researcher presents the views and actions of the Brazilian and Venezuelan actors and the beliefs that shape their realities, which in turn, dictated the policy direction of the two states in poverty alleviation strategies. Their responses to poverty through state driven social policy will be objectively illustrated in a manner that is in accordance with their rationale.

**Unit of Analysis**

A good research design must be able to stipulate clearly which units of analysis will be considered in the research. For the purpose of this research there are multiple ‘cases’ that are analysed that the researcher focuses on. A typical unit of analysis for social research can be people, social groups, organisations and institutions, patterned social action and social artefacts. The researcher is dealing with states that have a number of specific individual units that have to be considered, including statistics of how their populations have fared during a specific period in the implementation of their social policy programmes. The researcher will be analysing the State of the Nation discourse and political speeches of leaders from the respective countries. There will be assessment of official party documentation such as the election manifesto of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and the Workers Party (PT) of Brazil. The researcher will be analysing social policy documents that focus on health and education in particular.

Meyer (2001) cites the work of Yin in elaborating on holistic or embedded design. A holistic design examines the global nature of the phenomenon, whereas an embedded design also pays attention to sub-units. The researcher utilises an embedded design so as to ensure that each state is assessed accurately. Brazil and Venezuela have similar attitudes towards
poverty alleviation where they have targeted health and education for the desired results. The methods, however, are quite different for each country. For instance, in health care, there is *Barrio Adentro* in Venezuelan which has strong linkages to providing universal health care for the poor and targeting the most impoverished areas (*Barrio Adentro* means “in to the neighbourhood/Into the barrios”). On the other hand Brazil’s *Bolsa Familia*, an education/school based programme, has conditions provided to poor families getting particular assistance, for example, proof is required to demonstrate that a child has been attending consistently for a cash transfer to be given to the family. This is also known as a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCTs). This reward system ensures that parents/guardians have just as much stake and responsibility in the child’s future and that is ensuring that they remain in school. The dynamics governance is slightly different, with Venezuela equated with a more authoritarian regime, while Brazil is seen as a democracy. Based on Freedom House ratings on the comparative assessment of Political Rights (out of 40 points) and Civil Liberties (out of 60 points) Venezuela is rated at 13/40 and 22/60 while Brazil was rated at 33/40 and 48/60 in 2015.

**Collection of Data and Evidence**

In the case study method, the researcher should ensure that data collection includes adequate longitudinal data, i.e. data covering a sufficiently long period of time in order to avoid taking an unusual situation as a reference point. The research considers whether the MDGs have been achievable since their inception from 2000 – 2015 in Brazil and Venezuela. The data collected will reflect the impact during this period. Data should be based on a principle that ensures data can be triangulated. Du Plooy (2001) highlights that triangulation is the process of using multiple data collection methods. This is done to increase the reliability and validity of the data.

Documentation in a case study is important mostly to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources (Yin, 1994). The advantage of documentation is that the researcher can review the material repeatedly. The nature of the research is unobtrusive. Much of the documents are official state and party documents (election manifesto, UN and State of the Nation speeches). There are archival records that are available through the United Nations Development Programme records that assist in monitoring the progress of the states.
Limitations
Finding quantitative data that correlates with years the researcher found pertinent for the study was not always possible. Some of the more important data was only in Portuguese or Spanish, English versions would only have the abstract or translated title. Some of the official government documents of Venezuela and Brazil are only available in their national languages, including speeches, and analyses which took a lot of time to translate. Time constraints thus affected the research.

Breakdown of the study
This study is organised as follows:

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical frame of the study. This chapter focuses on the issue of justice; specifically social and transformative justice. The chapter will give a detailed account of what transformative justice is and how it was shaped by the influence of Dependency theorists. It will also focus on how the notion of transformative justice impacted on the narrative of justice in the Bolivarian Revolution in advancing a political agenda of a transformed society. On the Brazilian front we look at the route that the Workers Party evolved into as a progressive movement that became the vehicle to transform society in general.

Chapter 3 presents an overview of the development of MDGs to SDGs and illustrate how the transformative and social justice link with the desired human development and alleviation of poverty and inequality closely linked with education and health in Brazil and Venezuela.

Chapter 4 focuses on the Election Manifestos of the Brazil and Venezuela; the policy agenda through thorough analysis of their State of the Nation Address during the period between Hugo Chávez’s and Lula da Silva’s presidency. The chapter will also focus on the policy initiatives in Health and Education and how they fared against the Human Development Index, Gini-coefficient and other acceptable measurement techniques.

Chapter 5 and 6 presents the lessons learned from Venezuela and Brazil in advancing social justice and poverty alleviation through education and health.
Chapter 7 presents the conclusion to the study. This section will highlight the tools that can be useful in achieving SDGs as having learnt from the tools utilised in reaching the MDGs.
CHAPTER TWO
Transformative justice: A contested concept

*What has quite rapidly happened is that the Modernism quickly lost its anti-bourgeois stance, and achieved comfortable integration into the new international capitalism*

Raymond Williams, 1989.

*We first crush people to the earth, and then claim the right of trampling on them forever, because they are prostrate*

Lydia Maria Child 1833,

**Introduction**

In this chapter the principles of justice are elaborated on, including the historical link surrounding colonialism, liberalism and property. The chapter considers the different interpretations of justice which are contestable conceptually and at a substantive level, thereby seeking to draw attention to the role this may have on transformative justice and the importance on social policy which responds to social realities. It further assesses how the idea of justice has in the past neglected the question of race which has so widely pervaded much of the developing world. The relevance of unpacking development as a concept is further associated with liberalism which through its own inner workings is closely linked to human progress. The illumination of this (human progress) should thus be brought forward essentially due to its adjacency to hegemony, driven by Eurocentrism and how deepening democracy can and has been utilised to transform society through meaningful social policy. Interestingly, while maintaining the important work done by Armatya Sen – particularly on the role of development, much of the debate on development originated in Latin America which called for much more impetus at state and regional level in combating
inequality and injustice which saturates the periphery-centre debate. Both Brazil and Venezuela tap in to the workings of or similar to that of Paolo Freire in transforming society and rolling out participatory elements of democracy while simultaneously receiving aid from Cuba. We are also introduced to the concept that Venezuela initiated known as the twenty-first century socialism which is set in motion in the Gramscian mould – or counter-hegemonic – while also engaging the moderate stance Brazil has taken. Armatya Sen’s capability approach further enhances the development debate as executed by the United Nations, thus with the advent of the MDGs we introduce the literature which surrounds it. We briefly introduce how Bolsa Familia and Barrio Adentro have been received and practised with regards to the development debate, but principally, as transformative tools.

Liberalism and the Foundations of Justice
Liberalism stems from the Latin word *liber*, which means ‘free’. It initially referred to the education worth of a free person in Antiquity (*studia liberalia*), this study of the ‘liberal arts’ illustrated the study of the seven classical subjects (*artes liberales*) at Roman and medieval institutions of learning; the *Trivium* (grammar, logic, rhetoric) and the *Quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy) – as opposed to the *artes illiberales* that were economic and not scientific purposes (Pabst, 2013, p. 218).

Politically speaking however, the term ‘liberal’ referred to the status of ‘free’ citizens and peasants (as opposed to slaves, women and serfs) and it took shape almost simultaneously with the Enlightenment period (Amin, 1989, p. 16-17).

Because there is no clear definition of liberalism, Pitts (2011) highlights that the term itself contains a constitutive ambiguity, between an 18\textsuperscript{th} century association with liberality and so, generosity, openness and freedom from bigotry, and a later association with rights. To compose a reasonable take of it however, Pabst (2013, p. 219) claims a Wittgenstein root of “family resemblances” within it. These can be compartmentalised in the following manner.

*Universality* found in liberal theory and its claim to universalism consists in the dispute that values have common authority, which in turn rests on ideas of moral unity, universal criteria of judgment and legitimate rule. Linked to this is the notion that the liberal systems of government and liberal societies are universal because they maximise liberty, both
individually and collectively. While a staunch militaristic history pervaded the continent, in Latin America the universality of democracy is expressed through the “wave of democracy” (Huntington, 1991). This was evident from 1974 onwards (though Venezuela became democratised in 1958) which commenced with Portugal’s Carnation Revolution, setting off a domino effect in Latin America’s quest for democratisation (Puddington, 2014). This blanket approach of liberal universalism is also interpreted as “hegemonic” and has simultaneously made policies on a one size fits all model in line with the austerity measures taken by the joint effort of Reagan and Thatcher on the case of development, this was particularly so with the 1982 crisis which led to the Caracazo in 1989, and the added pressure that would lead to Brazilian democracy in 1988.

*Individualism* is firmly located in the moral primacy of each individual person over any collective – whether communities, groups or nations (Macfarlane, 1993). As such, institutions are only justified insofar as they promote individual rather than collective well-being. The fundamental reason given by liberals is that the ultimate repository of both rights and values is the individual, not groups or associations. At its inception, imperialism, as Arendt (1951) highlights, was principally driven by individual entities which found the state an expedient vessel to expand their capital, wealth and liberal ideas as the times necessitated. Today, of course, we see the power yielded by multinational corporations and individuals against some states.

*Egalitarianism* refers to the idea that all human beings have the same standing. The principle of equality recognises the equal moral status of all mankind, which limits the exercise of power and authority – this is a core liberal conviction. Quijano (2000) highlights that such equality, however, only meant the advancement of Eurocentrism and its power and perpetuated the inequality of race in Latin America which suggests such egalitarianism is in essence very limited to colonies, particularly on indigenous people and slaves through the effects of colonialism. Mignolo (2002, p. 74-80) emphasises this colonial difference.

*Meliorism* describes liberalism’s pursuit of progress, which is founded upon the view that progress is achievable through human effort and creativity. As such, the liberal tradition sees itself as a historical philosophy of progress. What underpins this perspective is the idea
of human imperfection and fallibility that requires constant correction and improvement. This view is contradicted by the depravity colonies have experienced in spite of this progress. In understanding liberalism and its redefining capabilities to meet the various challenges on a social and political level, for instance the inequality and need for an improved standard of living and human development are of grave importance. It should be mentioned that Europe’s own development occurred at the expense of colonies in Africa (Bond, 2006; Rodney, 1972) and Latin America in particular (Galeano, 1971; Frank 1966) while continuing to undermine them. These mechanisms of looking to ameliorate social and political conditions have only become possible as aggressively as they have with Chávez and da Silva in Venezuela and Brazil respectively.

In highlighting the extent to which these four pillars may be channelled, or to see whether they correlate with the universal notion of liberalism and in essence a democratic state in today’s world, Lipset (1959) highlights some social requisites necessary for the implementation of substantive quality and human developing policy. Once procedural elements are satisfied, in the Schumpeter (1942) and Dahl (1971) mould, then it would be regarded as legitimate. It is also known that no country practicing democracy is the same, there are specific nuances based on culture and economic wealth etc., thus a country’s history and culture of democratic practice becomes difficult to interpret but with fundamental institutional mechanisms that have to be considered like legitimacy through an electoral process, such measurements are possible. Latin America’s militarism (Stepan, 1988a), the cultural make-up of a country often determines how democracy in that country can be determined as Almond and Verba’s (1963) illustrate. In his assessments, Lipset (1959) underscores that the need for economic development is essential in the capability of a state to deliver social policy on a substantive level to its people.

Therefore, we should also take into consideration the different economies of each country. In the case of Venezuela, as a rentier state, they derive their revenue from the exploitation of a single, government owned resource, oil. This becomes a crucial player in the ALBA-TCP (Muhr, 2010) at large and specifically as a contributor to social programmes (Alvarez & Fiorito, 2005). Venezuela has the largest reserves outside of the Middle East and North Africa. In the case of Brazil; which is far more diversified in finding opportunities for funding (not just their policy programmes), but have the capability of generating revenue for the state. Brazil’s agricultural activities remain largely in private hands and in terms of
Petrobras, it is divided between the state (56%) and a pool of minority shareholders around the world. Politically, Venezuela is judged to have had a reversal of freedoms on the public imposed by government and other civil liberties (Freedom House, 2015) which may illustrate the radical course which they have pursued, including institutional changes which raises the alarm for its authoritarian inclinations (Wilpert, 2003a, 2007; Durán-Sánchez, 2013). Ellner (2013a) termed this the “twenty-first century Latin American radical left” or TFCLARL. By contrast, Brazil has been seen to be a moderate state (Freedom House, 2015), with da Silva’s government in his first term as president expressing conservative policies and trying to consolidate its democracy within the confines of a neo-liberal friendly framework. This goes hand in hand with what Castañeda (2006) and Weyland (2009) highlighted as the rise of Latin America’s two lefts.

**On Hegemony**

Hegemony derives from a Greek term that translates as “dominance over” and that was used to describe relations between city-states. Antonio Gramsci illustrates hegemony as the exercise of dominance by those in power and authority in presenting their definition of reality, their view of the world, in such a way that it is consented to by other classes as ‘common sense’. It can be exercised through the State and ‘juridical’ government. Wallenstein utilises a chronological model of hegemony which refers to productive competitiveness in other core markets, subsequent commercial competitiveness and financial competitiveness (Frank & Gills, 1993, p. 8).

This hegemony is also visible in multilateral structures such as the UN as it is dominated by the Bretton-Woods system (Therien, 2004) which has left further scepticism regarding the type of transformative policy-making driven through these media. It is particularly true in developing states where there is a far greater need for ushering in redistributive mechanisms that address such inequality as caused by hegemonic financial and economic practice. The ideological orientation of Brazil’s Workers’ Party sought an alternative to the injustices which had not been overtly challenging the status quo as it is more reformist in nature (Burton, 2012). On the other hand, Venezuela’s PSUV can be looked on from the
Gramscian perspective, something attested to by Ellner (2013a) with the Twenty First Century Latin American Radical Left. Not only has a cultural hegemony been achievable in Venezuela, but the Bolivarian Revolution during Chávez’s reign managed to influence much of the thinking in the region for reimagining a new socio-economic space and popular political engagement that emphasises state-protected standards of income, nutrition, health, housing and education for all citizens as national imperative (Trinkunas, 2005; Muhr, 2010). The drive toward poverty alleviation was primarily an entrenching of social programmes that are participatory in nature without necessarily focusing on economic productivity but ultimately confronts the hegemonic global environment. The emphasis is to transform society to be more just and to diminish poverty and inequality that they felt needed urgent attention but also strategically use the multilateral fora as the UN (including regional summits as describe above with ALBA TCP, Summit of the Americas and CELAC) to agitate for the idea of alternative paradigms. The appeal with “UN paradigm” according to Therien (1999, 2004) is that while the Bretton Woods paradigm favours a complete market liberalisation, it (the UN paradigm), in contrast, is linked to practices of UN agencies i.e. the UN Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Development Programme etc. – which insist on acquiring objectives of social equality and sustainability with less focus on economic expediency.

Underpinning hegemony, as mentioned on page 26, is the “universality” component which, ironically, not only created the centre-periphery divide but engendered an unbridled development process which would benefit countries of the North. It is precisely this notion that Hugo Chávez sought to challenge in his aspiration of generating a 21st Century Socialism which would translate into a world that is more just. It would seem necessary too, however to interrogate the meaning of justice, its origins and how it has been interpreted over time.

---

4Hugo Chávez realised that when he became president of Venezuela and leader of PSUV, seizure of all facets of governance were indispensible for the advancement of the state’s resistance against the global hegemony of the US. More essentially, weakening the traditional elite within Venezuela would carve out the necessary conditions internally that would enable the transformation of the material conditions for ordinary Venezuelans. These things, it would seem, happened simultaneously. In this regard Gramsci highlights that ensuring “an unprecedented concentration of hegemony (where) a more ‘interventionist’ government will take the offensive more openly against the oppositionists and organize permanently the ‘impossibility’ of internal disintegration – with controls of every kind, political, administrative, etc., reinforcement of the hegemonic ‘positions of the dominant group, etc. “ (Gramsci, 1999, p. 495). For Chávez, this idea remained a paramount necessity to advance the perpetual struggle at state level and then further, seek advance it, at regional level.
On Justice
Justice stems from the liberal concept which Locke emphasised in the Law of Nature as rooted in property rights and their authorisation by the principle of the common good. Barnett (2000) expands on this in contemporary terms as a need to introduce and define Justice to address the first-order problem of knowledge, power and interest. Justice is respect for the rights of individuals and associations. These rights have fundamental underpinnings on:

The **right of several properties** specifies a right to acquire, possess, use and dispose of scarce physical resources – including their own bodies. While most property rights are freely alienable, the right to one’s person is inalienable.

The **right of first possession** specifies that property rights to un-owned resources are acquired by being the first to establish control over them.

The **right of freedom of contract** specifies that a right-holder’s consent is necessary (freedom to contract) to transfer alienable property rights.

This then, in the understanding of colonialism and the ubiquity of dispossession that was consumed by liberal thought becomes inseparable with such a view of Justice; and without forgetting that Latin America’s inclination towards Latifundio’s and Caudillos – Morse emphasised the Machiavellian orientation on Latin America in particular, makes land right specifically peculiar (Wiarda & Mott, 2003, p. 59). In agreement with classic liberal theorists, Barnett (2000) further highlights that interests and power primarily as there is a scarcity of both physical resources and human abilities. Additionally, due to the limits of an altruistic

---

5 While Hobbes is generally understood to have enabled the state to assert itself on the public, to give up their rights in recognition of the state as Sovereign, Locke’s refutation of this is supported by his belief that Property – as given to by God – justly underscores the rights of man to their property which should be respected by the State. His political society came into being when men who are owners of property are morally bound when they come together in a State of Nature and are in agreement, to each give up their executive power to punish those who contravene the Law of Nature, and submit that power to the majority. As highlighted by Forde, Locke’s interpretation of property rights was highly influenced by Grotius, Pufendorf and Aquinas before him, which became the primacy of political thought and law that justifies appropriation of land in the New World, the demarcation of territory in Europe and the extension of colonisation in the developing world as a whole. Justice is thus inalienable from the rights of individuals on these grounds.

6 In purely economic terms, Zarri (2013) illustrates the difference between pure altruism and impure altruism. A pure altruist is a subject driven by a utility function directly depending not only on one’s material well-being
society and the vulnerability of people in society these are exacerbated. As Locke had asserted, individual conduct must be constrained by specific mechanisms which are generally understood to be the rule of Law. It can be concluded in this regard that Justice is rules based or ‘procedural’ aspects, and has strong foundational elements absorbed within the understanding of democracy today.

Based on these rights, is the liberal idea that the modern state and its laws should remain neutral\(^7\) with respect to the varying conceptions of a prosperous life held by individuals. For Rawls (1971), neutrality as an aim of the state, is to mean that the conception of the good which is those conceptions that respect the principle of “Justice as Fairness” created under conditions of a veil of ignorance\(^8\) remain paramount for democracy. Rawls highlighted the need for free choice of all people to be achieved. He was attracted to a list of resources that allow basic standards of human life which individuals must be able to select for themselves, in accordance with their own more comprehensive religious or ethical conceptions (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 284). This list included liberties, opportunities, and powers, wealth and income and the social basis of self-respect – he later included freedom of movement and free choice of occupation (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 283).

Examining this however, it is notable that through understanding that the reality of people as inherently unequal as in the deliberate laws enforced and belief systems that Mignolo (2002) and Quijano (2000) highlight, law should be pursued to change social inequality rather than assuming a neutral and ‘equal social world’ and avoid legal differentiation to preserve it. Lehning (1990, p. 190) in reference to Rawl’s work asserts that;

---

\(^7\) Neutrality is seen as a political idea which governs the state’s policies and institutions, public relations between persons and the state and not the private relations between persons and institutions... Furthermore, the stress upon neutrality and equal respect which denies the state any right to implement any specific conception of the good life, emphasizes the equal freedom that all persons should have the ability to pursue their own conception of a good life,” (Lehning, 1990).

\(^8\) Rawls’ hypothetical assertion is that the rational man knows not his position in society, his class position or social status, nor does anyone know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence, strength, and the like... but that through equal liberty which is determined by the principles of justice. For him, the veil of ignorance provides fairness because it ensures that no one is advantaged or disadvantaged in the choice of principles by the outcome of natural chance or the contingency of social circumstances. The principle of justice is the result of a fair agreement or bargain (Rawls, 1971, p.654).
The fundamental principles, by which all individuals are to live, must be justified without appeal to the intrinsic superiority of any conception of the good. Such principles assign to persons rights and duties and define the appropriate distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation. These principles are the principles of social justice (Lehning, 1990).

This suggests that it is essential to notice the real conditions of inequality to end them rather than enforce “colour blindness” or “gender neutrality” which perpetuate traditionally imposed social disadvantages. In the Brazilian case for instance, an ‘epistemology of ignorance’ (Tuana & Sullivan, 2007) is honed in the semblance of ‘racial democracy’ (Guimaraes, 2003; Hanchard, 1994) which has ultimately lead to the focalisation of reform policies that seek to address social inequalities undertaken on race lines. This can only be achievable if substantive equality excels toward a vision whereby all humans are equally recognised and partake in civil society as full members of everyday life. Herrera-Salas (2005, p. 87) emphasises that racism in Venezuela is an ideology and a practice closely linked to economic and social inequalities and highlights Archer’s (2000) work:

Racial discrimination impoverishes and socially dispossesses those who suffer it. It denies them access (or access in quality of conditions) to land, employment, education, health, and family planning services and housing.

On this basis, “the racial contract” interprets the normalisation of race politics which Mills (1997) perhaps views as being on the periphery of the Rawlsian interpretation. Mills (1997) emphasises a “naturalising and socialising of moral epistemology (that) should have, as a component, the naturalising and socialising of pervasive social patterns of mistaken moral cognition...” the idea around this being the improvements in our cognitive practice should have a practical payoff in heightened sensitivity to social oppression and the attempt to reduce and ultimately eliminate that oppression (Mills, 2007, p. 22). Thus, while the Rawlsian project has made commendable progress with reference to egalitarian principles that portend targeting the most vulnerable, unlike his predecessors, the transformative element of society is improved but not explicit in accordance to gender and race and indeed “Othering” (Said, 1977). Amin (1989) supports this by claiming, rather sternly, that Rawls did
not provide anything new, because it remains prisoner of the liberty, equality and property, primarily as inequality is accepted and legitimised by a feat of acrobatics, which borrows its pseudo concept of “endowments” from a voracious international economy (Amin, 1989, p. 16). Losurdo (2011) argues through a counter-history that to grasp liberalism, one should understand that fundamentally it is founded on the implicit logic of exclusion and therefore supports an unbalanced development. For instance, its definition of human rights is only defined through the narrow prism of property owners and denies the universality of the concept of man (Tosel, 2008).

It would seem then, that justice in the liberal context does not quite suffice for the developing world. How progress perhaps should be read; understood as meliorism in the Wittgensteinian sense, is how justice is closely linked to a development cog that engenders an improvement of one’s life at a political and socio-economic. In his seminal research work on social fundamentals of democracy, and with particular reference to Latin America, Seymour Lipset brings to our attention how “Education, if it does not make men good citizen, makes it at least easier for them to become so” (Bryce cited in Lipset, 1959, p. 79). This emphasises not only the efforts towards consolidating democratic ideals by having an engaged citizenry but that the determination to ameliorate social conditions through social policy that focuses on literacy drives and education or promote creative health initiatives has virtuous transformative principles that states should ideally adhere to. Considering the binary effects of colonialism, predominantly those between the oppressed and coloniser; development, justice and racialisation are inextricably linked to the conditions of democracy in Latin America in general and with Brazil and Venezuela in particular. For this, there has to be a clear outlining of development, its perception and how it is understood from theorists of Latin America and the dependency it endured from West European and North American democracies.

**Theories on Development**

According to Grosfoguel (cited in Moraña et al., 2008), dependency is a theory that seeks to explain why Latin American countries did not develop similarly to the centre (Europe and the US). It can be understood as a relation of subordination in the international capitalist system rather than as a result of archaic, traditional or feudal structures. The latter is a
result of the modern, capitalist structures. For this reason underdevelopment involves an interrelation of “external” and “internal” elements, which is to say that Europeans justified the colonised lands by the claim that Latin America in general, had an unsophisticated culture (Mafeje, 1988). Furthermore, the high culture of Europeans/Modern industrialists was the essential cog in modernising those economies. Perhaps a liberal romanticism, the belief maintained that the primitive/tradition societies would perish under the overwhelming modern ‘civilisation’.

Development debates in Latin America should be viewed in a \emph{longue durée} (Grosfoguel, 2011) manner due to the geo-culture of modernity which has dominated the world system for centuries. Similarly in the “Politics of Modernity”, Williams (1989, p. 44), argues that development in general, had much to do with imperialism and that the absorption of wealth and power in colonial capitals and the concurrent cosmopolitan created access to a wide range of subordinate cultures. That within Europe itself, there was a marked unevenness of development and hence the movement of art and literature that ensued as a result of resistance against capitalism/liberalism. Mendieta (2005) makes clear the conditions of Latin America, in the argument which illustrates the “differential hierarchies” created from modernity (read rationality of globalisation) and how its social structures insisted on some societies referred to as primitive and others pre-modern and modern. This links with the centre-periphery binary which was perpetuated by ‘development’.

The birth of the dependency theory and the foundational opposition to modernisation theory in Latin America is credited to \emph{dependentistas} like Raúl Prebisch and Gunder Frank (1966) and illustrated vividly by Galeano (1971). It is a Marxist interpretation of Capital and the World System questioning the centre-periphery concept of exploitation. Pierre-Charles, a Haitian scholar, captured the essence of dependency and explained it as “the extraction of surplus-value for the benefit of the centre” (cited in Dussel, 2003, p. 97). The assertion by dependency, post-colonial and decolonisation theorists was that the autonomous national development had to be achieved outside liberal ideology, or the capitalist world-system. Hard-line Brazilian \emph{dependentista} Vania Bambilra, citing the Cuban Revolution, felt that autonomous national development under capitalism was impossible. She was of the opinion that
The logical conclusion [of dependency theorists] implicit in some, explicit in others, that the historical necessity for the development of the productive forces in Latin America be impelled by a superior socioeconomic system, that is, socialism... The struggle for socialism in countries such as those of Latin America is within the framework of the struggle for autonomous national development that capitalism cannot achieve (Grosfoguel, cited in Moraña et al. 2008, p. 321).

On the Brazilian front, the need to transform society fundamentally was propelled by critical theorist and Workers Party (PT) educationist, Paolo Freire (1970) and sanitistas in the health sector, who added a practical dimension to the dependendistas in engaging not merely through philosophical conceptualisation of the world but pushing through practical measures and praxis (Wong, 1995) that ensure ideals of transformative justice and equality in over-coming the endemic, cyclic poverty perpetuated by a slanted human development. Of course this brings back the logic that fuelled conviction for the Bolivarian Revolution, neo-Gramscian in orientation (Muhr, 2010) which subsequently led to a 21st Century Socialism that was led by Hugo Chávez in transforming society through its institutions and promoting an inclusive human development as opposed to economic development (Ul-Haq, 2003). The Latin American School of Medicine (LASM) championed by former Chilean President Salvador Allende as a participatory and preventative driven approach to health later adopted by Cuba (Tajer, 2003) subsequently gave the framework of Venezuela’s Barrio Adentro (Armada et al., 2008) and there are similarities to Brazil’s participatory approach (Victora, et al., 2011) but not as poignant an undertaking as Caracas. Having become democracies, these two countries these understand that to transform society, justice has to serve all people.

Human Development as Transformative Justice

In the event of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 by the United Nations (UN), the unique commencement of acknowledging human rights as a global responsibility, which is to say, the ethical politicisation of ethical commitments, were realised. As such human rights articulated the gallant initiative that all people have claims to the social promise that ensures their protection against the worst abuses and deprivation.
The key factor here was that for human rights to be achievable it must operate in-tandem with human development to tackle the realities of poverty and equality. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) defines human development as;

...a process of enhancing human capabilities – to expand choices and opportunities so that each person can lead a life of respect and value.” It continues, “When human development and human rights advance together, they reinforce one another – expanding people’s capabilities and protecting their rights and fundamental freedoms (UN Development Report, 2000, p. 2).

Mahbub Ul-haq assessed the necessary shift away from economic development which he believed only benefited developed nations (Ul-Haq, 1973, 2003). The UNDP also stressed a combined role by civil servants and civic organisations, policy-makers, multilateral organisation all have in transforming the potential of global affairs not just mere false piety. Dreze and Sen (1989, p. 221-225) championed this view\(^9\) which was achievable through their “public action” which was aimed at promoting people’s basic entitlements and capabilities – in targeting literacy development and expansion in public action.

Amartya Sen’s Capability Approach is centred on the “expansion capabilities” of people where he argues beyond the liberal traditional outlook of the economic development prism (moving away from Rawls) and highlights the need to expand ‘freedoms’. Sen (1990:44) argues that “the capability of a person is a derived notion. It reflects the various combinations of functioning (doings and beings) he or she can achieve. Capability reflects a person’s freedom to choose between different ways of living”.

Sen’s novel development approach influenced the ideas of the UNDP (Jolly, et al., 2004) because the pertinent questions of measurability; highlighted quality of life based on human capability and functioning rather than the Gross National Product (GNP) and wealth. This is closely linked to the theory of justice and equality (Nussbaum, 1997). Nussbaum supports the idea of capability and argued with Sen that Rawls’ list of resources is insufficient because it does not answer the questions about who is better off and who is worse off

\(^9\) Dreze and Sen (1989) illustrate this through their example of Kerala, who, like Cuba (Tharamangalam 2010), especially due to their uniquely low economy managed to have a higher human development index than China and India.
where differences exist monetarily and physically amongst individuals. The criticism has however been based on its “methodological individualism” or it sharing an individualism of the utilitarian approach (Deneulin & Stewart, 2002, p. 66), and whereby issues of social norms and cultural practice are seen to be “instrumental” to the individual’s well-being (Deneulin & Stewart, 2002, p. 67). In illustrating a comparative analysis between countries and highlighting the idea of human development, Tharamangalam (2010) further describes how Kerala and Cuba illustrate three distinct patterns compatible with the success of their programmes: high policy given to human development with education and health, public action (as explained by Dreze and Sen) with its two components of organised social movements that influence state action and finally an interventionist state that is responsive to the demands of such movement. Anderson (2014) notes that a mass education which has strong social values; should run concurrent with strong social agency motivated by social aims because it is an extension of human potential. He argues that “the wider elements of human empowerment – such as communications and a democratic and broader social participation capacity – must develop from such a base” (Anderson, 2014, p. 69).

Education is seen as key strategic tool for both Worker’s Party and Bolivarian Revolution in its “humanising” principles (Freire, 1970) and a praxis that was influenced by a transformative pedagogy (Brown, 2004). In Venezuela’s case there’s a deliberate antagonism and a agitation against the “traditional education” for a “progressive education” ushered by Misiones (Duffy, 2014; Gonzalez & Oyelere, 2011) precisely toward what was termed a “democratic socialism” (Dewey, 1916), and a special emphasis on changing of the curriculum (Apple, 1993; Carlson, 2007). While the question of instruction remained important, the building of politically astute teachers was encouraged (Giroux, 1997), maintaining an approach that enabled a teacher-learner relation that was reciprocal, that fostered agency, and constitutive of participatory action, the learning capacity of both teacher and learner can be linked to Freire’s (1970) “banking concept”. In Brazil, the cycles of strikes of the 1970s and 1980s (Haag, 2012), the sanitaristas (Cornwall & Shankland, 2008; Dowbor, 2011) illustrate a participatory element that was awakened within Brazilian culture in their demand for a democratic country. The public participation is visible in the manner in which health (Victora et al., 2011) was administered which is also illustrated through the dichotomy that existed (Elias & Cohn, 2003) which would lead to Brazil’s
Sistema Unico de Saude (SUS) or Unified Healthcare System; and education through *Bolsa Familia* was undertaken through state-interventionist means when the Workers Party government was in charge from 2002 (Hall, 2006). Similarly the manner in which the Bolivarian framework was participatory in nature (Wilpert, 2007; Carlson, 2007; Ellner, 2010) gives agency to the public and a sense of ownership of their situation. Both Brazil and Venezuela remain inspired by Havana considering they utilise Cuban assistance undertaken both the framework of multilateral (ALBA TCP and CELAC) and bilateral agreements (The Economist, 2014; Briggs & Mantini-Briggs, 2009). It is through Cuba’s own insistence on transformative justice focused on human development that Cuba remains world leader in education and health. James Wolfensohn, ex-president of the World Bank, acknowledged this feat, stating that Cuba “has done a great job on education and health” and that “it does not embarrass me to admit it” (Strategic Culture Foundation, 2015). This vision was laid much earlier and it is consistent with the argument made by Jose Marti that;

> Instruction is not the same thing as education; the former refers to thought, the latter principally to feelings. Nevertheless there is no good education without instruction... An ignorant people can be deceived by superstition and become servile. An instructed people will always be strong and free... Education is the only means of being saved from slavery (Marti, 1979, p. 34-35).

Brazil’s *Bolsa Familia* (fundamentally education driven) programme and *Barrio Adentro* (which is health driven) are participatory in nature which is the fundamental element in transformative paradigms (Mertens, 2007) centred on human development which can be measured through MDGs which were created in 2000.

Thus it becomes imperative to challenge institutional distortions that maintain gross inequalities and poverty which is representative of neo-liberalism encouraged by the Washington consensus and Structural Adjustment Programmes as witnessed in Latin America from the 1980s (Klein, 2008, Morley 2005), development strategies became increasingly linked to ameliorating human development within the United Nations. Therien (2004), illustrates that the “UN paradigm” multilateral system formulated on empirical underpinnings that were “extremely fragile” (Piketty, 2014, p. 16), the trickle down method
favoured by “growth economists” is one mechanism that has continued to exacerbate these inequalities as Piketty argues which is also supported by Klein (2008). The UNDP indicators of human development as driven by the ideas of Sen and Nussbaum became an especially important tool to enhance the Global South (Therien, 1999) and its responses toward desired transformative change in the international context. Thus, through multilateral platforms such as the UN and its critical organs we see for the first time poverty alleviation was addressed in developing countries. On the other hand Samir Amin believed the measurements in the form of MDGs were a perpetuation and passive submission to an unjust system under which capitalism or the “Bretton Woods paradigm” functions (Therien, 2004). This is perhaps in line with Deneulin and Stewart’s (2002) assessment of Sen’s “methodological individualism”; which is legitimised through increased privatisation aimed at eliminating public services, including sectors of health and education (Amin, 2010). Another criticism highlighted that the MDGs lacked concern for empowerment and participation and limited explanatory value and analytical power (Deneulin & Shahani, 2009, p. 66). Thus, perhaps with the shifting towards SDGs, the idea could be that more inclusivity of issues would have to be factored in for the propelling human development and building a more equitable world.

Transformative justice and redistributive justice in this instance are achieved by transforming society from an individualist trajectory under which neo-liberalism dominates to a social space that envisions collective human development (HD) through social policy that reflects such. Tharamangalam (2010) suggests two points that have stood out since the inception of the Human Development Report (HDR) in 1990, which highlighted a challenge to the global regime of neo-liberalism:

human development provides a thorough, more comprehensive concept of development, one that includes human, ethical, social and even political dimensions, secondly it has spawned the influential HDRs, which have been effective in acting as a two-pronged tool for assessing the social impact of economic policies, on the one hand, and for advocacy on behalf of the poor and the deprived on the other.
This suggests the state ensures to take it upon itself through the creation of the opportunities such as affirmative action in tertiary education (Cicalo, 2013 Oliven, 2012) in Brazil, which increases chances for employment, conditions for better human settlement, closing the income gap, addressing past injustices, including racial or gender bias that ensure that these programmes are appropriately carried out towards the MDGs.

The MDGs stem from the articulations stressed in the multilateral platform of the UN, it is essential to interrogate what role the UN plays in world politics, the shaping of the development agenda initially by Latin American theorists, but later how the normalisation of shifting development language as purely an economic factor to a human factor as Sen highlighted, it would be beneficial to unpack the role of the UN and how states have taken to these ideals. We assess how The UN General Assembly as an essential platform for states to assert their position has been used by world leaders, particularly Brazil and Venezuela.

**Leaders and Political Society**

The democratic leftist wave seemingly transformed the region of Latin America considerably in the last fifteen years since Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and later Lula da Silva in Brazil (Blanco & Grier, 2011). Illustrating subtle nuances, Castañeda (2006) has called it the “two lefts” which requires an understanding of the political culture of Latin America as illustrated by Vanden and Prevost (2015). This critical stance has been emblematic of the resurgence of Latin American progressive thinking and had been driven by Venezuela with its adoption of an alternative model which sought to break the normative Western ideological framework under which much of the globalised world operates. This anti-neoliberal approach stems from the view that the exploitation traditionally faced by Venezuela’s poor majority (Ellner, 2010) can be overcome by social spending based on the government’s ownership of its natural resources. Venezuela has predominantly followed what Schamis (2006) terms a ‘more nationalist populist symbolism’. For example, the changing of the constitution by Chávez was a controversial issue because it was seen by other scholars (Weyland, 2009; Castañeda, 2006) as harbouring dictatorial rule and strategies to hold on to power (Durán-Sánchez, 2013).

Armada et al. (2009) analyse the successes of the Venezuelan Barrio Adentro model in health. Colitt and Devereux (2013) show an improvement in the overall life of ordinary
Venezuelans in accordance with the UN HDI Index. (Geyer, 1999) illustrates how the poor majority has traditionally been sidelined, which emphasises the polarisation within the country as stipulated by Corrales (2005); Ellner and Salas (2005) and Ellner (2010). With the passing of Hugo Chávez in 2013, we have seen the continuation of the same social policies by newly elected president Nicolás Maduro of the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV).

Under da Silva, and influenced by Venezuela's stance (Ellner, 2004), we saw a new state-centric poverty alleviation focus, particularly the improvement of predecessor Cardoso’s *Fome Zero* (Zero Hunger) to *Bolsa Família* under da Silva's presidency (Hall, 2006). It should be said that the same social policy has continued with da Silva's successor, Dilma Rousseff during the past four years. One of the key elements for poverty alleviation identified by the UNRISD (2010) is increased state led action. This is due to the fact that “state interventions shape the conditions for the involvement of other actors’ directly through regulations and subsidies or indirectly through the design and scope of public interventions” (UNRISD, 2010, p. 139). This is also shown by Anderson (2014) who illustrates how meaningful state involvement and social involvement has a far greater impact toward poverty alleviation and social transformation. Soares & Rocha (2010) evaluates the success and shortcomings of *Bolsa Família*. Chioda et al. (2012) crucially focuses on the “spill-overs of Conditional Cash Transfers” which critique the manner in which the Brazilian state conducts this process of social protection. We also look at *Bolsa Escola* in the Education Department and its effects, from its inception (Cardoso & Souza, 2013) including its impact (Schwartzman, 2005). This illustrates obstacles of implementation especially as they are varied and dependent on efficiency of “federal, regional and local governments launching their own schemes which have multiplied coordination problems” over time. More recently, improved literacy levels illustrate that Brazil is heading in the right direction (Ireland, 2008). Some disparities, it should be said, remain race oriented as illustrated by the Unified Black Movement (Hanchard, 1994) which also played a part in elevating race to a national level. A historical question is posed on fundamental rights in widening expansion to all Brazilians, particularly on education (McCowan, 2007; Hernandez, 2004); and the eventual step being taken by the Workers Party government through Affirmative Action programs in Higher Education (Cicalo, 2013; Oliven, 2012). Perlman (2006) Boito and Resende (2007) demonstrate how
class relations and usage of state capital in Brazil play a role in redistributive measures and the constraints thereof. We also see how the Workers Party readjusts its politics (Campello, 2013; Madarasz, 2002) as it gains political power. Inequality becomes equally challenging in the health sector and substantive policy-making (Macinko & Lima-Costa, 2012, Nyarko et al., 2013).

Conclusion
Liberalism, as demonstrated in this chapter cannot, it would seem, soundly respond to the ills faced by countries of the developing world because of its inherent ostracism. Analogous to this then is democracy’s partiality to orientations of the well-to-do within individual countries. Having illustrated some of the social policy in Brazil and Venezuela and its implementation gives us a sense of the rationale to the approaches to transformative justice adopted in the two countries. We shall see in the next chapters that the radical route Chávez has taken in Venezuela transcends into the international field – in confronting the hegemonic structures including vociferously fighting for justice of the Global South – this further coincides with the calls for reform of the United Nations Security Council made by PT and PSUV governments. Dependendistas have convincingly illustrated how development occurs at two speeds, one that has been historically biased to countries of the North, while the Global South has continued to lag behind; thus expounding on the linkages between justice, democracy and development, effects of which Chávez remained perpetually opposed. While Brazil does not quite lose its step on the international front, being systematically squeezed by their commitments to reforms after Cardoso’s leadership, the slowness of the programmes that follow when da Silva comes in, become unsatisfactory to his constituency which had delivered him to the office for substantive change. That being said, Brazil or perhaps the Workers’ Party, as we shall see in the manner in which the Global North becomes the drivers of the MDGs in the latter stages of it becoming adopted, so too it gradually changes its stance and gravitates to the multilateral field to assert it itself.
CHAPTER THREE

MDGs to SDGs

“...Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing. “

Arundhati Roy (War Talk)

“More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that is why we have the United Nations.”

Kofi Annan

Introduction

This chapter highlights the role of the UN not just in the formation of the intergovernmental arena, but also regarding the importance of specific arms for the contribution to the MDGs and eventually the SDGs. I elaborate on the role multilateralism plays and why it has been a factor in accomplishing the Millennium Declaration. The UN has been a specific vehicle whereby these issues are highlighted; a brief background is also given which further explains the evolution of the MDGs, how they became aligned with the SDGs and why these have become so intrinsic in world politics. The world is also divided along developed and developing nations or the Global North and the Global South, and this is illustrated by the kinds of partnerships key multi-lateral bodies have placed themselves, including endorsing the ideas for which cause.

Multilateralism

Multilateralism is three or more countries that work together on issues they find pertinent to themselves. While multilateralism benefits less powerful states, it is comprehensible that all states are able to take advantage of multilateral fora, especially those that are less powerful. If we look at the question of law, for example, solving a dispute between nations,
the question of who presents the issue in dispute as a legal question is quite pertinent\textsuperscript{10} (Grewe, 1999).

Law is in essence a tool for the weaker party to exert pressure where it would otherwise be unable to. As it is now, it is aided by the adherence to institutions which predetermine the roles of all those involved in the international arena. Thus liberalism or the Lockean concept of justice is utilised, whereby the individual state rights are protected by international law. This issue of law, its relation to land and colonialism as previously alluded to in chapter two becomes clearer when one considers how states, as an extension, utilise the same principle in an otherwise anarchic, realist world. More importantly, the global North and Global South divide (Therien, 1999, 2004) is so prevalent that it has agitated for an alternative orientation within international politics particularly based on the historical elements of development, power and hegemony which affected states can collectively address. It would be true then that multilateral institutions like the UN enjoy greater political legitimacy that no single state can attain on its own (Therien, 2004). This legitimacy is stimulated by the presupposition that if there is satisfactory consent by states acting collectively according to recognised supermajority rules, legitimacy follows.

Over the last few decades, nations have accepted that in order to mitigate global obstacles including, security, economic development, terrorism, human rights and environmental issues there is a need to work together. It would be rather difficult for states to tackle many of these issues alone due to how interconnected they are, but more importantly, it has become more acceptable for states to act through institutions as a normative mechanism. Former South African President Nelson Mandela highlights that:

---
\textsuperscript{10} Grewe illustrates that from the inception of international law, there is great enthusiasm from smaller states in “matters of codification, effectiveness and judicial enforcement of international law. In this context, one recalls the cities like Geneva, The Hague, Brussels and Vienna that played a prominent role in the development and codification of modern international law. But the undeniable fact, that Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Austria did play such a role, that these countries always tried to attract important conferences in matter of international law to their territory and that they offered suitable conference accommodations, does not justify the conclusion that they always regard their interests best protected by rule of international law and by legal institutions and procedures” (Grewe, 1999, p. 23). One can also see that these are what today have become strategic locations to which institutions as multilateral fora of the United Nations are now situated. In the same manner whereby small states in today’s sense wants to reiterate a specific point, this is far more acceptable in multilateral fora with backing than to have a stance whereby one even chooses to highlight without regional or other multilateral support.
The world is becoming ever more interdependent. What each one of us does as an independent nation impacts on others. We therefore have no choice but to build a system of relations which, while it guarantees such independence and seeks to exclude the possibility of one country’s imposing its will on another, creates the possibility for each to have a meaningful say in how we should live together in one peaceful, stable, prosperous and free world (Nelson Mandela, 1991).

At the heart of understanding the development debate lays the appreciation for the complexities and nuances of international relations and geopolitics, where states (and non-governmental organisations) have interests in wishing to maintain their influence on others.

Considering the unbalanced development of Latin America (Galeano, 1971; Frank, 1966) as illustrated in the previous chapters and the effects of a burgeoning industrialisation process, guns and germs (Diamond, 1997), the expansion of Europe through its colonies and the establishment of the United States as an imperial power in the 20th century and the commencement of the 21st century (Harvey, 2003; Ali, 2003), there is an elevated need for the formation of multilateral platforms as necessary tools to broker peace. George Friedman highlights that after every major systemic war it is primarily through such coalitions that states that won the war and indeed the compliance of losers to the new order and unification do multilateral platforms become attractive platforms for all to contest and dictate terms and language of specific agendas of the world (Stratfor, 2008). He highlights that this was the basis for the existence of the platforms such as the Congress in Vienna, the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations. Undeniably, where democracy has succeeded, and having become an acceptable model, conditions for good governance, strong institutions that remain transparent and that which allows trade/economics to continue without hindrance have been encouraged. Demands for multilateral organisations to be accountable to civil society have proven to be more prevalent which further stresses the question of their legitimacy (Ghaus-Pasha, 2005).

The question of race as we know it within a multilateral platform is not new; the true remnants of the clear-cut reality of the global polity have normatively been divided between racial equals and the racial un-equals between the Global North and South divide (inducing
the momentous UN Conference against Racism in Durban in 2001). A clear case of its orderliness amongst allies in the inception of global hegemony is the example of the 1919 post WW1 Versailles Conference, the Japanese delegation’s proposal to incorporate a racial equality clause in the League of Nation’s Covenant was vetoed by the six “Anglo-Saxon” nations, which included Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand (Lake & Reynolds, 2009). This is in spite of Japan’s view of itself as an imperial power; the veto in this regard was an affront on their status. Lake and Reynolds (2009) also highlight the important works of WEB Dubois who, in the face of international racism, used such multilateral platforms to emphasise the need to address discrimination, racial and racist policies as the international community had the equal responsibility of combating its perpetuation.

While legitimacy of multilateral platforms is predicated on autarchic desires of powerful nations, todays political realities may need revision where the powers concerned are forced to reform those institutions. It is necessary to reflect for example, that the Bretton-Woods monetary system was preserved for the deliberative incentive and assurances to the US with regards to US dollar exchange for gold (Melzer, 1991; Irwin, 2013). Similarly, the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and its successor, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) stem from the US led Marshall Plan for expediency that exceeds mere Cold War corollaries but to consider genuine economic cooperation amongst leading European nations of the Atlantic (Wolfe, 2007). The effectiveness of UN operations in Kosovo (1999 – without consent of UN Security Council) and Libya (2011) depended on military actions by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), all of which insinuate the role of power politics (Keohane, 2006), and how this impacts concerns of those on the periphery. The omnipresence of the US in these powerful institutions is undeniable and its footprint in world affairs not only warrants that it adequately responds to its security concerns but advancing a foreign policy that serves its interests, politically and economically. Today’s political realities however suggest a withering unilateral, US led, world. The rise of emerging powers on the periphery (sometimes labelled rogue states) namely India, China, Iran and Russia has ossified the idea that the world is moving toward a multipolar world. In chorus, regional blocs as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the coming together of Brazil, Russia, India, China
and South Africa (BRICS) and forming of its New Development Bank, has intimated uncertainties of the Westphalian model of state sovereignty in the 21st century and specifically American hegemony (Adnan, 2014). Another question that may have contributed to the shift from influence of traditional international institutions is the reluctance of developed nations to deliver on assertions made to make adjustments to the international institutional architecture, which have continued to shun countries of the Global South. An example I refer to later in the chapter is that of Development Assistance and how the commitment of developed nations’ appetite has been unconvincing.

Recognition of Brazil as an emergent power has had Brazilian leadership salivating for decades (Rohter, 2012). This was acknowledged by Henry Kissinger who for many years envisaged that good rapport become customary between Brazil and the US as hemispheric giants (Palacios & Carrasco, 1995). While Hugo Chávez used the multilateral space to criticise the unbalanced power and the imperialism in world affairs, he simultaneously pushed to work with countries that were overtly antagonistic to the West (Rochlin, 2014; Noriega, 2010), including initiating other regional bodies that functioned outside of the influence of the US (Muhr, 2010) and strengthening existing regional blocs such as the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR). Brazil on the other hand sought to exert its influence within traditional multilateral structures (Mantzikos, 2010). It is worth noting that only Japan has been nominated more times than Brazil as non-permanent member of the UNSC. The Workers’ Party government forged, under Lula da Silva, an emboldened attitude to foster stronger South-South cooperation while it also sought to assert itself within UNSC as permanent member (Rohter, 2012). Few countries would object to Brazil as permanent member but as illustrated (Marber, 2009), opposition stems from the fact that it is the only Portuguese speaking nation, and thus not representative of the region as argued by Argentina and Mexico. The Workers’ Party, as a massive progressive movement, initially became the natural champion of the left in the region, thereby generating a semblance of competitiveness between him and President Chávez at regional and world stage (a point elaborated on in Chapter 4). This would also clarify their stances in global governance as represented by the United Nations.
A Short Description of the United Nations (UN):
The UN is the largest and most representative multilateral body. It comprises of 193 member states and 2 observer states. It was created in the aftermath of the Second World War with the purpose to bring all nations of the world together and afford them the opportunity to balance global interdependence and national interests when addressing international problems. The UN Charter was signed at the UN Conference on International Organisation in San Francisco on 26 June 1945 by the original 51 Member States including Brazil and Venezuela. This platform was a far more inclusive apparatus and incorporated periphery states but it would require ingenuity from them – as the debate supported by development theorists of Latin America – and a fast changing geopolitical environment that would assert the progressive views on poverty alleviation programmes to be regarded in a new light.

The UN has 6 (Six) Principle organs, namely:

The General Assembly (UNGA) is considered as the main deliberative, policymaking and representative body of the UN. Every Member State has a single vote. It is authorised to make key decisions on international issues, resolutions, and recommendations which are generally non-binding on member states but they carry significant political weight. Each session opens with the General Debate, which is led by Heads of State who address the GA on issues of global, international, regional and national significance. Since 1955, Brazil has always been the first to take the podium and in 2011, Dilma Rousseff would become the first woman to open the debate. Brazilian Presidents da Silva and Rousseff have used these platforms very effectively to advance their state and regional goals and also critique the international monetary system. President da Silva for instance at the 64th General Assembly highlighted that:

the absurd doctrine that markets could regulate themselves, with no need for so-called “intrusive” state intervention, and to the thesis of absolute freedom for financial capital, with no rules or transparency, beyond the control of peoples and institutions. It was iniquitous defence of a minimal, crippled, weakened state, unable to promote development or fight poverty and inequities (Ignacio Lula da Silva 64th UNGA Statement, 2009).
Each session takes place from September to September every year with 2015 marking the 70th UNGA session. The landmark Millennium Declaration, adopted in September 2000 and others that followed reflect the commitment that would lead to the adoption of the SDGs witnessed in September 2015. I elaborate on the nuances of this transition and the significance to poverty alleviation later on in the study and the importance of regional groupings such as the Group of 77 (G77) which have contributed to the advancement of the SDGs. There are 6 main committees of the General Assembly.

1st Committee – Disarmament and International Security
2nd Committee – Economic and Financial
3rd Committee – Social, Humanitarian and Cultural
4th Committee – Special Political and Decolonisation
5th Committee – Administrative and Budget
6th Committee – Legal

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is the principle body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on economic, social and environmental issues and for the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals. ECOSOC has 54 member states that are elected by the General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms. Resolutions of ECOSOC are in the form of policy recommendations on social, cultural, educational, health and related matters. This is possibly one of the more important arms in the UN in the case of the implementation of UNDP and particularly as measuring of the impact of programmes is channelled through it. This is including policy initiatives presented by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), UN Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC); the main responsibility of the UNSC in terms of the UN Charter is the maintenance of international peace and security. Members of the UNSC include five “permanent members” also known as the P5. These include; China, France, the Russian federation (formerly the USSR), the United Kingdom and the United States as well as 10 (ten) rotating members, elected by the GA for a two (2) year term based on geographic representation. In 2014 Venezuela was elected for the first time to be on the
UNSC as non-permanent member in the PSUV era, its term ended at the end of 2016 as it began from the beginning of 2015. Brazil served twice already in the Workers’ Party era, in 2004-2005 and 2010-2011. The P5 all have veto power in any action of the UNSC, making their agreement critical in any UNSC endeavour.

The UNSC is the only UN organ which has the authority to demand actions on the part of Member States; all other UN resolutions are recommendatory. At the adoption of the Millennium Summit the most frequently discussed issue from UN reform was the Security Council. The argument here, as alluded to above, is on the premise that world realities have completely changed since the formation of the UN. The shrinking influence of Western states economically, including the re-emergence of China as economic heavyweight, particularly in the Global South. The argument as aptly highlighted by China, that the reform debate is “multi-faceted” covering not only key issues of enlarging the Council’s membership and strengthening representation, but also increasing efficiency (Asia Times, 2015). Brazil, as part of an alliance of the Group of 4 along with Japan, India and Germany (G4) has strong aspirations to be included in the UNSC and support calls for such reform. President Dilma Rousseff in 66th UNGA underlined the urgency that:

> The debate on Security Council reform is entering its 18th year. We can delay no longer. The world needs a Security Council that reflects contemporary realities: a Council that brings in new permanent and non-permanent members, especially developing countries. Brazil is ready to shoulder its responsibilities as a permanent member of the Council (President Dilma Rousseff 66th UNGA 2011).

The **Trusteeship Council** is the UN organ intended to oversee the administration of the original eleven Trust Territories which are remnants of the formerly agreed pact of the League of Nations. Known as the Trusteeship System, the Council seems somewhat obsolete since all Trust Territories have now gained independence, been decolonised or achieved self-governance (some contested lands include e.g. Namibia, parts of Cameroon, New Guinea and combined lands of Rwanda and Burundi etc.).
The Secretariat, formerly headed by Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon, is appointed by UNGA on the recommendation of the UNSC for a term of 5 (five) years. He is the Chief Administrator of the Organisation. The Secretariat is the international body which conducts the habitual operations and management of the organisation. Due to the necessary visibility of the organisation, his rapport and impartiality at the time of conflict mediation becomes a key factor.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principle judicial organ, now supported by the International Criminal Court (ICC). All UN member states are automatic parties to the ICJ Statute. The ICJ may preside over cases brought to it by parties to the Statute. It gives advice to the UN and its specialised agencies.

The Making of the MDGs
One delay in the convergence of meeting objectives of the multilateral platform can be attributed to what Wendt (1999) highlights as the contestation of “ideas” within the international arena and specifically in the UN, which were closely linked to economic factors. For example, the ushering in of New International Economic Order (NIEO) in the early 1970s highlighted the questions of colonialism and in effect the economic system which had continued to inadequately address key factors of development (O’Rawe, 1999), which developed nations did not want to confront. Essentially these were linked to the previous development decade’s thoughts of the dependendistas and indeed progressive intellectuals from the Global South then pushed through the UN. During the same period, pressure by the ILO brought attention to poverty, minimum wage, redistribution, with growth and the basic needs agenda. The ILO achieved this through a series of arguments brought on by employment problems leading to “cutting edge” contribution to development thinking within the UN and which would put pressure on the World Bank’s aspirations to drive the Development agenda (Jolly, 2005). Jolly et al. (2004) underscore a telling step in 1977 when Robert McNamara, who after a few months of the World Employment Conference in 1976, as president of the World Bank, called upon Willy Brandt to assume the chairmanship of the Independent Commission for International Development Issues. The Commission’s mandate was “to study the grave global issues arising from the economic and social disparities of the world community” and “to suggest ways of providing
adequate solutions to the problems involved in development and in attacking absolute poverty” (Jolly et al., 2004). One of the recommendations of the Brandt Report was that rich countries should increase their development assistance to 0.7% of their Gross National Product with an increase to 1% in 2000 (this agreed amount of 0.7% would also be adopted by the UN in the finance for development issues during the MDGs). The implementation of the Brandt report, however, fell by the way side pending the simultaneous insertion of the NIEO, added pressures external to the UN including the world oil weapon used by Middle Eastern states within the same period would affect OPEC members, oil producers such as Venezuela, additionally from around 1980 an aggressive stance by the Reagan and Thatcher duo that sought to establish one size fits all economic policies on developing states in particular, through structural adjustments. The Bretton-Woods paradigm vis-à-vis the UN paradigm (Therien, 1999) and the concerted multilateral effort to target global poverty reduction/alleviation would coincide with the changing international political climate. The fall of the Berlin Wall highlighted the nuances with more clarity as it became visible that it had been the UN that initiated a more authentic and progressive development agenda. While the World Bank initially produced its World Development Report in 1990, it favoured a more Bretton-Woods oriented agenda that was uncomfortable with human development because it shifted language away from economic and financial development traditionally associated with developed nations and its other International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Wilks and Lefrançois (2002) highlight the contentious issue of the World Bank being the sole statistics producing entity in the face of “arm twisting” capabilities of its member states (Group of 7) and international non-governmental organisations. That same year, 1990, would see the very important UNDP’s Human Development Reports also produced. For Fukuda-Parr and Hulme (2011) it was the commencement of a series of UN summits and conferences beginning with the 1990 World Summit for Children in New York that would set the tone for the core process of the MDGs. It involved more than a million people taking part in candlelight vigils throughout the world. Poverty alleviation became the key guiding mechanism by which to target inequality driven by joint efforts of politicians, scholars, activists and international commissions. Human development oriented UN summitry was born, along with ideas of sustainable development, the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and the International Conference on Food and Nutrition in Rome in December of that year. It was followed by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, the
International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994, the World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 and the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 which was to be the most significant Summit due to the attendance of 117 heads of state.

What these illustrated and articulated was the global consensus reached for poverty alleviation and it was the priority for development (UNDP, 1997). However, UN summitry during this period, as Hulme (2009) highlights, for the last few years seemed a fatiguing process. It was information overload of sorts between states and the process was reduced to a smaller setting, namely in Paris where formalised meetings (predominantly led by men from developed nations) through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The irony with this group that led this development agenda, and perhaps parallels can be drawn with Therien’s previous assertions on “Bretton-Woods paradigm,” would regress into focusing on issues of economic growth and indeed the bias to donor entities and “expertise” synonymous with the top down methodology of problem-solving. In 1996 the DAC produced a paper known as the International Development Goals (IDGs) which would be endorsed by numerous OECD ministerial meetings, including by the G7 in 1996, 1997 and 1998 (Hulme, 2010). By the time Kofi Annan was UN Secretary-General there would be a reintroduction to the UN of the OECD led poverty alleviation programme which was far too slanted towards developed nations. While Annan’s We the Peoples: the Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century had emphasised poverty alleviation as its main theme, much of the inroads made through summits of earlier years had been declared insignificant, including women’s empowerment, gender equality, reproductive health and goals for the health sector in favour of economic growth and technology (Hulme, 2010). Advancing women’s position is largely dependent on the political will at the national level. While these measures were being expedited for adoption the added concern for developing nations was that these organisations and developed nations were unable to honour their commitments on development assistance. This fact was illustrated through a poor compliance level in accordance with the 0,7 percent of GNP policy, as previously explained. The initial position of OECD countries was 0,35 percent in 1977 at the time of that report. This had fallen to 0,22% in 2000 at the commencement of the Millennium Development Goals (Jolly et al., 2004). The Millennium
Development Goals were adopted in 2000 by a resolution of the UN called the United Nations Millennium Declaration unanimously approved by 189 member states and 147 national leaders at the UNGA meeting.

Some critique on the MDGs, however, was that they encompassed a “mixed bags of objectives and approaches” that were seemingly only dedicated to “ends and means” (Khoo, 2005, p. 46). There was no clear reasoning given as to why some goals had been regarded as more important than others and therefore left out all together from the list. For Amin (2010), the UN Summitry expansion is overstated as having had an influence on the MDGs primarily as the “consensus” process of achieving the declaration was “against” UN tradition of robust debate that would lead to a more collaborative process unlike the privileging of donor NGOs and G7 states especially, who would lead this process. While there could be merit in Amin’s assertions, it could be argued, as I have illustrated, that the extraordinary role played by Global South intellectuals in the effort of drafting the development agenda and underlining key areas synonymous with human development cannot be overlooked.

The Millennium Development Goals
There are key Millennium Development Goals to which member states agreed. These are the following:

- **Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger**: The 1st target was to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day. The 2nd target was to halve, between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

- **Achieve Universal Primary Education** - The 3rd target is to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

- **Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women** - The 4th target is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

- **Reduce Child Mortality** - The 5th was to reduce the under-5 mortality rate by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015.
• Improve Maternal Health - The 6th target was to reduce by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio between 1990 and 2015.

• Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases - The 7th target was to have halted the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. The 8th target was to have halted malaria by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

• Ensure Environment Sustainability - The 9th target was to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environment. The 10th Target was to halve by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. The 11th target to have been achieved by 2020 was a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

• A Global Partnership for Development - The 12th target was to develop an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (which included a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction both nationally and internationally).

Sustainable Development Goals: Background
The UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 was the first major gathering to discuss questions of sustainability at the international level. The concept of sustainable development, however, was coined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) report of 1980. It later became prominent after the environmental crisis was made visible by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) also known as the Brundtland Report (Drexhage & Murphy, 2010). The report captures the concept of Sustainable development as “…development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 43).

The hosting of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was a major step, not only for Brazil as host, but for developing nations. One of the key outcomes of the 1992 UN Conference was the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), which was an intergovernmental body of fifty-two members which was participatory in structure
and its outlook giving political leadership in the implementation of Agenda 21. Agenda 21 was the global plan of action for sustainable development. An intellectual debate that also comes to the fore is how developing nations are forced to adhere to western ideas on development at the expense of indigenous solutions. Culture and knowledge systems stemming from culture are very important tools for development. This statement is qualified by Archie Mafeje who asserts that modern western civilisation is the first to attempt at homogenising culture. He highlights that this is not only “impoverishing” culturally; but that it is “inimical to development” as it curtails other possibilities for problem solving (Mafeje, 1988, p. 7-8). This is one of the reasons why President Chávez, in the quest for transforming society, embarks on the Bolivarian framework and changes the education system so that it enables all indigenous people and knowledge systems in Venezuela (Carlson, 2007). Both Venezuela and Brazil took to the constitution in leveraging education as an important tool to gauge transformative justice. This is elaborated on in chapter 5 and chapter 6. Treurnicht (2002) channels this with real environmental factors which work simultaneously with the intellectual debate emphasising that through industrialisation, increased urbanisation leads to loss of habitation and various species, people and their heritage. There was grave exposure to skin cancer as a result of ozone deterioration and the increased usage of high entropic resources such as fossil fuels that encourage global warming. These ultimately accelerate deforestation, desertification and other crises in which humans find themselves. Brazil’s commitment is illustrated through their contribution to alternative energy usage, also highlighted by President da Silva’s statement at 62nd UNGA:

We will not overcome the terrible impacts of climate change until humanity changes its patterns of energy production and consumption. The world urgently needs to develop a new energy matrix in which bio-fuels will play a vital role. Bio-fuels significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. With its increased and more efficient use of ethanol, Brazil has kept 644 million tons of carbon dioxide from being emitted into the atmosphere over the past 30 years (President Ignacio Lula da Silva 62nd UNGA 2007).
This was to be followed by an equally important testament by his successor six years later that,

Multilateralism is stronger after Rio + 20. Together, during those days in June, we held the largest and most participative conference in the history of the United Nations. We were able to take firm steps towards the historic consolidation of a new paradigm: to grow, to include, to protect and to preserve that is, “Sustainable Development”... the outcome document that we approved by consensus in Rio not only preserves the legacy of 1992, but also sets the starting point for a sustainable development agenda for the 21st century, with a focus on the eradication of poverty, on the conscientious use of natural resources (President Dilma Rousseff 67th UNGA 2013).

**G 77 + China and Climate Change**

Of course the principal multilateral organ for Climate Change of the UN to which Rousseff refers (on page 56) is the Group of 77 + China (with 134 member states) which addresses the issues primarily faced by developing nations. It is a body that was founded in 1964 by 77 countries that made the first Joint Declaration at the conclusion of UNCTAD. Since membership has grown, it has become an important platform for the geopolitical or Global South and acts as umbrella for the heterogeneous group. It thus includes larger emerging economies or BASIC states (Brazil, South Africa, India and China), least developed countries (LDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS). The argument made by G77 + China emphasizes that Climate Change cannot be addressed seriously if matters of compensation (Vidal, 2013) and finance for development are not taken seriously by developed nations. As chairman of the G77 in 2002, Hugo Chávez reiterated this importance and insisted

...on the compliance with the allocation of 0,7 percent of GNP, agreed upon more than 30 years ago, which would make available to us (the Global South), approximately 200 billion dollars. These are sufficient resources for human development, on par with the external debt. (Hugo Chávez, 2002).
As an illustration of an on-going debate, Patrick Bond (Counterpunch, 2015) highlights 4 principles that continue to elude the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change which also persisted through the less than satisfactory outcomes of COP 21 in Paris. He underlines them as:

Ensuring emissions-cut commitments would be sufficient to halt runaway climate change; making cuts legally binding with accountability mechanisms, distributing the burden of cuts fairly based on the responsibility for causing the crisis and making financial transfers repair weather-related loss and damage following directly from that historic liability.

For this reason Naomi Klein is concerned with the actual system under which climate change is promoted. Neo-liberalism and capital consumption is so ravenous that it is no longer compatible with human well-being and progress. Therefore society requires reconstruction along the lines which disable endless wealth amassing condoned by neo-liberalism (Klein, 2015). One of the key criticisms by Samir Amin (on the MDGs) with whom Klein agrees is the refusal by developed nations, particularly the US, to sign the Kyoto Protocol which ensures cutting emissions by most 2 percent a year. While there has been strong solidarity shown amongst G77 + China in driving the message and visibly shouldering responsibility as the BASIC states unit, the nuances illustrate that Brazil (and South Africa) has been very assertive and committed to the negotiation of issues of finance and technology transfer, whilst India and China have certain reservations (Institute for Global Dialogue, 2014). This also speaks to the difficulty of such a large organisation, but pertinent to the subject of sustainable development it illustrates the complexities on the “common but differentiated responsibilities” (Drexhage & Murphy, 2010, p. 8) not just between the North South global divide but also between allies and regional partners.

**Sustainable Development Goals**

In elevating sustainable development, the 17 goals illustrate far more comprehensive targets than those highlighted by the MDGs, while still maintaining the commitment to the UN Declaration of Human Rights. It has 169 associated targets which are integrated and indivisible. The new SDGs were adopted in September 2015 and go into effect on 1 January
2016 and will guide decisions, as the MDGs had done previously, over the next 15 years. Just as the MDGs were based on individual countries taking responsibility for reaching the targets, capacities and levels of development of states are considered realities. For this reason regional and sub-regional frameworks are acknowledged as key enablers for sustainable development policies which, it is hoped, would translate to concrete action at national level. One way in which the SDGs have aimed to improve the language from that of the MDGs is on poverty. Goal number 1 (one) highlights “ending poverty in all its forms”. This is paramount because the definition of ‘poverty’ versus ‘extreme poverty’ suggests that there could be various levels of poverty. “Poverty in all its forms and dimensions” is all encompassing and inclusive and therefore develops and elevates the urgency toward sustainable development. In ending hunger, both Brazil and Venezuela have operated on the basis of balancing the question of ‘food security’ which is far more driven by multinational corporations, and “food sovereignty” that values locally produced food, work and indigenous knowledge of the people that work it, which is centred around the reclamation of democratic control of one’s food system and practising sustainable methods. Because this is largely centred on small scale farmers, however, still remaining true to the idea of sustainability in Venezuela especially (Chow, 2012), it raises the question of authenticity in developed nations and how food security as stipulated in the SDGs, if it portends mitigating the imbalances within agriculture in developing nations. Similarly in Brazil with rolling out Bolsa Familia, it has been very effective in utilising small scale farming in line with food sovereignty (Otsuki, 2013). Barrio Adentro, to an extent where in 2010, the President of UNGA, Ali Abdessalam Treki, speaking about the report he received from the Venezuela’s National Institute for Statistics, highlighted: “What Venezuela has achieved with regards to the Millennium Development Goals should serve as a model for all other countries” (Mather, 2010).

Similarly, Brazil’s public health system (SUS) has been very effective in addressing issues of health achieving MDGs well before time. This is primarily to highlight that while the SDGs have sought inclusive measures in addressing poverty and health, the two nations have practised these with aplomb albeit using different methodologies. The inclusive nature of their education systems though also slightly different, have been alluded to above, but this is expanded on further as the primary focus of the study:
• End Poverty in all its forms everywhere by 2030.
• End Hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
• Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
• Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
• Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
• Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
• Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
• Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
• Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.
• Reduce inequality within and among countries.
• Make cities and human settlements inclusive safe, resilient and sustainable.
• Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
• Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.
• Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
• Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
• Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
• Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

**Conclusion**
This chapter considered the route taken to reach the MDGs to the newly adopted SDGs. It describes the role of the United Nations as a platform to articulate these issues and how
countries have strategically raised their profiles and sought to maintain their interests within key multilateral fora. The idea of the UN as global governance and influence of developed nations through such dominant multilateral organisations like the OECD also demonstrate the power relations between the North and South. The chapter also sought to highlight, specifically the nuances between the Bretton Woods paradigm which elevates the ideas and interests of developing nations and the UN paradigm as a mechanism for developing nations in progressing the human development element that is associated with both the MDGs and SDGs. Brazil and Venezuela have utilised multilateral fora to outline their achievements and agitate for alternative views within the context of human development and sustainable development.
CHAPTER FOUR

Political Party Analysis and Political Rhetoric

...The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the ‘emergency situation’ in which we live is the rule. We must arrive at a concept of history which responds to this

Walter Benjamin (VIII) Theses on History

Introduction

This chapter describes political party dynamics in Brazil and Venezuela. This is done through analysing the evolution of the political parties in the government, namely the PSUV in Venezuela and Brazil’s Workers’ Party and how they managed to articulate their positions to the people from their inception. The research seeks to highlight the rationale behind the changing political dynamics of the Workers’ Party and how this impacted on them on both a national and international political level. The political rhetoric is thus a key feature and the relationship between the leaders, President da Silva and President Rousseff in Brazil was considered and also with Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez and his successor Nicolás Maduro. Due to the history of Latin America, populism is also highlighted as a key feature through which the principle leadership styles are understood and appreciated in their context and largely for the message they want to drive. The researcher uses predominantly official speeches and interviews that highlight the leaders’ particular stance.

Brazil and the Workers’ Party

For thirty-five years after its formation in 1980, the Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores - PT) in Brazil has been a symbol of great inspiration and disappointment alike to Left politics across the globe but in particular to Latin America. They have
contributed much to a region marred by military dictatorships and coups, to a consolidated democratisation process (Linz & Stepan, 1996) that not only required constant reinvention of their image but also suggested abandoning ideological underpinnings that may have constrained them from reaching office a little over twenty years after they were birthed, the implications of which we discuss here. The Worker’s Party of the 1980s brought through the strong militancy of social movements inspired by one effective tactic that became synonymous with general dissatisfaction with the military regime. It was to have massive cycles of strikes and rallies which were in essence led by the workers (Haag, 2012). This was sparked by the 1978 metalworkers’ union downing of tools in the industrial belt of the São Paulo ABCD region, initially for a salary increase. There were 118 labour related strikes in 1978, and a staggering 2,193 sustained strikes over ten years which had far more impact than any opposition (Codato, 2006, p. 20-22) could have. Previously to the formation of the Workers’ Party, Brazil only had two legal parties; Aliança Renovadora Nacional (ARENA) that supported the military government and the Brazilian Democratic Movement which was in opposition.

The strike action spread into other sectors, including the fields of health and education. The seeds of forming a Workers’ Party had already been sowed. Its creation was motioned that same year of 1978 and had begun outlining the way forward in 1979. This is illustrated by Workers’ Party charter leading up to the party manifesto: Democracy means organised and conscious participation by workers in politics and its founding manifesto. The Workers’ Party is born out of workers’ desire for political independence (Branford et al. 2003).

The official agreement on the party manifesto in 1980 ensured that it had formally arrived, but its striking capacity would be curtailed by the economic recession of 1980. It would only start in 1983 in the form of a more “class conscious, radicalised and new trade unionism” (Santana & Braga, 2009). Such political expression was to be instrumental in propelling an invigorated activism in Brazil. In classic Marxist terms and perhaps relatable to what Friedrich Engels in the Communist Manifesto would underline; Workers had “mobilised as one army, under one flag, for one immediate aim” (Engels, 1890). In Brazil, this was the hope it carried, that there would follow a possibility for social revolution in the twentieth century different to what Ellner (2013a) describes as those of the Twenty First Century Latin American Radical Left led by the populist inclinations of Chávez 20 years later but also
significantly different from Cuba’s revolution that would in essence become a communist state 20 years earlier. Brazil’s Left political movement is born from working class resistance for a better life and the creation of a democratic state. For Bensaid (2002), the organisation of the Workers’ Party marked an enlightening and historical split with the political traditions of country essentially dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, the army and populism.

The ‘immediate aim’ of the newly formed Brazilian Workers Party and allies had already set in motion what they believed would be the requirement of a democratic state through praxis, articulated through participatory action which was driven by intellectuals of influence on the left through organic social movements. We can also link this to the ideas of Paolo Freire who led education and literacy drives and pioneered the way forward that would intensify political action and conscientisation of the masses, further influencing creative ways for governance. Similarly, the Brazilian Sanitary Reform Movement (Sanitaristas) would lead the way in health, inducing critical consciousness and self-awareness that is in line with a preventative mechanism that built a healthy nation; the Unified Black Movement which would highlight the plight of millions in Afro-Brazil including channelling the race debate to national level (I expand on all three; health, education and social movements later in Chapter 6). The Landless People’s Movement (MST), which was bitterly engrossed in the fight for land redistribution; the liberation theologians would be symbolic of the progressive church union and indeed the Communist Party and Unified Workers Confederation (CUT) - mainly a coalition of bank-workers and metalworkers – (also known as “authentic trade unionists”). They would be the backbone for the agitation for an alternative state. This is important because after the consolidation and writing of a new Constitution in 1988 which was carried out largely by intellectuals of the Workers’ Party, it was faced with a strategic dilemma. On the one hand as Branford et al. (2003) alert us, the party could not sustain its promise to internal diversity and ideological pluralism through the different social movements. The evolution of this is visible through the tactics and strategies applied in the electioneering campaigns principally led by Luiz Inacia da Silva in four instances, namely; 1989, 1994, 1998 and finally leading up to victory in 2002.

In 1989, when drastic changes in the world were to occur with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the neo-liberal wave reverberated across all international spaces. Brazil was not spared. The Workers’ Party’s principle slogan was sem medo de ser feliz “without fear of
being happy” which was in essence, as Peterson (2002) found to be, an unalterable feeling of hope that would usher in a qualitatively better future. Campello (2013) based this on “the people” against the “dominant class” and their militancy to seize what was theirs. He, da Silva, contrasted himself and Collor de Mello in this manner and showed his affiliation to workers of Brazil - especially bank-workers, (da Silva was a metalworker). His rhetoric underscores the binaries prevalent to the realities of the working class and elections were a moment of confrontation between those standing against the alternatives for a socialist society and a theme that was to be a special programme when he became president later; hunger.

It is necessary that the banking employee not believe the banker will pursue banking reform; it is necessary that the worker not believe his employer will write the law that favours him...

And also,

...the only possibility of feeding the Brazilian worker is to end the privileges of those who eat in excess. We will only have a fair society when there aren’t those who eat five times a day, at the expense of others that spend five days without eating... (Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Nov. 1989 as cited in Campello, 2015, p. 90)

Similarly the corporatisation of education had been targeted as a major source of frustration and criticism (Guedes-Neto, 2015). Underlining the fact that major opportunities had been granted to private schools with the emphasis on higher education. Private schools, due to their exclusionary nature illustrate an antagonistic behaviour to the poor. It is said that “80 percent of the traditional elite schools were managed by religious groups” (Workers Party, 1989 cited in Guedes-Neto, 2015, p. 144). A major source of inspiration of this time was electoral victory at municipal level by the Workers’ Party. It set forth one of the leading participatory democracy processes in the world, in the region of Minas Gerais (Aragonés & Sánchez-Pagés, 2009). Porto Alegre would lead the way for other cities especially in the Rio Grande do Sul region. When Olivio Dutro, Workers’ Party leader, was the 1st elected mayor in 1989, he chimed that “We are not selling the illusion of the direct democracy in the Greek Plaza, which, let us bear in mind, was not the democracy of all but the democracy of the best” (Aragonés & Sánchez-Pagés, 2009).
This is a distinguishing trait of the deepening of democracy where in participating in a deliberative process as Porto Alegre’s Participatory Budgeting, the citizen’s critical awareness is awakened in the exact manner Freire’s work entailed. The public space, ideally the state’s raison d’être, and Mayor Dutro’s message in reference to the Greek model, should engender “inclusivity” (Habermas, 1994). In this case it is the general people taking ownership of how their public funds are utilised. This victory was pioneered primarily by the efforts of MST and other progressive organisations and as proof of their closeness, da Silva always highlighted the significance of their cause, showing solidarity against the Latifundios. Documented in this speech in 1989

For us in the Workers Party, the agrarian reform is as necessary as the air we breathe, because it is not only a matter of fixing people in the country side but solving the problem of unemployment, life quality of urban population of one of our major problems which is infant mortality...

(cited in Campello, 2013)

Devastated by the loss, da Silva quickly got to work. He established a Shadow Cabinet modelled on the British Labour Party and a citizenship institute for alternative programmes. The institute was responsible for developing policy on housing and a Zero Hunger strategy was inspired by this initial process (Branford et al. 2003).

In comparison to the 1994 strategy, the 1998 strategy illustrated da Silva’s increased disenchantment with the radical stance. A space of intrigue was the increased deliberations within the trade unions involving the disputed methodology of Sectorial Chambers in negotiation (Santana & Braga, 2009, p. 105). Sectorial Chambers were to administer the process for the modernisation of the automotive industry and later motion it to other sectors. It sought to organise a tripartite organisation among private companies, the state and the worker union. It would signal the “dilution” of the Workers’ Party not only as bureaucratisation increased shifting right-wards, the new financial investments to top brass “the authentics” were also exposed (Campello, 2013). Ribeiro (2014) illustrates the “professionalisation” of the labour space, which, while contributing favourably to the organic sociological space or non-academic institutions (Santana & Braga, 2009, p. 106) –
and perhaps severing at the knees the Gramscian concept of organic intellectuals\textsuperscript{11} – the convergence with academic sociologists and economists would ultimately push out activists and voluntarism of the 1980s to satisfy “professionals” who would be paid for their services. The lack in theoretical paradigm from its inception could also possibly be a strong case for failing to create an identity for the Workers’ Party because as a mass party, it lost the unified objectives promoted against the military regime at its inception. Against Fernando Henrique Cardoso, da Silva still maintained the antagonism against the rich and locating himself with the poor, canvassing in 1994:

Here’s an example of what it is to govern the rich, the economy ministry spent 22 billion dollars in the first quarter from his total 4.8 Billion paid public service wages. 3 billion went to states and municipalities, another 3 billion to general expenditure. Half of these expenses, 11 billion dollars, were used to pay banks and international financial speculators. The Finance minister was Fernando Henrique, (Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva 24 August 1994).

Wendy Hunter also highlights “oppositional fatigue” as the primary determinant of an overtly right turn by da Silva and his party which also coincided with what many could classify as socialism’s slow and painful loss (Bruera, 2013). Evidenced by triumphalism of market liberalism, pragmatism toward big business and in essence hamstrung by Cardoso’s Real Plan (adopted in 1994) da Silva was forced to abandon his initial party make-up, grass-roots movement and an overtly developmental agenda. As Madarasz (2002) explains

\textsuperscript{11}The Brazilian movement of the 1970s had symbolised what Gramsci sought to highlight as organic intellectuals. Gramsci believed that “traditional” intellectuals or men of letters, philosophers and artists who often emanate from higher strata, only contributed to a vulgarised version of intellectualism and therefore offered little relevance to the modern socio-political and economic conditions. He asserted that “every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates together with itself, organically one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. The capitalist entrepreneur creates alongside himself the industrial technician, the specialist political economy, the organisers of new culture, of a new legal system, etc... (the organic intellectual) must have a certain technical capacity, not only in the limited sphere of his activity and initiative but in spheres as well, at least in those which are closest to economic production. He must be an organiser of masses of men; he must be an organiser of the “confidence” of investors in his business, of the customers of his product, etc.” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 135). In the context of Brazil’s organic intellectuals, the professionalization of the workers’ political space seemingly lost the penchant for radical change due to the dilution that occurred at decision making level.
The Real (name of Brazil’s national currency) Plan, was pegged to the American dollar, managed to squash the spiralling inflation that was turning the economy over throughout the early nineties, and attracted considerable foreign debt in consequence. When the crashing of the 1997 Asian markets loomed, the effects were so severe that the Real required that it be unpegged. It was devalued to half its worth.

Also fearing a repeat of Argentina’s case where the government defaulted on its debt (Weisbrot et al., 2011), da Silva’s “letter to the people of Brazil” in 2002 was testament that he would succumb to economic burdens, including an IMF US$10 billion. This would have a major impact on his image, and the party’s, but more essentially it illustrated limitations of government’s envisaged social policy that pursued the alleviation of poverty and fight real issues of hunger. Hillary Wainwright (2003, p. 9) ascertained that one of the reasons why social democratic governments were endangered and susceptible to the onslaught of the neoliberal right is due to their limitations through an over-reliance on the functionality of the state. The state as principle agent of social change is overstated and as a result they become overwhelmed by the ubiquity and creative ability of multinational corporate capital which eventually consumes them (Wainwright, 2003). The disappointment was not just a Workers’ Party that was “defeated” but that the required results for effective social policy came too slow as opposed to the promise shown when it started.

The disappointment for Aurelio Garcia (2012), which is perhaps shared by many, is that initial revolutionary trajectory became absorbed in a markedly similar fashion to the social democratic tradition also found in Germany’s Socialist Party and Britain’s Labour Party, becoming a party of the exact order it once fought so strongly. These sentiments were shared by Tariq Ali who lucidly underlined: “...for me, the relationship between Lula and Cardoso is the relation between Thatcher and Blair. Blair followed Thatcher, Lula is following Cardoso” (Venezuelanalysis, 2004).

Ironically, at the World Social Forum (WSF) held in Porto Alegre where da Silva’s Brazilian president received a luke-warm reception; it was Chávez who would defend him.

I say this from the bottom of my heart. In Venezuela at the beginning of my presidency many of my supporters criticised me and asked me to be more
radical, but I considered that it was not the right moment, because each process has several phases and different rhythms that not only have to do with internal situations in each country but with the international situation at the time... I want to say that I like Lula, I appreciate him, and he is a good man, of a great heart. He is a brother, a comrade and I send him a hug, my love and affection (Hugo Chávez Speech at WSF 2005).

As president, da Silva’s rhetoric and primary goal was poverty alleviation through the combating of hunger by means of the Fome Zero programme and a far more determined roll out of Bolsa Família, the extent of which is shared in Chapter 6. In her inaugural speech, Dilma Rousseff (2011) highlighted: “We have seen significant social mobility during President Lula’s two terms. But poverty still exists to shame a country and prevent us from affirming ourselves fully as a developed people”. And with added emphasis of addressing the criticism against the government’s social democracy and market oriented approach, the former Minister of Energy continued:

Overcoming extreme poverty demands that a long period of growth is given priority. It is growth that generates the jobs needed for current and future generations. It is growth, together with strong social programmes, that will enable us to vanquish inequality in income and in regional development.

It also would not be enough to dismiss their ‘pragmatism’ toward business and be content that they have alienated the poor and turn a blind eye to the successes of the programmes in health and in education and the consistency of their approach.. The defence of the Workers’ Party government can only come through its results on social policy, and in this regard they have excelled. President da Silva, in targeting health, said in an interview with the Financial Times (2006) that

The SUS, (the Unified Health System) must target providing a real solution that reaches the actual people who might use it. For this, all the available tools for diagnosis and treatment should be used, making medicine accessible to everyone, as well as strengthening policies for preventive action and for health promotion.
On education, he also alluded to a change of language in dealing with the impoverished which is often malignantly reported by its detractors of associating human development from traditionally “leftist” governments as wasteful, creating a dependency etc. in the same interview.

You notice I use the word investment in social policies because usually, people in Brazil say “spending”. I talk about investment because it is investment in a part of society that is excluded. We increased spending on social programmes from R$5.7 bn (2002) to R$22 bn in 2006. Investing in education, I intend to end my mandate with four new federal universities, 42 technical colleges. There hadn’t been one (new one) since 1998... If we do not invest in education and in social policies, Brazil will not make the leap in quality from being a developing country to being a developed one (Financial Times, 2006).

The consistency of the Workers’ Party government and in particular the emphasis of the sectors of health and education as the primary target has never been lost even in the face of party’s toughest political opponents; not to any political party but to the citizens of Brazil, especially the youth. The 2013 protests were induced by a myriad of issues, including corruption, inequality and the hypocrisy associated with hosting two major events that would only benefit the elite. Brazil is the only country to host the world’s two major events in the same tenure, (The Soccer World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016) a subtle expression to the overlooked fact that they are the 7th biggest economy. President Rousseff stressed government’s plan in her address to the national assembly on seeking to improve the public services, a threefold level: firstly, the preparation of a National Urban Mobility Plan which was poised to emphasise the public transportation system. While this may be regarded as an important aspect in pursuing world class facilities and linked with infrastructure development and growth, the high prices signalled proof of Brazil’s dancing with the devil (Zirin, 2014). This highlighted the dubious partnership formed with FIFA and the government. The swiftness in constructing stadia and public spending, it is lamented, is unjustifiable with such raging structural and historical inequalities that persist, and clientelism associated with it. The second issue mentioned by President Rousseff was the
allocation of 100 percent of national oil proceeds for education. The major boost in investment included bolstering teacher training and expanding higher education. Government would be utilising funding from the pre-salt oil exploration programme (The Guardian, 2015). Thirdly, immediately bringing thousands of doctors from overseas to expand the services under the SUS. The supplementation of the SUS by Cuban doctors is of particular interest here, because Brazil would be utilising the same mechanism that would turn Venezuela’s health system through Barrio Adentro into one of the successes of the last decade in preventative health, an objective alluded to by President da Silva in 2006.

Venezuela and the PSUV
There are pertinent points made by Chávez in the quote above while defending his fellow South American leader. Venezuela, like Brazil in their quest for poverty alleviation, required a certain level of control of state machinery. With similar cases of usurping power from overtly conservative governments, the disentangling of the political and economic knots, and having the buy-in of elites is a process that must be undertaken with finesse. The Bolivarian framework however, had a far more universal tone than mere domestic imperatives that needed to be satiated. For this reason, it was far more intolerable to the western world because it sought to undo and expose the shallowness of capitalism against its real affects through both ideology and practise. Linking the domestic problems to the international financial arena, the petroleum complex and the injustices of historical imperialism and colonialism was always the primary goal. Hugo Chávez, was driven by this idea, before attaining the highest seat of his country. To him, Venezuela was but a microcosm of the imbalances and sought all mechanisms and arenas to address the issues of his country. For this reason acquiring a 21st century socialism was non-negotiable and the only matter that would see him regarded as the most important leader of the developing and post-colonial world in the last 40 years. One could say that it was for the same reason that da Silva came to be adored by the West because he was predictable in policy-making and with such influence as an emerging economy, populism, was done away with. Chávez retained it and it was his biggest asset.
On Populism
As a big personality, it is inescapable that the scrutiny thrust upon him would have great significance, because of the enormity of the influence he had on whatever he was associated with. Political rhetoric is essential to classify the type of leaders people could be classified as. Populism is defined within the development hypothesis and is understood not so much as a tightly structured perspective but more as a group of ideas which emphasises the people as agents of their own destiny, or human development, which generally cannot be met by government. It is mostly associated with non-governmental, grass-roots and voluntary organisations (Korten, 1990). However, in the case of Latin America, and specifically the kind of popular movements that stem from the disillusionment of their respective governments, politicians in their quest to ameliorate the social malaise wrought by capitalism, seek popularity by appealing to people’s sense of nationhood or patriotism and clear identity politics. They remain in this style of articulation and these include Argentina’s charismatic Perón, and in contemporary leaders like Chávez, Morales and Correa. Hawkins (cited in Samuels & Zucco, 2014, p. 133) defines populism as “Manichaen discourse that identifies good with a unified will of the people and Evil with a conspirational minority.” Unlike da Silva who divorced any inkling of populism, both in association with radical popular social movements and in his discourse. Chávez’s public speeches and addresses made extensive use of metaphors in order to construct his self-image (Alousque, 2015). He also sharpened his skills on a Sunday show he hosted Alo, Presidente! mixing topics and language related to theology (moralistic views) global politics, patriotism and songs which would last up to four hours. Da Silva, on the other hand, downplayed any great reverence or adulation of his role or of himself in the building of the Workers’ Party (Samuels & Zucco, 2014).

12 Liberation theology is one such a movement that is very specific to Latin America which further encompasses civil society organisations. Michael Löwy (cited in Moraña et al. 2008) captures the tenets that clearly illustrates a rupture from the traditional practices of Protestant and Catholic churches with liberation theology: There’s an implacable moral and social imperative against capitalism as an unjust, iniquitous system, even as a form of structural sin; the use of Marxism as a way of understanding the causes of poverty, the contradictions of capitalism, and the forms of class struggle; the preferential option in favour of the poor and solidarity with their struggle for social self-emancipation; the development of CEBs among the poor as a new form of the church and as an alternative to the individualist way of life imposed by the capitalist system and; the struggle against idolatry as the principal enemy of religion, that is, against the new idols of death worshipped by the new pharaohs, Caesar, and Herods, Mammoth, wealth, power, national security the state, military force and Western Christian civilisation. Of course, along with labour movements, during military authoritarianism in Brazil liberation theology would contribute much to the conscientisation of the poor and also offer solace.
Of course populism can be linked to the dichotomy of the “two lefts” to which Castañeda referred (a point raised in Chapter 1) and the social democracies of Latin America. From this, further routes to social policy making pursued by the government of the day can be hypothesised. In citing the work of Kenneth Roberts, the underlying factor in labelling the Bolivarian Revolution as a “populist” movement is to “delegitimise socio-economic alternatives that depart from neoliberal orthodoxy” (French, 2009, p. 6). Thus the aspersions cast against Chávez’s government (and to a large extent ad hominem) were primarily due to his staunch opposition to the status quo. The close link with Castro’s Cuba would confirm to liberals that Chávez was senseless and unrestrained even if the rationale behind such a move was to transform society where the poor would be moved from the margins to the centre of public debate and policy making.

**On culture and Representation**

Hall addressed the question of culture. He asserts that language, meaning and representation are all factors that drive what we understand to be culture (Hall, 1997). He further highlights that:

> Culture is concerned with the production and the exchange of meanings – the ‘giving and taking of meaning’ – between the members of a society or group. To say that two people belong to the same culture is to say that they interpret the world in roughly the same ways and can express themselves, their thoughts and feelings about the world, in ways which will be understood by each other (Hall, 1997, p. 2).

The significance of this is how Chávez always sought to articulate his meaning through binaries. Signifying, us versus them; the elite who were light skinned and wealthy versus the black, indigenous, *pardo* and so forth who were poor; the *barrios* versus the suburbs, colonialism and liberation, and the global North and the global South. The language used is candid, confrontational and elevates justice in a manner that seeks to transform society with the urgency that it deserves. For instance, Chávez identified himself as *pardo* which is a mixture of African, Indian and European heritage. He is the first multiracial president and
was called ‘negro’ by his detractors because of his physical features. In an interview with Amy Goodman in 2005 he asserted that:

Racism is very characteristic of imperialism and capitalism. Hate against me has a lot to do with racism. Because of my big mouth and curly hair. And I’m so proud to have this mouth and this hair, because it is African (Democracy Now! Interview, 2005).

Of course the inverse would also mean that the representation of Chávez by his detractors, with whom they share no “culture”, his associations and his ideas are depicted in a disparaging light as it would become evident through the Venezuelan media that is traditionally in the hands of the elite (Weisbrot & Ruttenberg, 2010).

The same can be said of the international media. Chávez was intolerable because he disrupted the ‘naturalised’ manner in which the international economy operated. As a country with oil reserves that rival the best producers, the association with so-called rogue states including Iran, Syria and Belarus (Robertson, 2013b) and increased relations with very large emerging economies such China and Russia (Tockman, 2009) was an indication of deliberate provocation of a world order.

**On leadership**

A fundamental issue regarding the reality of the two parties and perhaps as a distinction to their strategies could illustrate, of the Workers’ Party and PSUV, is questioning their endurance, measured without their leaders; without Chávez and Lula respectively. For example, Samuels and Zucco (2014) highlight that many viewed Lula’s second term victory in 2006 created *Lulismo* loyalty against *petismo* (a reference to PT = Workers’ party) therefore signalling the man’s popularity, personal history, rhetoric style and policies, etc. Yet, as illustrated, this was not true. The Workers’ Party still remained intact under Dilma Rousseff and after winning a second term in 2014. The disenchantment lies primarily with the government’s conduct in corruption scandals as a whole; not necessarily on social policies. On the other hand, the death of Chávez due to colon cancer in 2013 brought stagnation to the Bolivarian framework and enabled the opposition to capitalise quite decisively in removing him (Maduro). His radicalism was further questioned (Ellner, 2013b)
and highlighted how he was at pains to demonstrate his loyalty by maintaining the trajectory of the revolutionary movement Chávez had in mind. For Chris Gilbert (Counterpunch, 2016), Maduro demonstrates unwillingness or incapacity to struggle, because his rhetoric is fundamentally on the back-foot and is defeatist in his assertions. He brings about the point that when using phrases such as “economic war” against him (referring to the acute shortage of basic commodities Venezuela was facing), Gilbert found him wanting on offering strategies and thereby creating gross uncertainty of his future and government. While Hugo Chávez was disparagingly referred to as a backward 21st century caudillo, they were also highlighting their disapproval of the time in which Chávez located his inspiration, with Bolivar. Gilbert (Counterpunch, 2016) reminds us that rural caudillos lived as equals among their followers and seldom went above them. And that a caudillo always listened and considered counsel before taking final decisions. The message is that these principles, while there may be opposite ends in some of them practising autocratic style leadership, the participatory nature in which Chávez sought to bring about constructive engagement with the poor and garner solutions that would be identifiable with Venezuelan popular movements. The shoes Maduro was to fill were simply too big.

**MVR to PSUV**

Similarly the Movimiento Quinta República (MVR) culminated from the understanding that the only way to change society was through assuming power, legitimately, through the electoral process, which they subsequently won by a landslide victory months after it was established in 1997. Their name was extracted symbolically from the idea that the first republic came with Venezuela’s liberators Simón Bolíva and Simón Rodríguez who would lead the subsequent overthrow of Spain as Imperial power. This symbolism is based on the inspiration that they would liberate Venezuela from the vice grip of American imperialism and with that create a socialist state that would represent the ideals of social justice. In his annual speech to the nation and to the National Assembly in 2006 Chávez said the state of Venezuela was no longer ruled over by “neither the transnationals; the International Monetary Fund, North American imperialism, nor the domestic elites” albeit that “we still have infiltrated enemies, infiltrated corruption, and many vices to defeat (Chávez, 2006).
The MVR was made up primarily of lieutenants who come from the barrios and understood what their role was. The name would later be changed to the Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (PSUV). This saw 60 percent who voted for the socialist project because they understood their government’s willingness to give them social justice. On the other hand, he derided the idea of the 4th republic and their out-of-contextualised and out of reach democracy:

What democracy are you talking about? They used to say that it was the most mature democracy, and it was collected in this way to prepare the Country Plan, the last of the Fourth Republic. But nothing farther from reality, democracy turned out to be a tyranny of the elites (Chávez, 2009).

Echoing the ideas of the Porto Alegre municipality and the entrenched participatory model that Venezuela had managed to apply at state level, including the writing and approval of their highest document; the Bolivarian Constitution, collectively. As an orator and charismatic leader, Chávez affected meaning in very elaborate ways, for Alousque, the interplay in emphasising, for instance, religious metaphors and reflecting back on himself and Christ were prevalent and further illustrated “the devotion and his saving mission” (Alousque, 2015). He utilises Misiónes or Missions as government social programs, not just as means to reach MDG targets but as something with a greater spiritual value by which the stage of the revolution would be met. Relating to the drop in poverty he asserted that “By 2013 we should be much closer to the goal of the “Christ” mission of zero poverty” (Chávez, 2006).

Referring to the Caracazo which was the turning point in Venezuelan political life and would encourage him to play a greater role, he highlights that

There is February 4th like a sacred cry from our collective memory that told Venezuela to get up and move forward, and thanks to the collective Lazarus that is the land of Bolivar, all of us are artifices of the resurrected nation (Chávez, cited in Alousque, 2015).
Venezuela’s Multi-fold Response

The limitation that Wainwright (2003) alludes to, of the state not being able to respond to the neo-liberalism barrage alone as the principle agent, can be argued against perhaps if we look at the Bolivarian framework which intensified at national, regional and international level through its usage of multilateral and the foreign policy dimension of Venezuela as a state. For example, in appealing to his OPEC partner states he emphasised the exploitation that producing countries were being subjected to:

Justice and only justice; we cannot allow, brothers of OPEC, that once again, as has happened in other times of our history, we be indicated as guilty as those who are guilty for the imbalance of the world. The guilty are elsewhere. We are victims of the imbalances of the world economy. We are not at fault. Those at fault are to be found elsewhere (OPEC Official Opening Speech by Hugo Chávez, 2000).

Similarly, when articulating the goal behind the role of the ALBA-TCP, and CELAC, he highlighted that it was a tool necessary for alternative mechanism against what they believed were stifling conditions under the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), which had telling effects on how they responded to social policies of poverty alleviation domestically (Muhr, 2010). “We can’t wait for a sustained economic growth of 10 years in order to start reducing poverty through the trickledown effect, as the neoliberal economic theories propose” (World Social Forum – Hugo Chávez, 2005).

ALBA has also had enormous success in the field of education and health where it utilises the strengths of all countries involved in creating the desired outcomes. And also highlighting the historical role of the US in the region, and perhaps why their relations (the US and Ven.) had deteriorated especially under President Bush, he highlighted that “those relations will stay unhealthy as long as the US continues its policies of aggression. The most negative force in the world today is the government of the United States” (World Social Forum – Hugo Chávez, 2005).
Conclusion
This chapter accentuated the differences between the ruling political parties of Brazil and Venezuela. It sought to highlight the leadership styles particularly within their rhetoric and how they came to be perceived. With populism being a traditional dynamic in Latin America, the study also considers the bearing this had on the evolution of the parties and what they stood for, their challenges and what the future looks like based on these issues. Importantly, as it appeals to the poor, the policy choices made by the leaders is also linked to their history. Lula da Silva drifted away from the populist rhetoric which would see him closer to the presidency while Chávez, in his unrelenting style was unflinching and this was demonstrated through transformative justice and social policy that immediately responded to social ills. Perhaps this spoke more to the pressures Lula faced in his country as he was the fulcrum upon which Brazil depended. The act of balancing becoming a world leader (as referred to in the previous chapter) and the necessity for pragmatism associated with intricate fiscal constraints inherited from the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration. The analysis also draws on how the different parties, the Workers Party and the PSUV have utilised different platforms to enhance their image if at all.
CHAPTER FIVE

Advancing social justice through education and health: Venezuela

Introduction
Venezuela’s development and prominence in world politics has been a blend of an enormous figure that is associated with its former President Hugo Chávez and the manner to which he has subsequently changed the Latin American political landscape and perhaps, more pertinent to this study, the impact which he had in the quest for poverty alleviation, especially in the sectors of health and education. Venezuela’s quest for 21st century socialism was also embodied in their constitution which Hugo Chávez worked hard to transform for the advancement of the Bolivarian Revolution. As an internationalist, and a self-professed social justice advocate that looked to influence other nations in supporting alternative methods to combating, what he termed, a voracious menace and great contributor to inequality, poverty and unemployment, the neoliberal doctrine under which Latin America had for so long been oppressed could not be tolerated. When he was elected in December 1998, a precedent had been set and a new political thought and debates to the true meaning of what substantive democracy is began. A populist, a 21st century caudillo, and dictator are some of the terms he was referred to, but he was also admired, revered and an inspiration to many smaller nations who identified with his politics. In this chapter, we examine the extent to which he achieved the MDGs and what can be learnt moving on to the SDGs.
Health in Venezuela

Venezuela’s stance on social reform and health issues must be understood holistically in the context of societal inequality in the region as a whole that has turned to the left politically in the last fifteen years (Blanco & Grier, 2011). The access to health care has been specifically targeted as one of the focus areas in which poverty alleviation targets could be met. Homedes and Ugalde (2005) illustrate the failure of health reforms driven by neoliberal institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank in the time frame of the 1980s and 1990s in Latin America. The *raison d’être* of neoliberalism was minimising the state’s presence in the financing and implementation of social policies, including increasing the use of private insurance for hospitalisation, surgery, and maternity care among public sector workers. Diagnostic and treatment protocols would be dictated by large pharmaceutical firms and the medical equipment industry (Pan-American Health Organisation PAHO, 2006). *El gran viraje* or the great turning point in Venezuela was specifically sparked by the application of the IMF and World Bank policies in the late 1980s that were fuelled by resistance to price increases in public transportation and petrol. His “*Movimiento Quinta Republica*” (MVR) or Fifth Movement Republic would be the principle driver of social programs and illustrated commitment to major social transformation (Hellinger, 2012; Alvarado Martinez et al., 2008).

There is research that identifies a link between poverty, income inequality, social class and health. For example, the work of Marmot *et al.* (1991) illustrate the persistence of stark levels of deprivation engendering a social gradient which impacts on the inequality of wealth on health are evident on adults, particularly its effect on women. Furthermore, this is supported by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health where adult diseases such as coronary heart disease (CHD) develops throughout the course of life and is likely to impact on people of much lower socio-economic or social class. Kristenson *et al.* (2004) concur with the impact stating that “this gradient is shown for all causes of mortality, but for a wide range of diseases, especially CHD, diabetes, gastrointestinal diseases, respiratory diseases, arthritis, adverse birth outcomes as well as accidents and violent deaths” (cited in Rose & Hatzenbuehler, 2009, p. 461) The Human Development Report (HDR) of 2000 not only states poverty eradication as a development goal, but highlights its urgency as a human rights challenge of the 21st Century. Human rights markers refer to the imperative of
universal availability of health care, raising the standard of living, adequate nutrition, education, decent work and social protection against social and economic calamities (UNDP, 2000). In a reversal of previous Venezuelan history, the 1999 Articles 83 and 84 of the Venezuelan Constitution affirmed health as a fundamental human right guaranteed by the state. The earliest country to have established health as a legal right in its constitution is Cuba right after their 1959 revolution, a country that Chávez sought to emulate.

In 1999, 67.7% of the Venezuelan population was living in poverty. The clear decline in living circumstances for the poor produced conditions characterised by ‘epidemiological accumulation’ (Rose & Hatzenbuehler, 2009). Public health researchers identify that the susceptibility of physiological and psychological damage that occurs in such a population are due to problems related to basic needs; which is to say, infectious and deficiency diseases that worsen while increases are also seen in morbidity and mortality related to degenerative and chronic diseases (Alvarado et al., 2008). Based on the above-mentioned factors the tackling of health in Venezuela as a universal right not only stems from the blatant disparities displayed in the relationship between a rich minority and the majority of poor as illustrated in figure 1; it points to the aspect of transformative social policy which should be driven by the state. For UNRISD (2010) transformative social policy aims to:

- Enhance the productive capacities of individuals, groups and communities;
- Reinforce the progressive redistributive effects of economic policies;
- Reduce the burden of growth and reproduction of society, including care-related work, and
- Protect people from income loss and costs associated with unemployment, pregnancy, ill health or disability, and old age.

Bolstered by the decision from PAHO in 1996 on a commitment to the goal of Health for All in 2000 (Sotelo & Moncayo, 1997 cited in Alvarado et al., 2008) Venezuela, under Chávez, went into a comprehensive approach in tackling health inequality. The fundamental issue is apparent under Article 83 of the Bolivarian Constitution (1999) which states that:

...Public health assets and services are the property of the state and shall not be privatised. The organised community has the right and duty to participate in the making of decisions concerning policy planning, implementation and control at public health institutions.
Multi-sectorial Action and Health Care
The World Health Organisation (WHO) model of multi-sectorial intervention in health can be found under the 1977 and 1978 “Alma Ata Declaration” documents which promulgated an initiative of “Health for all by Year 2000” (WHO, 2013). In the quest to alleviate poverty and targeting primary health care, Venezuela has taken on this multi-sectorial intervention with *Barrio Adentro* as their signature program. For instance, the conception of health, as read in their constitution of 1999: “Health is the state of collective and individual wellbeing and quality of life; it is the result of material, psychological, cultural, biological, environmental and social determinants and of the organisation and functioning of the Health Sector” (cited in Alvarado et al., 2008, p. 100)

This commitment to health as a basic right set the tone of deepening democracy through participatory means as a greater role was to be played by municipalities and communities in their own well-being. Ellner (2010) highlights the importance of Chávez’s mobilisation capacity, and reiterates how this contributed to “a sense of empowerment among those who for decades had been largely excluded from decision-making” (Ellner, 2010). This is exactly why the Comprehensive Health Care Model and Ministry of Health’s Strategic Social Plan (SSP) were so different and presented a new dawn for Venezuelan politics and a new approach to health (Alvarado *et al.*, 2008).

Pre-Misión Barrio Adentro

**Plan Bolivar 2000**
According to President Hugo Chávez the foremost maladies to be extricated from the Venezuelan condition were the impeding political system known as *puntofijismo*, which, since its inception from 1958 to 1998 had further developed overtly corrosive features of extreme poverty and corruption. *Puntofijismo* takes its name after the place, Punto Fijo, where the power-sharing pact was signed between *Accion Democratica* (AD) and the People’s Independent Electoral Organising Committee (COPEI) which, owing to the Revolution and commencement of democracy in 1958, was now viewed as an unbearable socio-political and economic atmosphere in the country (Ellner & Hellinger, 2003). He was able to disaffiliate from *Puntofijismo* via the constitution as seen above, but due to the recession that hit Venezuela during 1999 the only recourse available to government as a
means to fight poverty, which includes accessibility to health and education, was via the military. This is significant because it was the military which was allotted the objectives and strategies to devise programmes that would benefit the most vulnerable, in Venezuela. The inclusive name given to this civilian-military project was “Plan Bolivar,” which was the first social program under Hugo Chávez’s tenure (Harnecker, 2003). Plan Bolivar 2000 commenced on February 27, 1999 chosen symbolically and in solidarity with the Caracazo. Tasked with repairing thousands of schools, hospitals, clinics, homes, churches, and parks, Plan Bolivar would become instrumental in governmental implementation of people-centred and deepening democracy, including ability to address the tragedy that was to follow.

In December 1999, a city north of the capital, Caracas, Vargas suffered a devastating natural disaster in the form of a mudslide that had unimaginable consequences on the people of that city and region. An astounding 80% of the people staying in this region at the time lived below the poverty line and resided in informal housing. In two days between December 14-16, 30,000 people were killed with another 100,000 homes said to be destroyed (IFRC, 2001). Cuba’s humanitarian response consisted of 454 personnel made up of physicians, nurses, dentists and public health workers. Havana and Caracas had revitalised an initiative that would become a game changer in the region for approaching primary health care in the 2000s and going forward. This was done through multilateral forms of engagements with other states in the region, including the establishing of ALBA-TCP and CELAC which were led principally by Venezuela but also very closely supported by Cuba. A reconfiguration of the health system was undertaken by creating a National Public Health System (NPHS).

It is worth mentioning that this brand of collaboration is not new to this region. It is largely inspired by the Latin American Social Medicine (LASM) tradition which in the 1950s sought to tackle health from a socio-historical and structural base. The LASM stimulated the earliest social epidemiology tools that would integrate an international collective health policy practice driven by Chilean president Salvador Allende (Tajer, 2003). The validation of the LASM is that it challenges traditional norms of addressing societal disparities. There is a deliberate harmonisation of primary health care with implementation of public policy which ensures a morally sound approach that promotes a sense of transformative justice. These
points further highlight the synchronised paradigm of politics, the medical profession and intellectual leanings in which LASM corroborated and that offers alternatives to the normative traditional methods of which both the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Cuba are inspired (Tajer, 2003).

- The LASM’s definition of populations as objects of study, is that populations are not conceived as the sum of individuals but rather as collectives.
- Studies of health institutions aimed at understanding their logic and their capacity to reproduce relations of dominance, and at developing alternative proposals.
- The consideration of the dialectic relation between being healthy, being sick, and health care practices, not as unrelated situations but as a historical process described as the health-disease-care process.
- The introduction of socio-historical structures as determinants of the process of the health-disease-care process of individuals and collectives.
- The articulation between theory and political practice known as praxis that defines theory as both describing reality and inspiring social change.
- The methodological development of differing historical, quantitative, and qualitative approaches aimed at avoiding the perceived limitations of positivism and reductionism in traditional public health and clinical methods.

The mudslide tragedy in 1999 created an opportunity for the formulation of objectives so that the first Comprehensive Health Care Model was administered in Caracas, Venezuela. The programme was developed for health care services that focused on the needs of poor families and communities. It was structured and incorporated in the everyday practice of clinical consultations in three focus areas: primary care for children and adolescents, women’s health and primary care for adults and the elderly. There was an elimination of user’s fees which meant primary health care was readily available.

Marmot et al. (1991) argue for combating health disparities by recommending three issues pronounced by the Independent Inquiry into inequalities in health. They include the following: that of evaluating policies according to their impact on health, prioritising women and children as key for the reduction of inequality in health and policies that are centred on promulgating the living standards (Marmot et al., 2004). As such, Venezuela promoted
health and disease prevention in daily clinical consultations within three major areas of
practice; primary care for children and adolescents; women’s health and primary care for
adults and the elderly – regardless of age, gender or time of day.

Part of the holistic perspective in Venezuela’s outlook is the removal of a paternalistic
framework which engenders a disenabling and disempowering environment where the
public were not agents of their own health. The Ministry of Health’s Strategic Social Plan in
this light laid out the required platform from a political and philosophical perspective.
Access to health began to be seen as a transformative tool by which a country could
mobilise and where social rights could be respected through the democratic participation
and a new socio-economic model based on an even-handed sharing of the country’s wealth.
The Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (CRBV) simultaneously served the
role of empowering the wider population who are poor and to establish the harness for
these programmes. This would lay the perfect platform for Barrio Adentro, their most
successful and comprehensive health programme.

**Misión Barrio Adentro**
The work of the Venezuelan government’s signature health programme, Barrio Adentro, is
primarily aimed at gaining better health outcomes for the nation’s poorest residents, but it
developed out of a holistic approach that saw better health outcomes emerging from a
multi-faceted strategy. The process of *Barrio Adentro* began in the poor Caracas
neighbourhood of Libertador in February 2003 when the local municipality worked with a
newly created government agency known as the Institute for Endogenous Development
(IED) to study living conditions in the Barrio (Alvarado *et al.*, 2008).

Rather than operate from a rigid bureaucratic structure as government administrations
often do, planning was now a horizontal process in tune with the newly formed Constitution
and its participatory approach. The 1999 tragedy had created an opportunity whereby
community engagement by Cuban health care workers enabled the sharing of common
ideas. Meetings were conducted that included officials, community workers, and creative
discussions between academics, officials and residents. Cuba was the perfect country in
which to carry out this integrated strategy, because it had been pursuing such an approach
for more than forty years with success. Its first international medical missions began in
Algeria during the civil war against France and after Chile experienced a devastating earthquake in 1960 (Werlau, 2013).

In April 2003 the first 58 doctors from Cuba arrived. Cubans are well versed in general integrated medicine – a specialty emphasising familial, community, and environmental contexts and a critical approach to the intersection between biological, epidemiological, social, and humanitarian dimensions (Briggs & Mantini-Briggs, 2009). This is supported by Tharamangalam (2010) who, in bringing the paradigm of transformative justice, highlights their outstanding Human Development Index (HDI) (Tharamangalam, 2010). In 2014 Cuba’s infant mortality rate (IMR) stood at 4.2 unchanged from the previous years and again the lowest in Cuban history (Whitney jr., 2015). IMR can be defined as the number of deaths in children under 1 year of age per 1000 live births in the same year, and it is the most sensitive indicator of overall societal health. Figure 5.1 is an appropriate illustration of the high regard in which Cubans are held by the international community.

**Figure 5.1 Health Indicators for Cuba**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Infant Mortality Rate</th>
<th>Life Expectancy at birth (both)</th>
<th>Total Health Expenditure in US dollars (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51 279 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>148 878 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>216 443 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>304 154 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>440 174 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>794 267 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>1 045 094 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>1 221 951 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>1 857 035 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>2 596 300 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>4 792 212 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>5 951 622 700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Administrative Records. Direction of Economy, Cuban Ministry of Public Health (MINSAP, 2014)

By December 2003, Plan *Barrio Adentro* was so popular that the president transformed it to a national plan (implemented in 2004) based on the same basic features of that which was rolled out in *Libertador* and the programme was renamed *Misión Barrio Adentro*. One of the strategies adopted was a reinforcement of a preventive approach which aimed to address health prevention and advancement dedicated to the individual, their family and local
neighbourhood or Barrio. This meant they had to exercise emphasis from curative care to health promotion and disease prevention, with particular attention to ubiquitous and dangerous diseases such as malaria and dengue which needed thorough coverage through immunisation programmes. Health is promoted by visiting schools and workplaces. There are catchment areas where each centre provides treatment for between 250 and 400 families for whom a medical record is kept including individual clinical documentation. In general, medical consultation and curative care is undertaken in the mornings while the afternoon is reserved predominantly for home visits. Misión Barrio Adentro brought health care into the neighbourhood by developing primary health care clinics that were initially set up in the homes where the Cubans resided. The fragmentation of the Venezuelan public health system was primarily due to a lack of access to resources and poverty. To meet the requirements of such a programme, more health care personnel were provided by the Cuban government.

The primary reason for the lack of doctors available in Venezuela is that they are mostly concentrated in the private sector which has shunned the efforts of government to cooperate in creating accessible means to social health for the poor. The private health care system comprises mostly of medical professionals, Cabrera and Gomez (2014) indicate that it provides services from profit driven private clinics and benefits from out-of-pocket expenditure. Marino and Gomez (2012) highlight that “in the late 1990s and in 2000 and 2001, out-of-pocket expenditure represented an average of 88% of private expenditure on health. In 2003, out-of-pocket payments accounted for no less than 92,6% of the private expenditures on health.” It is further noted that in the 2011 World Health Observatory data it is stated that “out of pocket payments accounted for 89,5% of the private financing in 2008” (cited in Cabrera & Gomez, 2014). Traditional medical personnel in Venezuela are also from the upper-class who views government’s alternative social programme as directly hostile to their privilege and entitlement.

Del Pozo (2011) highlights that before Misión Barrio Adentro the country suffered a gradual disinvestment due to neoliberal policies that prevailed from the 1980s to 1998. Furthermore, he notes that pre the Misión Barrio Adentro “there was an old public system of primary medicine, downhill and institutional neglect” (Del Pozo, 2012). Some private practitioners opted instead to resign rather than work next to Venezuela’s poor. The private
sector was shifted to the public sector through the hiring of private health care services as employment benefit for employees in the public sector and by 2011 President Chávez intensified his regulating of private clinics by ensuring that no exorbitant service charges were permitted (Cabrera & Gomez, 2014).

The Venezuelan public healthcare was to have two distinct networks, which have started collaborating and overlapping and both are free and open to the public. While Misión Barrio Adentro functions through Cuban government aid, the second network is the traditional public hospital structure in which conventional Venezuelan doctors operate. They are trained in the traditional medical schools and generally understood to be politically aligned to the opposition. It would only be in 2011 that Cuban-trained Venezuelan graduates would be available for the Barrio Adentro programme. The first group of 8 160 graduated in December 2011, with 6 200 successfully completing the 6 year course in December 2012. The returning Venezuelans were enrolled at the quality preventive-medicine oriented Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) in Cuba. Upon graduation there is a compulsory two year residency which can include placement in both networks, which then ensures that there is appropriate work alongside orthodox doctors (Robertson, 2013a).

The second phase of Misión Barrio Adentro emphasised the extreme poverty and health crisis. The programme was aimed to ameliorate the living conditions of Venezuela’s poorest (Westhoff et al., 2010) and became entrenched in policy. The secondary level care had 13 000 Cuban medical personnel working in Venezuelan homes and clinics by 2004. It ensured the construction and equipping of Integral Diagnosis Centres (CDI), Advanced Technological Centres (CAT) and rehabilitation facilities for maximum redress. Each of these operate as a 24 hour emergency service and do para-clinical laboratory tests (faeces, urine herpetology), ultra-sound, endoscopy, X-ray, electro-cardiography and ophthalmology (Armada et al., 2009, p. 171). The first CAT was finished in 2006, with 18 more completed in two years. By December 2006 Barrio Adentro included 23 789 Cuban doctors, dental specialists, optometrists, nurses, and other personnel and more than 6 500 sites where patients were seen (Briggs & Mantini-Briggs, 2009). In that same year, 8 686 health posts for primary health care were being increasingly constructed within the neighbourhoods to serve as community clinics (Alvarado et al., 2008). This included 2 500 Venezuelan nurses and an estimated 800 Venezuelan dentists who volunteered to work in the programme as a public
health service corps as a means to enforce a collaborative approach. There are clubs (groups of people) who share age or health status, including clubs for pregnant women to prepare them for motherhood and childbirth. Sports professionals also created dance and exercise classes for the elderly and specific groups for hypertension, diabetes, and smoking where health massages are transmitted, and physicians provided more than 100 types of free medication (Briggs & Mantini-Briggs, 2009). The number of committee councils quadrupled, from 21,242 to 8,951 in 4 years (Armada et al., 2009). These health communities legitimised the role of grassroots mobilisation and continue the self-empowering element which is important deepen democracy amongst poor communities.

The third phase of Barrio Adentro started at the end of 2006 and aimed to improve infrastructure and equipment in the 300 active hospitals of Venezuela. The specialised component of this was on the installation of radiotherapy and chemotherapy. These measures became essential in dealing with the scourge of cancer which is the second highest cause of death for both women and men. The 4th phase was the building of a network of 16 new state of the art hospitals. In 2011 alone, 67,000 Venezuelans received free high cost medicines for 139 pathological conditions, including hepatitis, osteoporosis, schizophrenia, and others, 2012 saw 34 centres for addictions created (Muntaner et al., 2012). Until January 2012 there were 11 running hospitals, 6 hybrid hospitals, plus 5 logistical and medical storage systems of the National Public Health System inputs.

**Misión Milagro**

The social deficits of the Barrios highlighted the need for new integrated social programmes (Misiónes) that centred on health which would have to run concurrently with it. Continuing on the health path, the Cuban-Venezuelan programme, *Misión Milagro*, focused on the elimination of visual impairments like cataract, glaucoma, myopia, strabismus and other problems in the cornea. Similarly, the programme is conducted at no cost with free consultations and glasses. Between 2006 and 2008 a total of 587,685 surgeries were performed in the Venezuela. By 2010 patients treated reached 1,139,798 with an average of 5,000 operations occurring weekly in medical centres around the country (Ellis, 2010). *Misión Milagro* or Mission Miracle has become such a success and specialised between the two states that it has continued in integrated international cooperation with other states.

89
throughout the Americas including over 2,000 eye operations in Paraguay. Bolivians, Brazilians, Mexicans and Dominican Republic nationals have benefited. It has since helped around 3.5 million patients around the world (Telesur, 2014).

*Misión Milagro* was first launched in 2004. Venezuelan patients were taken to Cuba under the solidarity-based healthcare agreement (Fox, 2006) specifically because they did not have the necessary equipment. The initial building of apparatus for operational work was only started with *Barrio Adentro 2*. The ‘re-launch’ according to Robertson (2013a) involved connecting new medical-surgical apparatus and source centres where ophthalmic operations take place, establishing workshops for the manufacture of glasses and lenses, and creating a statistical centre to yield a record of patients attended and those requiring treatment. There has also been a push for the continuing of training ophthalmologists and optometrists in Venezuela, and to design and implement preventative policies for sight related defects.

**Misión Sonrisa**

On November 2006, President Chávez announced *Misión Sonrisa* or Mission Smile which provides dental prostheses for poor Venezuelans who were in need of them. By October 2010, 96,000 adults were provided with dental care, including 34,600 dentures since its inception. While the programme may be beneficial to citizens with rare diseases such as Mobius syndrome (inability to smile/show emotion), mild and severe cleft lips and those who have dental problems, it mostly benefits the elderly. It is an initiative that shows the government’s commitment to a quality of life for all its citizens.

This mission was initially brought to Venezuela in 1993 through the Operation Smile Foundation (OSF Report, 2012) which performs safe, effective cleft and cleft palate surgery and distributes post-operative and continuing medical rehabilitation to children in low and middle income countries, for example India, South Africa, Panama and Thailand at no charge. Patients that require speech therapy or psychology after surgery are assisted and this includes educational presentations on nutrition, speech therapy, psychology and dental care during each mission (OSF Report, 2012). However, due to the commitment to health and with the consistent production of its own medical personnel through Cuban
government assistance, Venezuela has become almost completely self-sufficient in Misión Sonrisa.

**Figure 5.2: Diagrammatical representation on how the Barrios Adentro program functions**

There is a subdivision of the Venezuelan health structure into numerous subsystems of care and services unstated, totalling more than 4 700 formations (Del Pozo, 2011). They are: the Ministry of Health (where urban and rural clinics are framed, which becomes a system for ‘the poor’, for who there is no other type of insurance). From year 2000, 4605 and 213 out-patient hospitals were created.

- The Institute of Social Security of Venezuela (IVSS), under the Ministry of Labour, comprising of 79 clinics and 31 hospitals, autonomous in the exercise of their functions of financing, health insurance and care provision in 2000.
• The Armed Forces (Institute of Social Welfare of the Armed Forces), with 21 clinics and 13 hospitals.
• The workers of education: Insurance Institute of Social Welfare, Ministry of Education (IPASME), which has 56 clinics.
• The large companies such as PDVSA (Petroleos de Venezuela, SA) with 3 hospitals and 3 clinics.

This is important to note because the technical skills that have become solidified and have made *Barrio Adentro* as a whole efficient is a direct result of the collaboration of these subdivisions of health. For instance, Diagnostic Centres and Hospitals require specialised technicians who would be able to operate the intricate machines e.g. for *Misión Milagro* that requires the use of ophthalmic medical equipment. They are trained via the Miracle Company China Meheco workshops which are an extension of China-Venezuelan relations. This is done via the IVSS under the Ministry of Labour.

Similarly, the armed forces, which were initiated via Plan Bolivar 2000, have been particularly instrumental in transporting services to rural areas and terrain only reachable by air. At the inception of *Barrio Adentro*, it was through the emergency services delegated to the Institute of Social Welfare of the Armed Forces that ensured lives were saved and/or improved in the event of disasters.

**Table 5.3: Health Statistics of Venezuela**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Government Expenditure</th>
<th>Infant Mortality Rate</th>
<th>Incidence of Tuberculosis /100 000 People</th>
<th>Life Expectancy at Birth (Female)</th>
<th>Life Expectancy at Birth (Male)</th>
<th>Gini Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>6,19</td>
<td>19,6</td>
<td>34 (139° of 200)</td>
<td>75,22</td>
<td>69,34</td>
<td>0,4865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>7,20</td>
<td>16,8</td>
<td>34 (128° of 201)</td>
<td>77,07</td>
<td>70,78</td>
<td>0,4811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>8,41</td>
<td>14,4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>76,65</td>
<td>70,4</td>
<td>0,4099</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The WHO defines % of government expenditure as the recurrent and capital spending from government (central and local) budgets, external borrowings and grants, including donations from international agencies and NGOs; Social (or compulsory) health insurance funds. In 1997, Venezuela had its lowest value of 5,45%. Its highest value was in 2006 when
Misión Barrio Adentro was in full effect. While Venezuela may have been able to withstand 2009 and 2010 in continuing with intensifying spending, both years equalling 8.96% (not reflected on table). The statistics clearly indicate government commitment through social expenditure for the majority of the poor, per capita government spending increased by 84.7% since 1998. The sharp fall in 2012 is a reflection of negative economic growth in 2010 and 2011 which had effectively inhibited revenue from oil (Spronk & Weber, 2011). Similarly, the Maduro administration has struggled with the negative effects of visible poverty levels rising since 2014 due to political and economic pressures.

Education and Literacy in Venezuela
The most obstinate form of poverty, chronic poverty, is said to occur from five specific impediments: lack of security, limited citizenship, structural inequality, social discrimination and poor work opportunities (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, 2008). More acutely, this research also suggests that groups that are in perpetual poverty have low levels of formal education generally and literacy specifically, which further stand as fundamental constraints to one attaining social mobility in society today. Structural inequality is a corollary phenomenon that stems from colonial, segregated and historical constructs that, for many multiple reasons, have persisted over time (ECLAC, 2010). These isolated areas for the same reasons as identified in health and poverty alleviation in Venezuela become neglected both socially and politically, meaning that the majority of the people residing in these areas will be excluded from the body politic. The challenge for states with deep inequality is to measure against the MDG indicators which illustrate and emphasised reduction of child mortality, also linked to primary school enrolments, where particular importance should be put on women and girls (UNESCO, 2007). This is because the most affected gender in extreme poverty stricken spaces and the lack of access to resources and opportunity is women (Joo, 2010). Another way of highlighting this is through transforming the role of women from being victims of violence, patriarchal laws, and economic exclusion to empowerment by enabling access to economic opportunities (channelled through educational opportunities) that would change their role in society being without power and a voice.
It is no surprise then that the UNESCO identify with the MDGs of 2000 that refers directly to
the targeting of literacy and Education for All (EFA) campaigns as means with which to fight
poverty.

The target 2.A of the MDGs seeks ‘...to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and
girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary school education”. To achieve
this, the following measurements were set in place:

2.1 Net enrolment ratio in primary education

Net enrolment is defined as the number of children of official primary school age who are
enrolled in primary education as a percentage of the total children of the official school age
population. Primary education is defined by the International Standard Classification of
Education of 1997 (ICDE97) as programmes normally considered on a unit or project basis to
give pupils a complete basic education in reading, writing and mathematics along with an
elementary understanding of other subjects such as history, geography, social science, art,
music and physical science.

2.2 Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary

Also known as the survival rate, this is the percentage of a unit of pupils registered in grade
1 of the primary level of education in a given school year who are expected to reach the last
grade of primary school, regardless of repetition.

2.3 Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds, women and men

Literacy is the ability to read and write with understanding a short simple statement. It also
generally encompasses numeracy, which is the ability to make simple arithmetic
calculations. Therefore this is to assess the literacy rate of 15 – 24 year-olds who can both
read and write with an understanding of a short simple statement on everyday life.

On Constitutional Reform

In Venezuela, the constitution is regarded as living document that resonates with specific
needs that enable and harness transformative tools that would cultivate their lives for the
better. In an interview with Marta Hanecker in 2002, Chávez highlights the thought processes they had deliberated on in targeting the constitution (but also learning from regional neighbours in how not to go about its undertaking):

We discussed how to break with the past, how to overcome this type of democracy that only responds to the interests of the oligarchical sectors; how to get rid of corruption. We had always rejected the idea of a military coup, of a military dictatorship or of a military governing junta. We were very aware of what happened in Colombia, in the years of 1990-1991 – when there was a constitutional assembly – of course – it was very limited because in the end it was subordinated to the existing powers. It was the existing powers that designed Colombia’s constitutional assembly and got it going and therefore, it could not transform the situation because it was a prisoner of the existing powers (Chávez, 2002 cited in Wilpert, 2003b)

Following his election on 6 December 1998 and before he took office officially in February of the following year, Chávez scheduled a referendum by signing Decree No. 3, on whether or not citizens want to convene a constitutional assembly. Venezuela was operating on the 1961 constitution which had subsequently been the longest lasting in their history (37 years) and which did not provide for the calling of a constitutional assembly. He did this to reorganise the balance of power and to transform the State through the constitution. Maignon (2000) highlights that,

Ten days before Chávez took office, the opposition, acting through a human rights organisation Fundahumanos filed a case with the Venezuelan Supreme Court, to issue a Judicial Review regarding the legal procedure to be followed to convene the Constituent Assembly. In the same document, they expressed doubts regarding the previous constitutional reform to enable plebiscites. However, the Court’s response far from validating the opposition’s claims provided legal precedent to proceed with the referendum without prior necessity of the constitutional reform (cited in Sánchez, 2013, p. 3).
While the law calling for the referendum was expected to go through congress, Chávez sought instead to do so by means of executive decree. This was controversial because it opened the path for a dictatorship. The referendum took place on April 19 and had two questions; the first was whether to convoke or not to convoke the assembly and the second question was whether or not voters accept the procedures set forth by the president. The second question can also be linked to what Sánchez (2013) highlights as the culture of Latin America’s presidents to indulge in this exercise of reorganisation of the constitution because it is a means to political survival and holding on to state power. Of those that voted, 92% voted ‘yes’ in response to the first question, and 86% approved of the second question granting the executive full powers. There was an abstention rate of 63%. Wilpert (2003b) highlights that two months after the April vote, the vote of the members of the constitutional assembly took place. The procedure was such that 24 members to the assembly were elected nationally, three as representatives of the indigenous population, and the rest, 104 were representative from their respective states. All together there were 131 members of the constitutional assembly, all of which were elected directly, via simple majority. As a result of overwhelming popularity and having sensed a waning opposition, Chávez received 95% or 125 of the representatives were allied with Chávez’s Bolivarian project. Only six belonged to the opposition. By 15 December 1999 the document of the new constitution was submitted to a national vote. 71.8% of the voters approved the new constitution, with an abstention rate of 55.6% (Wilpert, 2003b). This process by President Chávez set in motion a precedent for more reforms during his time in office. In 2007 and 2009 the intention of reconfiguring the constitution was to build on the limitations that hindered a sitting president further terms in office. Wilpert (2007) notes that the most valid criticism against Chávez’s leadership is the insistence on reform when it was not necessary, the most controversial aspects are those which strengthened his ‘hold’ on power. He eliminated the limits of re-election, eliminated central bank autonomy, tightened control of the military to his whim, strengthened states of emergency and increased the president’s ability to reorganise the politico-territorial divisions (it was pro-Chávez leadership in all 5 branches of the Venezuelan state). Also the nervousness around the utilisation of the word “Socialism” which pervaded the new constitution was particularly seen as that which would be intolerant of other people who do not share in such a view from partaking in the political process (Wilpert, 2007).
Venezuelan Government Commitment
As part of the Venezuelan constitutional framework, Article 102 considers education to be a human right and a fundamental social duty and states that the State is obligated to act accordingly because education is viewed as:

A public service, and is grounded on the respect for all currents of thought, to the end of developing the creative potential of every human being and the full exercise of his or her personality in a democratic society based on the work ethic value and on active, conscious and joint participation in the processes of social transformation embodied in the values which are part of national identity, and with a Latin American and universal action (Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 2000 – Article 102).

Furthermore, Article 103 reads that:

Every person has the right to a full, high quality, on-going education under conditions and circumstances of equality... education is obligatory at all levels from maternal to the diversified secondary level. Education offered at State institutions is free of charge up to under-graduate university level. To this end, the State shall make a priority investment in accordance with United Nations recommendations (Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 2000 – Article 103).

Education was such an important theme in the Chávez presidency that the national budget dedicated to education more than doubled in five years from less than 3 % to 6,9% between the years 1999 – 2009 (UNESCO, 2010).

The Constitution is an indispensable document in Venezuelan governance because as the state emerges from what would be understood as the realms of seclusion, the Bolivarian government seeks to entrench ideals that represent the aspirations and the vision of ordinary citizens. For instance, in 1999 when Hugo Chávez was elected, he highlighted this vision as wanting...

...to put an end to poverty, and power must be given to the poor. We are at the birth of a new power. It is a power that leaves behind the concept of oligarchy and plutocracy. Only this way can there be life, (Chávez, 1999).
When the Venezuelan government seeks to challenge the existing education structure, it magnifies the previously isolated groups into the width and breadth of the proposed Bolivarian education system. In 2007, the Venezuelan national constitution was reformed to accommodate the precise political pragmatism required for Venezuela to follow the inclusive path that would assert key state directives on five main areas i.e. participatory democracy, social inclusion, non-neoliberal economic development (perhaps towards the advancement of socialism), politico-territorial reorganisation, and stronger (or more effective) central government (Wilpert, 2007). Key changes were directed at the Bolivarian curriculum applied to both public and private schools and was based on four fundamental pillars of learning and four programmatic themes. The four pillars are: learn to create, learn to coexist and participate, learn to value and learn to reflect. The four programmatic themes of the new curriculum, according to Carlson (2007) are:

- Environment and Health (collective, individual, and mental health, and harmony with nature)
- Inter-culturality (self-identity and the recognition of national consciousness)
- Information and Communication Technology (for the production of native content, free software, and the generation of knowledge), and
- Liberation Work.

To expand on these further, what the Chávez administration highlighted was a different way of seeing the world and a lot of that had to do with how they dealt with nature. For instance, in dealing with the environment, he understood that Venezuela is part of the Group of 77, the effects of climate change (e.g. desertification, deforestation, the changing of ecosystems) and what effect these changes in the environment have on not only land and the indigenous groups of his country but of the Global South in general. The emphasis on inter-culturality is the acknowledgement of the different heritages that Venezuela was made up of. He credits the vision of Simon Bolivar and exulted him to idol status in the country because he unified the people, not just of his own country but of 3 other countries, Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador as well. Culture should be taught in schools not as something that existed in the past but something that exists today, whose place in the world has never been more prevalent and urgent. For instance, people should not refer to slavery as something that is in the past but as something whose effects are still being felt today. This would be an
example of recognising the nuances of in one’s society including the nuances of language (e.g. keeping indigenous languages alive). Language plays an important role, specifically for supplying information and communicating. While the world is moving to different technologies, these have to be made intelligible for all society to grasp. It also encompasses the question of indigeneity, indigenisation, self-reliance and endogeny and how knowledge systems can be incorporated in a harmonious society. Liberation work suggests that the process of learning about culture itself is a process of self-discovery. When learners are taught about their own heritage and how they situate that to their immediate realities they can better understand their role in society. It was after all through *cimarronaje* (self-liberation) that Haitian slaves were able to eventually liberate themselves and then defeat their colonial masters in 1791. It was slaves that had escaped and understood their immediate reality. It is the Haitian revolution that would eventually produce liberators such as Bolivar to whom Chávez looked up.

**Education Structure in Venezuela**

Venezuela’s education starts at preschool but it is not compulsory. It covers ages from 4 to 6. Since 1981 compulsory primary education (or *educación básica*) is practised in public schools from the age of six, and it is free. When children finish grade 6 they are promoted to the second stage, middle education which lasts 5 years, after which they are awarded the Basic Education Certificate. Secondary Education or *educación Media*, follows, where they choose a path in either the academic route, which is two years; or a technical (vocational) direction, which is normally three years. After graduation these students can choose to further their education at a junior college, a university, or a technical institute aligned to their high school background.

In 1991, encouraged by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport they started with three specialities in the core subjects: 1) Basic Sciences and Technology, 2) Social Sciences, 3) Humanities, Technology and Arts. At the professional level in the third year there is a focus on six specialities: 1) Industrial, 2) Commerce and Administrative Services, 3) Farming and Livestock, 4) Social Work, 5) Arts, 6) Security and Defence (D’amico & Gonzalez, 2006). In 1996 the enrolment of children at primary education level was equivalent to 91% of the
school age population. Secondary enrolment was 40%. Only 50% of pupils complete their basic education.

It should be mentioned, however, that the traditional education system advocated for decentralisation from state influence where it has a limited role (Navarro, 2000). The relationship between education, human capital and wages were intertwined and left solely at the mercy of markets as the state had further embraced the neoliberal economic policies through the Washington Consensus (Ortega & Pritchett, 2013). This is essential to understand well as this would be the goal of Hugo Chávez, who sought to improve the role of the state and create an enabling environment for the previously excluded. While democracy had been achieved in Venezuela in 1959, the Putofijismo government had only catered for schools that were well-off, it was believed.

It is also true that while the wealthy became increasingly wealthier, the poor Venezuelans became a lot poorer in the years that preceded Hugo Chávez’s presidency, up to a state of near collapse (Hausmann & Rodriguez, 2014) which, from the year of the Caracazo had made the Venezuelan situation unbearable and ripe for change. The time Chávez was voted in in 1998 had promised to constitute a far more socially just and equality driven policy. As the economic situation deteriorated, state primary and secondary schools struggled against the effects of a declining state public schooling system.

**Cuban Government Co-operation**

Based on the historical consequences of exclusion in the Global South especially, adults and the elderly have had little access to education, which then raised the question of integrated approaches to inclusive education. In essence, the formation of the Bolivarian Alliance of the Peoples of our Americas (ALBA-TCP) in 2004 was about fostering state relations that harness strong social, political and economic agreements that seek alternative means of policy making to transform society (Muhr, 2010)

Similarly, with the role that Cuba continued to play in Venezuela with Barrio Adentro, Misión Robinson and Misión Ribas are the important components of state’s missions to channel access and opportunity to the poorest in the arena of education. With these Venezuelan programmes, Cuba is bringing to bear its own successful literacy. Cuba identified 1961 as
their “Year of Education.” It delivered a massive stroke that was to address their weak literacy levels. The state only had 34,000 professional school teachers at the time, there was a mobilisation of 126,000 youthful ‘peoples’ teachers, between the ages 10-18, who were put through an intensive course in teaching and learning, and successfully imparted reading and writing skills to 707,000 from an identified 929,207 adults in the rural areas (Paulston, 1971). Within a space of eight months Cuba’s illiteracy fell to less than 4 percent and was subsequently declared by UNESCO to be free of illiteracy. It would be Venezuela’s goal to achieve the same results as Cuba (Wagner, 2005).

There had been a close friendship forming between the two figures Castro and Chávez which began around 1994. It would come into full fruition with the latter’s success in 1998 when he was elected president. With Cuba’s ailing economy and Venezuela’s desperate health and education condition from equally crippling structural adjustment programmes from the 1980s and much of the 1990s. In 2000, the Cuban and Venezuelan governments signed an accord that would have Caracas transport 52,000 barrels of oil and Havana would provide 20,000 doctors and educators to the barrios. In a 2003 letter to President Chávez, President Castro emphasized the connection between reading and the revolution. He invoked the wisdom of Jose Marti, Cuba’s national hero, saying that “Marti’s phrase, ‘to be educated is the only way to be free,’ is more relevant than ever in our era” President Castro further asserted,

How can we speak of freedom and democracy when millions of people are total or functional illiterates? The privileged persons and masters of the world vehemently wish for masses of illiterate and semi-illiterate people, when deception and lies are chosen weapons of those who pillage and enslave the peoples (Whitney Jr., 2015).

**Education under Chávez Government**

The debate in Venezuela on the “quality of education” (Rhodes, 2008) is central to understanding the state’s centralisation and commitment to education. Rhodes (2008) demonstrates the reconfiguration of the traditional education system towards the Bolivarian framework as fundamental due to its “humanising principles” (Freire, 1970) and people centred free education. UNESCO (2007) advocates for this and emphasises an
articulation of the quality education on the Freireian notion of ‘assigning meaning’ to what one learns devoid of dehumanising instruments. This is directly contrasting to the World Bank Education Sector Strategy (1999), which interprets quality education as that which should be directed towards skills development and meeting the experiments of a market economy. One can also observe the Venezuelan education experience through the works of Dewey (1916) who centralises the role of “progressive education” versus “traditional education” and the experiences that engender energy towards building a democratic socialism. The traditional schooling system before Chávez’s Bolivarian Fifth Republic (BVR) won the election in 1998 is one that isolated the poor further by engendering a wage system that perpetuated poverty without addressing the structural conditions and the constraints that go with accessing quality education.

The transition to democracy in Latin America generally and Venezuela specifically with Hugo Chávez’s presidency in 1998 would denote an expedient opportunity for universal cost-free education from which the general public and those previously excluded would benefit. The disproportionate income gap between the wealthy and impoverished was perpetuated by educational disparities, structural violence of the barrios (Galtung, 1969), and how expensive public schooling had generally become (Navarro & Castro, 1999).

D’Amico and Gonzalez (2006) highlight that in 1996 in Chile, Ministers of Education of the Ibero-American States signed a document that indicated that competence was dependent on the ability to alleviate poverty and social exclusion. The Bolivarian Project encompasses an overhaul of the education system dealing with issues of pedagogy, scholarship, nutrition, health and sports to recapture more children into the primary education fold within the next five years. It also became an opportunity to challenge the higher education space. In his last State of the Nation speech in 2012, Hugo Chávez highlighted references made by the UN and the Economic Commission for Latin American Countries (ECLAC) which confirmed Venezuela as the least unequal country in Latin America, and reported a 26,8 point reduction in poverty and a 19,7 point decrease in extreme poverty in the past 12 years. He also asserted that University enrolment in Venezuela was recorded as the second highest on the continent, after socialist Cuba, and the fifth highest in the world (Boothroyd, 2012).
**Misión Sucre**

*Misión Sucre* was enacted in September 2003 by the Venezuelan government for the provision of free mass education at tertiary level, targeting the poor and marginalised. In one of his fiery speeches at the World Social Forum in Porto Allegre, Brazil the Venezuelan had the following to say:

> Privatisation is a neoliberal and imperialist plan. Health can’t be privatised because it is a fundamental human right, nor can education, water, electricity and other public services. They can’t be surrendered to private capital that denies the people from their rights (Chávez, 2005).

One of the principle debates around *Misión Sucre* was the centralised admissions process which had a lack of scholarship and loan programmes. This fact excluded many poor students and ensured that higher education would be preserved for the privileged few. *Misión Sucre* was thus initiated as an endeavour towards scholarship allocation to the poor. The Venezuelan government also did away with the stringent, compulsory entrance examination. It viewed it as a deliberately placed obstacle that hindered the opportunity of many Venezuelans who had a different education orientation which is unlike that which is offered at private schools. To understand this further one should examine the work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) who, in their analysis of France’s *grande ecole* (GE), found that what university entrance examinations tested was deeply related to the socio-historical power structure and the types of knowledge most worthy of recognition (Watanabe, 2015, p. 81). In the Venezuelan case, as Chávez had sought to establish, it was an endogenous, humanising, and human development oriented education which functioned on the principles of what Paolo Freire argues as a humanising pedagogy. Thus, to base entrance on the basis of ‘merit’ is to illustrate a deeply flawed meritocracy primarily as it was defined by neo-liberal, exclusionary and materialist pedagogy.

The first unit of students participated in a 6-8 month preparatory course called *Programa de Inacion Universitaria* (PIU). This step was removed in 2005 because it only gave priority to students, who came not just from the poorest areas, but also those who graduated in or before 1990 and those who were unemployed or underemployed heads of households (Gonzalez & Oyelere, 2011, p. 1356-1357). *Misión Sucre* created the Bolivarian University of
Venezuela (UBV) with campuses in three different states, Caracas, Zulia and Bolivar. The traditional college curriculum was shortened from five years to three to four years and further enabled more from poor communities by providing scholarships (Gonzalez & Oyelere, 2011). In 2004, 1000 provisional campuses were brought closer to the community level. The campuses are known as “Local Scopes of Alternative Socialist Education” (ALDEAS). UBV has over 1700 satellite campuses all over Venezuela. In 2005, the programme expanded with 24 new majors and the construction of 37 campuses in various states. By 2007, gross enrolment in tertiary education had increased to 41% from 29% in 1995. In 2007, there were 612 enrolled in colleges and institutes, and 334,499 enrolled in Misión Sucre, making up 24% of the total (Gonzalez & Oyelere, 2011). An additional 13 universities were opened by the Chávez government by 2013. Education Minister, Ricardo Menendez says that in 2014 a total of 2,6 million people were studying at university. This is a number which is four times above the 617,000 Venezuelans who were studying in 1999 (Pearson, 2014).

The criticism of Misión Sucre has been fundamentally about quality. The lack of academic aptitude testing of students’ has great implications for higher education. A student only needs a diploma to be accepted in a UBV. This has been increasingly challenging to wealthy families who have their privilege tested through the competition in the job market. More and more students in Venezuela have opted to attend technical schools to receive their professional education, where they gain benefits through both short courses and long term trade qualifications. An appealing outlook when work is readily obtainable in multiple industrial areas. This was justified for Chávez because it also suggested that learners from all backgrounds received a fair chance at competing for certain jobs. It was also a mechanism that was established to equalise society through various platforms, including Misión Sucre. Another criticism closely linked to the speech referred to under this heading, is that Venezuela has the burden of a single article of trade.

**Misión Robinson**

*Misión Robinson*, also known as Simon Rodriguez Extraordinary Literacy Programme, was launched on July 1, 2003 and inspired by *Yo Si Puedo* or ‘Yes I can,’ the ground-breaking Cuban designed literacy programme (Artaraz, 2009). The program was designed by Cuban
Teacher Leonela Reys. It was brought in with a strong focus on targeting basic adult illiteracy. The Cuban government donated 50,000 television sets, videotapes, VCRs and printed material to be used in class. The government first had to remove the stigmatisation of illiteracy. Seventy-four Cuban literacy experts came in to train 100,000 volunteers who would spend their evenings teaching basic writing, reading and mathematics skills to adults in night classes. They had to ensure that there was a clear comprehension that government was an ally in their engagement with such programmes. Similarly, with the Cuban government that urged volunteers to assist in the initiative, there was a major public campaign to win the buy-in of the citizenry. Once illiterates realised there was nothing to be ashamed of in their lack of formal schooling, reading and writing enrolments in the programme soared.

In 2005, two years after its inception, the government announced “a territory free of illiteracy” where 1.4 million people learned to read and write and thus had achieved the eradication of illiteracy which was validated by UNESCO’s EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005). *Misión Robinson* worked closely with woman’s groups such as Banmujer, which is a state backed micro-credit bank chiefly for women. It provides both monetary and non-financial services to women in order to inspire their activism and contribution in the building of a participative economy. As a result, over 67% of graduates from the *Misión Robinson* programme are female. This is noteworthy because not only were 70% of Venezuelans in poverty women (Barrett, n.d.), but also between 60% and 70% of households were run by single mothers (Frantz, 2009). The success of *Misión Robinson* can also be attributed to the comprehensive nature of the civilian-military operation Venezuela had been consumed by. Chávez had in essence transformed the distrust that had existed between the military and the public in Venezuela, to one that strengthened national unity. The tough terrain and geographical difficulty evoked great resilience from the military and patience from the public, the state had to maximise its capacity to ensure that even the most remote rural areas with little electricity and trained personnel within those areas were given attention. Just as the military had been deployed to assist in the flood of December 1999 in Caracas (which is explained in detail under the health section) military intervention including the construction of electrical plants and supplies for the programme to run were made possible (Wagner, 2005). There has been some criticism of the method Venezuela has taken in the
eradication of illiteracy. Critics particularly question the total number served in that there were only 1.08 million people who were illiterate, yet the Venezuelan government claimed 1.4 million (Ortega & Rodriguez, 2006). Rosnick and Weisbrot (2008) argue that such a complex and vast programme is likely to have difficulty in the disassociating functionally illiterate and those that are fully illiterate and thereby discrepancies may exist in the Venezuelan statistics. Furthermore, they believe the nuances of illiteracy need to be thoroughly investigated everywhere. They give an example of the US adult literacy rate “as reported at 99 % yet 20% of those same adults cannot read the simplest instructions off a medicine label”. They continue that “in Venezuela, a million self-reported illiterate adults should imply millions more who are functionally illiterate” (Rosnick & Weisbrot, 2008).

Challenges to the Misión Robinson are of diversity, particularly with regard to their indigenous groups and languages and they have been met head on. Programmes are conducted in a manner that supports indigenous languages and Spanish. Venezuela has over 40 indigenous languages with some communities unable to speak Spanish. Based on the humanising principles of keeping alive their culture and heritage and enriching cultural diversity, Misión Robinson sought to cater for all groups in the country. As a result the language of Venezuela’s Mapoyo indigenous people was added to the Intangible Cultural Heritage list of the UNESCO in 2014 (Telesur, 2014).

Misión Robinson also facilitates progression. Individuals who make it through Misión Robinson graduate to Misión Robinson 2. This allows basic entry to primary education. Misión Robinson 2 is also where the programme has been improved and by close monitoring of the National Situation Room which is established in all regional and local chapters; it assesses the qualitative and quantitative progress of the programme on a daily basis.

Government had the daunting task of moving the Misiones to the next level primarily as it wished to change the curriculum into a more Socialist orientated model. Caracas sought to strengthen the Misiones and the updated Bolivarian Curriculum implemented in 2007 had greater emphasis on liberation education (Carlson, 2007). For Giroux, liberation education has some very specific criteria for it to be effective. For example, he highlights the role of the teacher who, as
critical educators (of the capitalist/neoliberal system), will need a reconstructed language of critique in order to challenge the current conservative offensive on education. Second, there will need to be a reconstruction of a language of practical learning. In both cases, the starting point for such a challenge centres on the imperative to develop a dialectical view of authority and its relationship to public education. Such a view of authority must both serve as a referent for critique and provide a programmatic vision for pedagogical and social change (Giroux, 1997, p. 96).

Hugo Chávez understood this and also wanted to assert it at a practical level. In a television interview he highlighted that “knowing English is important, but for us Venezuelans I think it would also be important to know Portuguese. For that reason, we should evaluate the possibility of it being taught in our schools (Hugo Chávez during his television/radio show Alo Presidente! on 2 October 2005).

This emphasis on Misión Robinson 2 and the curriculum change was a key in elaborating on the need for more unified and inclusive primary school education and the administering of new textbooks and other vital school material. It can also be said that key elements to this kind of change is intrinsically atoned to the cultural aspects of a society, much like Kerala and Cuba (Tharamangalam, 2010), where education and learning become cultural practice where the state plays an active role in creating the necessary direction.

Misión Robinson 3 pursued the spreading and instilling of the good habit of reading through Círculos de trabajo y Estudio or Circles of Work and Study. This was to further promote engagement with contemporary political, economic, social and cultural issues of concern on regional and national fronts. In 2012 there were 247 000 Venezuelans enrolled in some aspect of Misión Robinson, supported by 33 757 volunteer teachers (Robertson, 2012). Misión Robinson 3 was manufactured primarily to aid students who had participated in other programmes (missions) to develop trade skills so as to find employment.

**Misión Ribas**

*Misión Felix Ribas* was launched in 2003 with the sole intention of providing free high-school education to those who had dropped out of school and help them graduate within two
years. It was coordinated with the participation of the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Ministry of Education. Classes take place in schools all over the country at times accessible to students. The most affected areas such rural communities, indigenous communities and prisons are prioritised so as to orient and reintegrate them into civic life. More importantly, this programme aims to ensure that they are not stigmatised and alienated from the country’s systems. By 2006, Misió́n Ribas opened 114 different classes where 18 893 prisoners were studying for their high school degree. By 2008, a total of 510 585 students finished their high school degree across the country, in effect completing their secondary education (Irago, 2013). It continued from the strategy of Misió́n Robinson and its titles are legally recognized on a national level.

Statistical Tables on Venezuelan Primary Education

Figure 5a: Pre-primary and Primary School in Venezuela

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School Enrolment Pre Primary (% gross)</th>
<th>School Enrolment Primary (% gross)</th>
<th>School Enrolment Primary (% net)</th>
<th>School Enrolment Primary Private (% of total primary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>53,26</td>
<td>105,35</td>
<td>92,03</td>
<td>14,27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>69,19</td>
<td>103,28</td>
<td>92,3 (2007)</td>
<td>16,03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>73,99</td>
<td>102,43</td>
<td>92,71</td>
<td>17,55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNESCO 2013

Gross enrolment ratio (GER) in the pre-primary section is the ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, age to the population of the age that officially corresponds to the level of education shown. The very big rise in numbers is particularly due to education that enhanced the school experience at commencing preschool level. The Simoncitos (so named after Simon Rodrigues, friend and advisor to Bolivar) or pre-schools are a day-long programme with cultural and sports activities. It is essential to note that the GER can exceed the 100% due to grade repetition and entry at ages younger or older than the typical age at the grade level. Another important factor is that the Bolivarian schools provide feeding schemes in the morning, at lunch and in the afternoon. The programme began in 2005. This
gives an opportunity to parents, single mothers especially, to search for work (Wilpert, 2007).

Gross enrolment at primary is the total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education. It is unclear whether the adult learners who graduate from Misión Robinson 1 are also taken into consideration in this section. Net enrolment is the ratio of official school age based on the ISCE 1997 who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. One can also see that there has been slight growth in primary private schools. This refers to pupils or students enrolled in institutions that are not operated by the state. Some operate for profit, some do not; it can be through NGOs, religious entities, foundations or businesses.

Figure 5b: High School Education in Venezuela

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School Enrolment Secondary (% gross)</th>
<th>School Enrolment (% net)</th>
<th>School Enrolment Secondary Private (% of total secondary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>69.10</td>
<td>58.56</td>
<td>25.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>81.64</td>
<td>69.94</td>
<td>27.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>83.48</td>
<td>72.80</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNESCO 2013

As in the primary school section, during the time president Chávez came into office, the accessibility to education has gradually improved. This is supported by Bolivarian projects such as Robinson and Ribas. Figure 4 illustrates a definite improvement in the rise in expected years of schooling as there are less pressing conditions for a learner to drop out. Similarly, the portion that has remained in private schooling has been consistent with the rise in enrolment in primary schooling that continues to make up the entire education sector.
Tertiary school enrolment has improved drastically, particularly due to *Misión Sucre* and the alternative form of Higher Education of the Bolivarian Framework. In the past the entrance exams that had been established by the Puntofijismo government was indifferent to the human development of ordinary Venezuelans. This was one mechanism the Bolivarian Revolution set out to achieve, i.e. transformative justice through education. The more youth, especially those in the poor section, were educated, the more they were able to contribute to the economy.

**Racial Redress in Venezuela**

The violent history of the Caribbean and Latin America due to the slave trade has had a profound effect on the region in general and Venezuela in particular with regards to and power politics and the economy (Quijano, 2000; Herrera Salas, 2007). The colonial history of racism, dehumanisation, degradation and inequality is a direct consequence of slavery, and as we shall see, has impacted on Venezuela’s class politics and race as defining illustrations of continued discrimination and political exclusion. One could argue then that for a transformed society to be recognisable there are specific issues of perpetuated prejudice...
and discrimination that have to be addressed. Grosfoguel argues that the decolonisation process is not enough unless it addresses the “second decolonisation’ which should address the racial, ethnic, sexual, gender and economic hierarchies that the first decolonisation left in place.” He continues, that “as a result the world needs a second decolonisation different and more radical than the first one” (cited in Morana, Dussel and Jauregui, 2008, p327).

From the onset Latin American’s social stratification was race based and a sense of “othering” (Said, 1977) that ensured political exclusion. The Ibero-American societies were under control of a small white minority. Quijano (2000, p. 566) asserts that “their social interests were explicitly antagonistic to American Indian serfs and black slaves, given that their privileges were made from precisely the dominance and exploitation of those peoples in such a way that there was no area of common interest between whites and non-whites and, consequently, no common national interest for all of them”. This then could justify the Eurocentric ideas and values to which the dominant white class aligned itself. The constitution of 1830 recognised neither Venezuelans of African descent nor the indigenous people as citizens. This would also overlap into the religious jurisdiction whereby the Catholic Church would ensure such discrimination of freedom of religion would be perpetuated (Wilpert, 2004). The whitening of Venezuela is said to have begun with more emphasis under the 19th century ruler Antonio Guzman Blanco who brought in Europeans purposefully to change the colour of the country. There was a concern for the rise in racial mixing of whites, Indians and blacks to ‘improve race.’ Furthermore social theorists would advance the religious based justifications of racism to justify slavery in the same manner that ensured the ‘inferiority’ of non-white groups would remain subordinated in the political and economic realm (Herrera Salas 2007).

The 1958 revolution was seen as a turning point in the democracy and the universal freedoms espoused by the citizens. Generally, the advent of democracy, as Ciccariellos-Maher (2013) illustrates, was meant to be the telos of a society and struggle. Venezuela would face a new one in the form of the Puntofijismo which was seen as a betrayal by social groups who had contributed to President Betancourt being in power. Puntofijismo was the formal bargain between representatives of Venezuela’s three main political parties which were the Accion Democrats, Political Electoral Independent Organisation Committee (COPEI) and Union Republica Democratica, for the acceptance of the democratic
government that was to be led by Betancourt. This period was marked by the ideology of *mestizaje* (miscegenation) or the myth of democracy or racial equality due to the façade it demonstrated on the racial discrimination and the socioeconomic deprivation of Venezuelans of African descent and indigenous communities. The white elite in power soothed their collective political consciousness of ‘racial democracy’ by perpetuating the lie that Venezuela was different to much of Latin America. They emphasised that their shared mixed heritage was emblematic of a society free of racial prejudice and racism often invoking the national hero, Bolivar’s sentiments that Venezuela was ‘united’ (Hall, 2009). Herrera Salas (2007) illustrates that the ideology of miscegenation denies the reality of social class and the possibility of integrating various identities into the national society, furthermore suggesting that homogeneity of culture would be encouraged to erase any cultural practices that were seen as impeding to social cohesion. The racist structural practices were concealed and perpetuated through education. *Indegenismo* was concomitantly adopted by official government policy to guarantee assimilation to the culture of the white creoles, and the denial of Afro-Venezuelan and indigenous community experiences. On a strategic hegemonic level espoused by liberal ideals, development in Latin America would utilise this mechanism to achieve integration to maximise economic interests.

The question of nationhood would be challenged in the 1970s and early 1980s due to the petroleum challenge that affected the world. The Arab-Israeli War of the 1970s would affect the oil rich South American nation far more than it had anticipated. The oil-weapon exploited by the Gulf-states impacted on the economic instability of Venezuela and heightened the underlying xenophobia, racism and discrimination. The Ecuadorian, Bolivian, Colombian, Peruvian and other Caribbean nationals, particularly of African and Indian descent, who migrated for work to Venezuela were scapegoated as economic tensions prevailed in the country. The racialised othering and racist sentiments of the media as representative of the white oligarchy invoked the beliefs that had existed in the country for centuries. Venezuelans in the lower strata and particularly those who shared a ‘*café com leche*’ of coffee with milk or darker complexion did not escape the vitriol as ‘lazy,’ ‘vermin,’ ‘rabble,’ ‘monkey,’ ‘mixed-breed,’ commentary became ubiquitous at the time. Venezuela was as polarised as any deep-seated racist society in the Western hemisphere (Cannon,
The riots and economic crisis would see a re-emergence of visible racism (Herrera Salas, 2007). Similarly, the Caracazo would highlight the exacerbated economic inequalities that had resulted from overtly anti-poor structural adjustment programmes of the late 1980s and 1990s put in place under President Lopez. It would be more visible that contra-distinctions of race and class were inherently inseparable and were effectively ignored. Gregory Wilpert (2004) further confirms this through observation of how racially stratified the neighbourhood was. He illustrates that middle to upper-class neighbourhoods have predominantly lighter skinned people while the barrios are inhabited by darker skinned Venezuelans.

**Misión Negra Hipólita**

In 2006, the Venezuelan government initiated a social mission that would endeavour to empower traditionally excluded groups. *Misión Negra Hipólita* or Black Hippolyta aids risk groups including the homeless, extremely poor, or drug-addicted people, especially concentrating on children and adolescents (Reardon, 2011). The *Misión* takes its name from Simon Bolivar’s wet-nurse, a slave, who upon Bolivar’s mother’s illness, had to take up the role of breastfeeding him. It is said Bolivar held her in high esteem, referring to her as “our mother Hipolita” (Reardon, 2011). This is symbolic for its acknowledgement of mutual vulnerability on a human level, in that Bolivar understood that he owed his life to a woman who would remain unacknowledged in society but ensured that she was exalted to someone of great significance, a mother, and insisted that she be cared for by the Bolivar family. The Ministry of Popular Participation and Social Development reiterated through its minister, Jorge Luis García Carneiro, that *Negra Hipolita* represents “love and generosity of Venezuelan mothers, equality, solidarity and justice for a neglected Venezuelan group who is filled with misery” (Voltairenet, 2006). The Venezuelan government carries out a duty on taking care of its citizens as it does through other missions with prime focus on the homeless which it acknowledges as being mainly black. When the mission commenced it was estimated that there were 8,000 homeless children in Venezuela (Reardon, 2011). By January 2013, the mission helped 24,000 homeless people.
**Misión Corazon Adentro**
There also exists another mission, which as a means to recognise the diverse past of Venezuela, President Chávez inaugurated as the government’s Culture Mission in 2009. Through culture the mission seeks to cultivate artistic and cultural programmes in the community as the President reiterated that “all art is liberating, anything that claims to be art but represses the people can’t be considered art” (Maloney-Risner, 2009). Corazon Adentro means ‘Heart Within (the community).’ It was started with the aid of 500 cultural promoters from Cuba which aimed to take cultural activities directly within the Barrios to promote affirming themes of identity and history. This also inculcates the important notion of reading and the creation of a culture of reading amongst communities. This importance of history was demonstrated by President Chávez in the ALBA meeting in Trinidad when he gave President Obama the Classical book by Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins to Latin America* earlier referred to.

According to Jesus “Chucho” Garcia there are 7 million Venezuelans of African descent and through grassroots organisations he formed the Network of Afro-Venezuelan Organisations for a more ‘complete’ Bolivarian revolution. Afro-Venezuelans made a formal request of several issues: A reform of the constitution, the creation of a new census that categorises and counts Venezuela’s black population, the acknowledgement of Afro-Venezuelan history in the school curriculum, the creation of a federal-level ministry to implement the World conference Against Racism’s ‘Durban Plan of Action’ (Carrillo, 2007). With much constraints and assistance from President Chávez the New Education Law was approved in 2009 as illustrated in the chapter on Education. In the 2011 Census, the Afro-Venezuelans had an opportunity for the first time to identify themselves as being afro-descendents. The official celebration of the Month of Africa and Day of Afro-Venezuelans on May 10 is driven by the government.

In 2014 President Maduro has been in full support of the Afro-Venezuelan agenda, often showing support in rallies driven by the proposals of programmes of action against racism and fascism, particularly of media and opposition rhetoric (Eisen, 2014). Overt racism in Venezuela is practised by media which is run by a reactionary upper and middle class coalition, which are ethnically white Venezuelans. For example, Tariq Ali points out that
Politicians like Chávez had become unacceptable. What (Chávez) loathed most was the contemptuous indifference of mainstream politicians in South America towards their own people. The Venezuelan elite is notoriously racist. They regarded the elected president as uncouth and uncivilised, a zambo of mixed African and indigenous blood who could not be trusted. His supporters were portrayed on private television networks as monkeys. (Former US Defence Secretary) Colin Powell had to reprimand the U.S. embassy in Caracas for hosting a party where Chávez was portrayed as a gorilla (Ali, 2013).

Racism goes beyond taunts at the president or negative stereotype of blacks (Herrera Salas, 2007), it goes to other state leaders. Six African countries including: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria, Western Sahara and South Africa, accused the television chain Globovision of racism over a parody of Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe, in March 2004 (Herrera Salas, 2007).

Venezuelan Politics Today
The irony of strong man politics is that due to the explicit influence and the charisma of the individual, allegiance only goes as far as person’s dominance is definitive, or as long as the cult remains alive. It could thus be argued that the death of President Hugo Chávez on 5 March 2013 was symbolically the start of the decline of the Bolivarian Revolution. Chávez almost single-handedly consolidated PSUV to be more than the confederation of collective leadership of Venezuela’s left, but its historical relevance transcends Venezuela’s borders (Maloney-Risner, 2009). The decline of the PSUV was quickly illustrated in Caracas when Nicolás Maduro narrowly won the presidential elections on 14 April 2013 by 1.6 percent. In the legislative elections of 6 December 2015, PSUV lost control of the National Assembly for the first time in 17 years.

The suspicion of Maduro’s weak leadership has been principally, the incapacity to bring Venezuelans together, including his own constituency. The over reliance on oil not only exasperated the economy which led to a deep recession, inflation and security concerns; the Wealthy retorted through unprecedented protests reaching incredible heights (BBC, 2014).
By 2015 Venezuela’s inflation reached 180.9 percent, the highest level in its history (Gallegos, 2016). The energy crisis was so calamitous that the Government introduced enforced leave for public sector employees, to three days a week! In essence this meant that Venezuela only had two working days, a strategy targeted at combating electricity shortage that caused power cuts and the protests. Maduro launched a rationing plan with power cuts of four hours a day for 40 days in towns and cities across multiple states (Agence France-Presse, 2016) affecting everyone, including difficulty of attaining basic needs such as toilet paper, cooking oil and milk. This breakdown of social services generally led to an increase in violence and the erosion of democracy.

At the level of international engagement, concern for Maduro’s alleged human rights abuses were becoming intolerable to regional partners. When Venezuela was to assume the pro-tempore chair of MERCOSUR, the trade alliance which includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, these allegations were used to bar Venezuela from the chair (Merco Press, 2016). It would be apt to underline that Latin America had slowly been facing a decline of Leftist democracies. Argentina’s Peronist government had lost to the conservative party led by Mauricio Macri and Dilma Rousseff was facing impeachment (outlined under “Brazilian Politics Today” in chapter six). Ecuador’s President Rafael Correa called it the new Operation Condor (McSherry, 2001), recalling the 1970s and 1980s period in Latin America which saw the intensified usage of military and subversion to undermine progressive governments (ANDES, 2016). The increasing violence and security were brought under scrutiny when Venezuela was to host the 17th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in September 2016. The NAM summit also highlighted the “deep concern at the violent actions aimed at destabilising the democratically elected government” (NAM, 2016, p 127). Maduro also used the opportunity of the summit to appeal for the bolstering oil prices which had fallen more than two-thirds (First Post, 2016).

**Conclusion**

What was pretty clear about Hugo Chávez was that in the last 40 years he was possibly the most important spokesperson for structural change and social transformation in the developing world. The challenge for Nicolás Maduro was not just whether he should seek to
emulate Chávez’s rhetoric but whether he would be as convincing in advancing the goals of the majority of poorer Venezuelans. Would he be capable of building on the gains of the Bolivarian Revolution or will he fold under political pressure? With high oil prices having completely crippled the economy of Venezuela, the sustained pressure against his government in the last two years, including high inflation, a growing discord amongst the opposition and increasing violence in the country, discord from his own constituency, it may be very difficult for him to emulate or repeat or improve such results. Considering the public service had reached record lows of productivity, only working twice a week, Misiones had been drastically affected. Being constantly seen to be on the back-foot in response to the “economic war” and social conditions all contribute to the decline in confidence for the PSUV government. However, only time will tell whether he succeeds or fails.
CHAPTER SIX

Advancing Social Justice through Education and Health: Brazil

Introduction
The Federal Republic of Brazil is one of the most influential countries in the global South. Not just through its economic clout, but as a country with historical inequalities and structural disparities, Brazil has been able to overcome these issues with creative systems that were ushered in with more impetus at the commencement of term of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in the presidential office in 2003. This chapter highlights the journey taken to reach first democratisation and why this was imperative to commit itself to an inclusive constitution pressured by participatory action from social movements. The Workers’ Party government may have taken a little over twenty years to reach ruling status but it has remained adamant to work to address the multiple factors that surround poverty alleviation. In this section we shall describe Bolsa Familia and how it was formulated. We shall also be exploring Conditional Cash Transfers which have a strong relationship with Bolsa Familia. The researcher also delves into the health sector, illustrating its journey and how the Sanitaristas as a unique movement contributed to health education that would eventually change the manner in which the government engages with society in that regard. The last section is concerned with the racial dynamics in Brazil and how the government has sought to address the inequalities and structural imbalances related to race.

Brazilian Government Commitment
The federal government of Brazil’s constitution regards education as a right which is an extension of human rights. This is fundamental to progression of other rights and full participation as citizens of the state. The state has committed itself to
Mandatory and free elementary education, including the assurance of its free offer to all those who did not have access to it at the proper age; progressive universalisation of free high school education; specialised schooling for the handicapped, preferably in the regular school system; infant education... and assistance to elementary school students by means of supplementary programmes providing school material, transportation, food and health assistance (Article 208 Constitution of Federal Republic of Brazil, 1988).

In addition paragraph 4 of Article 212 asserts that the supplementary food and health assistance programme stated above in Article 208 shall be supported with reserves from social contributions and other budgetary funds.

It should also be emphasized that Brazil’s education system operates on the premise of federal districts which is to say that the organisation of educational systems varies from state to state but the Federal Authority or ‘Union’ is liable to assist it on multiple fronts.

The Union shall organise the educational system and that of the territories, shall finance the federal public educational institutions and shall have, in educational matters, a redistributive and supplementary function, so as to guarantee the equalisation of the educational opportunities and a minimum standard of quality of education through technical and financial assistance to the states, the Federal District and the municipalities (Article 211 Constitution of Federal Republic of Brazil, 1988).

The Brazilian government has also committed itself to how much each Federal District and municipality shall contribute annually. For instance Article 212 asserts that

The Union shall never contribute less than eighteen percent, while all states, federal districts and the municipalities a minimum of twenty-five percent of the tax revenues(sixty percent of which goes to primary education) including those resulting from transfers, in the maintenance and development of education.

Legislative advances have also been made through investments in basic education (primary and lower-secondary schooling) through what is known as the Fund for the Development of Elementary Education and Teacher Development (FUNDEF) which was implemented in 1998. This was later replaced by the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and for enhancing the Value of the Teaching Profession (FUNDEB) in 2007, which helped extend and facilitate the redistribution of resources among states and municipalities to take into account total early childhood education and primary and secondary school
students. One is made aware that the Brazilian educational system is decentralised and provides autonomy for schools. This is made possible via the Law of Directives and Bases for National Education (*Lei de Directrizes e Bases da Educação* – LDB) which also encourages collaborative mechanisms in administrative responsibilities with the forming of basic education.

What the constitution aims to do, as illustrated in the health and other sectors, is that it should truly reflect the aspirations of all Brazilians and ensure that it is inclusive. Higher education access has often been limited to racialised hierarchies (Hernandez, 2004). The Workers’ Party government has committed itself to principles defined by the UNESCO Declaration (Article 26 1) which was inspired by the prescriptive texts of the United Nations and above all by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It states that access should be based on merit and that “Everyone has the right to education and that no discrimination will be acceptable in the granting of access to higher education on grounds of race, gender, language, religion or economic, cultural or social distinctions, or physical disabilities”.

McCowan (2007) problematises the Brazilian social question and argues that it would be very difficult to assess qualities of ‘meritocracy’ in isolation of the background factors of race, gender, language, religion, economic, cultural or social distinctions, because exclusion often occurs in multiple ways, primarily as questions of access and merit are defined by these very factors. Thus appropriate policy should be facilitated in a manner that addresses these discrepancies. For instance, the University for All Program (PROUNI) (*Universidade para Todos*) created through decree No. 213 of 2004 and institutionalised by law No. 11. 096 of 2005 was set in motion to provide scholarships to low income students studying for a degree or a sequential course in private institutions of higher education offering incentive exemption to some taxes for those institutions that adopt the program (Righetti, 2010). This study elaborates on this matter further in the higher education section.

Furthermore, the LDB is a means to appropriately represent the country’s history and there is a commitment to reflect the previously ostracised and excluded people through education. Legislation (Law No. 10.639 of 2003 and Law No. 11.645 of 2008) ensures that the organic integration of other cultures occurs through curriculum development. It states that
The programmatic content (curriculum diversification) to which this article refers will include diverse aspects of the history and culture that characterises the formation of the Brazilian population, beginning with these two ethnic groups, such as the study of the history of Africa and of Africans, the struggle of blacks and indigenous peoples in Brazil, the Brazilian black and indigenous culture and blacks and Indians in the formation of national society, recovering their contribution in the social, economic and political areas, pertinent to the history of Brazil (Law No. 11 645 of 10 March 2008).

Thus it is highlighted that curriculum which is compulsory for all schools, as driven by the Ministry of Education produced the new curriculum for secondary education based on three main principles:

- Flexibility in providing for different people and situations and the permanent changes that are typical of the world of the information in society;
- Diversity guaranteeing attention to the needs of different groups in different areas and situations and
- Contextualisation which, guaranteeing a common base diversifies careers and allows the establishment of meanings that give meaning to learning and what is learned (World Data on Education 7th Edition 2010/11: UNESCO).

Educational Structure in Brazil

Basic Education
The Ministry of Education as authorised by the Brazil Federal Government (The Union) supports the states and municipal systems with official and financial aid. Municipal structures are responsible for the running of everyday activities and play a fundamental role in Brazilian education. This is organised in two main sections. The first part consists of Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Educação Infantil which, according to the 1988 Constitution is a constitutional right in Brazil for children under 6 year olds. However, it is not compulsory. Preschool learners have a choice between Maternal which are state run crèches, and Jardim which are privately administered and for-profit businesses. Their intake is from three to six years of age. Jardims also allow the school to meet with the child’s parents/guardian before enrolment and advise them on academic and social skills. Maternal, on the other hand, is free of charge with no specific obligations to the parents. Furthermore, Maternal is split into
day-care centres for children age 0-2 and pre-school for ages 3-5 (until recently the age limit was 4-6). The state took a decision formally through the Law of Directives and Bases for National Education (LDB) of 1996, sometimes referred to as the Darcy Ribeiro Law after Brazilian sociologist and educator, to ensure that ECEs are integrated into the primary education framework (UNESCO, 2007).

The next step comprises 9 years (formally 8 years before 2010) of fundamental education (Educação Fundamental), for children ages 6 to 14. These compulsory 9 years are divided into two levels: Ensino Fundamental I and Ensino Fundamental II. Ensino Fundamental consists of grades 1-4 (ages 6-10) and children study Portuguese, mathematics, science, arts, history, geography and physical education. This group of learners stays with one teacher throughout its duration. Ensino Fundamental II, also known as a lower secondary schooling, begins from grade 5-8 (ages 11-14) and includes a foreign language. This is particularly important in private schools who sometimes introduce it earlier as the economic and social demands increase (Crocitti & Vallance, 2012). Learners spend more time with different teachers per subject as the focus per subject becomes more acute. Exams are set to all pupils at the end of each academic year to determine whether the child continues to the next level or whether they will have to repeat. This often means that groups have a blend of different ages.

Ensino Médio or Upper Secondary Education or middle education is not compulsory and is free of charge in public schools. It caters for adolescent learners from the ages 15 to 17 and lasts for three years. Additional subjects are taken along with the core from Ensino Fundamental II, which include further development of language, arts and sciences, culture, technology and society. Learners are taught sociology and philosophy which was only introduced in 2006, particularly for those who plan on going through to university level. This group work towards a high school diploma. In response to the demands of the country’s population of those who seek work after this, a vocational education at the same level was approved in 2004 (Crocitti & Vallance, 2012).

Higher Education
Due to Brazil’s history of intense inequality, and with clear obstacles that divided the population on racial and ethnic lines, higher education has also been affected by issues of
equity. This is also related to income distribution and how educational opportunities, particularly at this level, have been moulded unjustly (Neves et al., 2007). Access had been maintained and reserved for the elite. In 2007, legislation by the Workers’ Party government ensured that the necessary transformative mechanisms were administered in education as a whole, but particularly in higher education (Burton, 2012).

**Government Programmes under Lula**

Bolsa Familia

In 2003, with the advent of what many Brazilians viewed as a people’s government, the Bolsa Familia Programme (Family Grant) was integrated into Brazil’s social policy framework with learning outcomes clearly identified by the Cardoso government. Under the flagship concept of *Fome Zero* (Zero Hunger) Lula da Silva was driven to act by the MDGs, which sought to halve hunger and extreme poverty by 2015. The Workers’ Party led by Federal Government sought, primarily, to unify all conditional cash transfer programmes to target poor Brazilians under the umbrella of the Ministry of Social Development. These were the Bolsa Escola (School Grant), Cartão-Alimentação (Food Card), Bolsa-Alimentação (Food Grant) and Auxílio-Gás (Cooking Gas Aid).

The Bolsa Familia Programme was meant to augment and enhance national, federal, state and municipal levels and push for regulations via the decree No. 5209 of 17 September 2004 that stipulates the requirement that its application and administration requires for the collective efforts of the various levels of government, including as a cross-sector methodology, social oversight and transparency. The main objectives of Bolsa Familia (via the same decree) are:

i) To strengthen access to public services, particularly to education, health care, and social assistance;

ii) To fight hunger and to promote nutritional and food security;

iii) To enhance the ability of families to overcome vulnerability and poverty;

iv) To fight poverty; and

v) To promote integration, complementarity and synergy of social policies.
Due to the enhanced role at municipal level, the programme had a political orientation that was characterised by quality of governance, administrative structure, voting cycle and the transparency of the selection process which determined its impact (Nichter, 2014). This is due to the fact that municipalities were responsible for the selection process (of eligibility). Working agreements were signed with Brazilian municipalities without political peculiarity, in order to prevent bias in the allocation of benefits (ECLAC, 2012). One of the most pertinent concerns Sugiyama and Hunter (2013) raise is how conditional cash transfers programmes become “susceptible to machinations” due to the extensive decentralisation, control and strains which such a comprehensive system may demand on ‘good governance’. *Bolsa Familia* was thus also a means to remain “insulated” from clientelism which Nichter (2014) further emphasises, was a struggle to achieve.

**How it works**

*Bolsa Familia* has various factors it takes into consideration when deliberating on legibility. Households must be listed in a registry called the *Cadastro Unico* or Single Registry. The registry holds information on domestic demographic characteristics (number of people, people with disability, elderly, pregnant/breast feeding women etc.), domestic income (level of education, location in the labour market), and features of household (type of construction, number of rooms, availability of water, sewage and garbage) and prior participation in transfer programmes. Recipients are chosen at the national level, through the following method: Each municipality is assigned a maximum quota number of *Bolsa Familia* beneficiary households based roughly on poverty maps, which are dependent upon the characteristics of municipalities. The weight of legibility criteria and recipient status are often prioritised (de Brauw et al., 2014). Following this course a Social Identification Number (NIS) is generated for each registered person which then becomes the root for the entire management of *Bolsa Familia*. The NIS is utilised to identify the legality of the person in charge of the family when receiving benefits from the programme. In 2007 the Decree No 6135 was made. This further entrenched the quality of the procedures for registration. It ensured the compulsory use of information by Federal Government policies directed at poor families available with *Cadastro Unico* and National Household Sample Survey (which investigates and verifies general characteristics) to preserve aspects of ethics, privacy and confidentiality.
Bolsa Escola
The first of *Bolsa Escola* was established in 1995 in the cities of Campinas, São Paulo and Brasilia and by 1999, 61 were recorded throughout the state. That same year the Ministry of Education stated that the programme benefitted 504,000 families (including one million children) in one fifth of all Brazilian municipalities with differentiated payment that averaged R$37-00 per family (Cardoso & Souza, 2004). *Bolsa Escola* was initiated in those cities and in 2001 a law was enacted establishing it as a federal programme, based on economic transfers made through a large government-owned bank, *Caixa Economica Federal*. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso could not ignore the achievements of the programme and passed legislation in 2001 granting municipalities with close links to the Ministry of Education the right to collaborate by preparing the registry of persons in need and play an active role in bringing the children to school. While there was admirable success in some aspects pertaining to school attendance (or quelling drop-out rates) and student achievement pre the 2001 legislation (de Janvry *et al*., 2006), the pace of these of programmes did not penetrate those areas it was particularly made for with desired effect and the questions raised were about the conviction of implementation of such social programmes, considering that the Cardoso administration was essentially a neoliberal policies advocate on the one hand; and on the other hand Schwartzman (2005) argues that their focus was perhaps more oriented to the minimum income policy than on an educational point of view. Schwartzman further states that they lacked the appropriate research for the impact that it desired thus, requiring a much more comprehensive approach that was soon to be established in 2003 by the Lula government. These two points are significant not only to understand the necessary steps taken by the PT government when they assumed office, but the purpose became much more pronounced as national duty by President Lula da Silva on the commitment to poverty alleviation and to zero in on hunger that affected the majority of Brazilians. It was also to ameliorate the state of the public schooling system, which reflected societal ills and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, unemployment and limited social mobility entrenched by non-progressive state policies. The initial emphasis on the link between poverty, education and child labour could not be adequately substantiated, primarily due to a Minimum Income programme introduced by the Ministry of Education in 1998. The Minimum Income programme or *Programa de Garantia de Renda Minimal* was launched for municipalities with an income
per capita and tax revenues below the average of its respective states (Schwartzman, 2005; Cardoso & Souza, 2004) and it ensured that conditions placed on families were mandatory, such as the consistency of attendance of school-age learners in classes. An example of the geographical, historical logistical and developmental differences of municipalities can be seen in the regional indicators of illiteracy as presented in figure 2.1 below, where the North East (historically Black) and North (indigenous and Amazonian area) fare significantly lower than the rest of the country. While great strides have been made, they remained at the bottom of list. These discrepancies added strain on governance, which required far clearer monitoring and evaluation terms and an integrated social policy framework which would be introduced by the PT government.

Significantly, it is illustrated that Brazil’s transformation of their education strategy (and in essence fighting poverty) at the commencement of Bolsa Familia did not fundamentally change from Bolsa Escola’s solitary approach (as there had been no formal link to other programmes). The three critical normative pillars facilitated at federal level remained key target points. These were to

- Equalise funding across regions, states and municipalities with the FUNDEF reform (later improved to FUNDEB)
- measure the learning of all children on a common national yardstick (SAEB)
- protect the educational opportunity of students from poor families (Bolsa Escola) including the Law of Directives and Bases for National Education.

The distinction was that President Lula da Silva utilised the FUNDEF financing equalisation mechanism but significantly extended it to accommodate secondary schools and pre-schools; therefore impacting on a broader population and demography. This funding mechanism was known as FUNDEB which, as an entity that enhanced the profession of teaching and educators, referred to a holistic function of schooling. This commenced in 2007. As a result in Brazil the measuring (monitoring and evaluation) of the learning capability of children is viewed as the most sophisticated method exceeding that of US and OECD countries. There is a prime focus on the quantity, relevance and quality of the student and school performance information it provides (World Bank Report, 2010). The sample-based student assessment system (SAEB), commencing in 1995 conducts a biannual nation-
wide test of maths and Portuguese called *Prova Brasil* and applied to all 4th, 8th, and 11th grade students. SAEB was designed to provide representative results at the state (but not municipal) level and to permit standardized tracking of learning progress over time. Combined with data on student enrolment, repetition and graduation rates, a comprehensive index of school performance was generated, called IDEB (Basic Education Development Index). With an IDEB score for all but the smallest of Brazil’s 175,000 primary and secondary schools, over 5000 municipal school systems, 26 state systems and the federal district systems, every single segment of the Brazilian education system can benchmark how well its students are learning and how efficiently its school system is performing. No other large federal country in the world endorses such a superior and well-arranged progressive educational assessment tool (World Bank Report, 2010).

**Bolsa Alimentação**
The Zero Hunger strategy via the Ministry of Food Security and Fight against Hunger (MDS) was channelled through public institutions like schools to assist, particularly, the nutritional deficiencies that were pervasive in poverty stricken municipalities. The MDS is supported by the *Programa de Atenção Integral à Família* (PAIF) a Family Full Care Programme. The PAIF is implemented by the *Centros de Referência de Assistência Social* (CRAS) or Social Assistance Reference Centres. While Brazil is a key agricultural and industrial power with the strongest economy in Latin America, the majority of the population remained impoverished. Neves do Amaral and Peduto (2010) highlight that Brazil’s food insecurity, in spite of their output, is not due to anything but food being too expensive. *Bolsa Alimentação* was a vehicle to combat the scourge induced by the monopoly of big corporations. Municipal governments were obliged by the School Feeding Law in 2009 to use at least 30 percent of the allocated food procurement budget to purchase local produce. The encouraging of ‘food sovereignty’ rather than ‘food security’ via family-based farmers was viewed as revolutionary (Otsuki, 2013). The National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) provides the legal framework to ensure that this is carried out. When it commenced in 2003 with the Lula administration, PNAE allocation was raised to US$0.08/student/day for municipal or state-run crèches, preschools, primary schools and philanthropic schools, and US$0.12 a day for schools in indigenous people’s reserves and quilombos (former runaway slave communities of Afro-Brazilians). From 2003 until the approval of the current law in 2009 there was a gradual
increase in the amount of support, reaching US$0.15/student/day or US$0.30 in indigenous people’s reserves and quilombos. Overall resources for PNAE increased from approximately US$500 million in 2003 to US$1, 17 billion in 2009 (FAO, 2012).

There was an increase in the brewing ‘food culture’ in Brazil through community and school gardens (horta communitaria) where they took initiative to determine the food they consumed and grew, including a keen assessing of the dietary needs of the learners. This became habitual affecting half of Brazil’s 5 000 municipalities. This was done through the School Feeding Committees (Conselhos de Alimentação Escolar or CAEs) which are civic run, i.e. local officials, coordinated parent and teacher associations or school governing bodies.

Furthermore, the Bolsa Alimentação program or Food Grant was enhanced by monthly R$25 cash grants to women conditional upon them keeping up with regular visits to health clinics (especially those pregnant and lactating), for monitoring of growth and adhering to vaccination dates including partaking in nutritional education seminars which succeeded in boosting food security for mothers and children. The benefits paid to children are R$15 per child up to a maximum of three children, to poor families with a per capita monthly income below R$90. Eligibility for Bolsa Alimentação expired when children completed seven years. They then transitioned into the Bolsa Escola programme as they enter the formal primary school structure. The Cartão Alimentação Programme was also a component of Fome Zero and was operated by the former Ministry of Food Security who sought to promote food consumption and use transfers (of cash payments) for food purchases. It provided a monthly payment of R$50 to poor families with a per capita income of less than half the minimum wage per month. The Auxílio-Gás insulates the most vulnerable in society from the topsy-turvy nature of petroleum and how expensive it becomes. As electricity is also a scarce commodity, the provision of gas becomes extremely important in Brazil’s social policy.

**Education-Oriented Social Programmes**

**A brief history of Conditional Cash Transfers**

In 1990 Brazil had less than 40% of children nationally managing to complete the 8 years required for primary schooling, with only 38% of children managing to enrol for the three
year cycle of secondary schooling. Using official data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography Statistics (IBGE), Cardoso and Souza (2004) illustrate that there had been a deleterious relationship between Brazilian youth with child labour and school attendance between 1992 and 2001. In 1992, 36% of boys (and 19% of girls) between 10 and 17 were in the labour force. In 2001, these ratios had fallen to 24% (and 12%). The type of labour this sought to highlight in particular was the harsh kind synonymous with rural areas, specifically on sugar plantations that require the use of a manual workforce for agricultural purposes which entailed the dangerous usage of machetes, the hauling of crops that lead to injuries or herding for long hours at a time. In the urbanised areas young people worked at illegal jobs, such as hawking, prostitution and drug pedalling to either supplement their family income, which was in the lowest income quintile and they experience economic shock induced by the lack of social safety nets. One should also be made aware that this is the time Brazil that was going through a transitional period, an abertura which, as the democratisation process demanded, was going through austerity and economic re-structuring which mostly affects mostly the impoverished. These circumstances often bode ill for aspirations such as continuing with education and formal schooling for adolescent Brazilians.

The first education oriented social programme in Brazil was the Bolsa Escola Programme (School Grant). It is a Conditional Cash Transfer program (CCT) which offered mothers in poor households, with children between 6 and 15 years of age, a monthly stipend on regular a basis. There exist two components: one basic flat rate paid to families living in extreme poverty which has an administrative limit of R$70 per capita income irrespective of whether they have children, and an additional variable component which depends on a family’s composition. Families living with a monthly per capita income of less than R$140 are eligible for the variable component (Simoes & Sibates, 2014). Eligible households are paid according to the number of children they have, receiving R$32 (US$20) for each to a maximum of five up to the age of 15 (increased from 3 in 2011), plus a further R$38 each for up to two children aged 16-17 (Hall, 2012). The higher incentive that is provided for learners of the latter ages is precisely targeted at keeping them at school for longer. Children between the ages of 6-15 years are expected to register in a school and uphold a minimum day-to-day school attendance of 85%. Those between 16-17 years (secondary school) are expected to
attend for at least 75% of the time. Children under the age of seven years are expected to comply with Brazil’s childhood immunisation schedule and growth monitoring visits twice a year. After Dilma Rousseff succeeded to hold office in 2011, the maximum monthly payment increased from R$200 to R$242 (US$151) while the average benefits per family have rose from R$75 to R$115. Those monthly payments are made to women and are directly credited to beneficiaries’ electronic cards dependent upon compliance with applicable health and education prerequisites. This is noteworthy, because of women being assisted through the programme. It has also become an enabling tool; an empowering instrument that has provided deprived females and poor communities with a decision-making power in their own lives (de Brauw et al., 2014). Schools and health centres are responsible for reporting such compliance.

While Brazil is a relatively latecomer to the CCT domain in Latin America at national level, it has become the world’s largest programme. CCTs emerged in policy debates driven in the late 1980s and early 1990s on two strands (Lindert et al., 2007) that suggested on the one hand, providing minimum income not to the individual but the family. On the other hand, proposals were drawn up in an attempt to move beyond reducing poverty through superficial and seasonal methods that did not address the fundamental structural sources of poverty. Coming from a strong education policy making tradition of the PT, Cristovam Buarque former governor and senator of Brasilia is credited for having pioneered *Bolsa Escola* (Burton, 2012). When one looks closer, however, the PT, as depicted with the reconfiguring of its 1988 constitution, had been closely associated with grassroots activism and social awareness via alternative means of the educating and conscientising of people. For instance, Paulo Freire, whose thought further stimulated ideas on popular education and Human Rights Education (Wong, 1995), including a more ‘humanising’ pedagogy (Freire, 1970), and indeed the steps that would be taken by Buarque in propelling programmes as the *Bolsa Escola later on*, was the education secretary of the new PT administration in São Paulo in 1989 during a time when there was great innovation in non-militarist and participatory approaches that breathed new life into Leftist politics and the use of education as political tool. On the question of educators for instance Freire asserted that:

> Understanding the limits of educational practice requires political clarity on the part of educators with respect to their project. (...) I cannot recognise the
limits of the politico-educative practice in which I am involved if I do not know or if I am not clear about in whose favour I work (Freire, 1998 cited in Torres, 2014, p. 124-125).

Platforms such as the Education Issues Commission (CAED) had been created for the organic process of participatory action and rigorous educational policy debate that would define sessions that made up the municipal administrators, social activists, party members and PT officials. However, this would be abandoned as the Workers’ Party reinvented itself and took a reformist approach that was preparing itself for office (Burton, 2012). One argument for this approach was that the PT sought to dominate political power before the presidency due to the culture of militarisation that pervaded Latin America, an experience they heed from Salvador Allende in Chile by acknowledging that dominant strategic actors in the economic and political sphere could cause the failure of a progressive government.

The premise of linking school attendance to family cash assistance was based on the long term and impactful results that are associated with education, which has proved to be a superior poverty alleviation strategy, then looking at short term concerns. It is highlighted that structural conditions in the form of “economic restrictions can severely affect pattern of food consumption and limit access to medication, lowering nutritional and health standards within the household, and directly impacting on learning capacities and absenteeism” (Simoes & Sabates, 2014). CCT’s have provided more innovative ways to combat poverty and seeking to equalise society via government intervention. For instance, the mechanism and strategy devised is that the longer period learners (poor children) are kept in school via the Bolsa Familia Programme, the more effective the quality of the policy is enhanced at a substantive level. It was initiated under the auspices of the Cardoso administration, but it was the first time such a method would be fully facilitated at state level via the vehicle of the PT government. It is also an instrument of social policy which reflects the widespread perception found in the country that citizens are poor due to the “fault of an unjust society” attested to by 76% while 71% perceive that if it were not for state intervention, the poor “have very little chance to escape poverty” (Lindert et al.,2006). CCTs are synonymous with Latin America Opportunidade (formerly known as Progressa) in Mexico, Subsidio Unitario Familiar in Chile; Red de Proteccion Social in Nicaragua; Jefes de Hogar in Argentina, Familias en Accion in Colombia and Bono de Desarrollo Humano in
Ecuador and can also be found on other continents including India, Uganda, the Philippines and Indonesia. (Fiszbein & Schady, 2009) CCTs are seen as an alternative and innovative means of combating poverty. In Brazil it contributes to all 5 564 municipalities in the 27 states of Brazil and affects 13 million families or a quarter of the Brazilian population.

This is an illustration of where the illiteracy levels of children in Brazil were from the inception of *Bolsa Familia*. From a developmental perspective, the improvement of the literacy skills of children, i.e. those who can read and write, have improved. The regional illustration and the stark difference in levels are primarily due to historical and geographical differences. The North East, as a historically black and socially excluded (with *quilombos*) region in Brazil is far behind in percentage; the North is also historically excluded but also difficult to penetrate logistically and due to a lack of political will in the past, has had relatively slower progress. Despite these challenges there is great improvement shown since the PT government took office. On the other hand the South East has done fundamentally well, specifically as it is the wealthiest region and has had a head start. It also indicates the differing challenges municipalities have experienced with the implementation of *Bolsa Familia* in general.

---

13 The institute of Applied Economic Research IPEA is a Brazilian public foundation subordinated to the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management. It undertakes macroeconomic, sectoral and thematic research with the objective of helping the government in the production, analysis and diffusion of information and in the elaboration of public policies.
The prime condition for *Bolsa Escola* is that learners are obliged to maintain a suitable level of attendance at school. Chitolina *et al.* (2013) highlight the challenge of finding creative ways of enticing youth, who are making the transition between *Ensino Fundamental II* (middle school) and *Ensino Medio* (upper secondary). By the time learners make the transition into the late stages of formal schooling they are 15 years old, which has a high drop-out rate as they opt to go into the labour force. As a result in 2007 *Bolsa Familia* was extended to the *Benefício Variável Jovem* (BVJ) which is the Variable Benefit for Youngsters to accommodate these adolescents. This explains the notable increase in attendance between 2006 and 2009 due to the conditionality government imposed. Tougher economic conditions between 2011 and 2013 have put strain on improvement in this regard. Children between 4-5 years old have had the highest successful level in attendance. *Bolsa Escola* and *Bolsa Alimentacão* have added much needed relief for job-seeking parents with the knowledge that the state funded *Maternal I* to provide pre-school children with food and that they operate as a day-care centre. The discrepancy between boys and girls is because females tend to stay in formal schooling for a longer period, while boys are often forced into child labour due to economic circumstances (Chitolina *et al.*, 2013). It is with these policies that Brazil achieved its own MDG in 2007, which was to reduce poverty by 2015 to one quarter to its level in 1990 (25.6 percent).
Health in Brazil

There is only one patriotic programme for Brazil: sanitize. There is only one way to revamp the Brazilian voting system: sanitize. There is only one way of increasing production in Brazil: sanitize (Monteiro Lobato, 1918 cited in Lima, 2007)

Historically, Brazil has had a rather difficult history with health and this is particularly true of society in general but for the poor in particular. Lima (2007) illuminates how at the turn of the 20th century arguments made by intellectuals, medical doctors and social scientists were symbolic of inequality, political consciousness and dignity of the ordinary citizen. They emphasised the difference of industrialised coastal towns to those in rural regions and appealed to improvement of public health which they believed would undoubtedly improve human life as well as national unity. The above-mentioned quote by Lobato is an illustration of the insistence that confronting health should be a key element for social mobilisation, conscientisation and political agency in Brazil. While the first national agency for public health and disease control was established in 1920, Brazil’s public health system has its origin in the momentous Eloi Chaves Law which developed a social security system for urban workers in the private sector. The law was enacted in 1923 and it authorised the establishment of a privately run pension fund for all railway workers. It provided medical, retirement and survivors’ benefits (Elias & Cohn, 2003). However, it was not until the late 1980s, after the military regime was removed in 1985, that the health system truly becomes reconfigured. As would be regarded commonplace in Latin American politics in 20th century, the entrenched culture of militarisation and the transition to the democratic state was ripe for neoliberal democracy to dominate the political and socio-economic space (Vanden & Prevost, 2015). This is particularly demonstrated through the Washington Consensus, SAPs and the influence of IFIs which ensured that market friendly policies were adhered to by the government of the day. The privatisation and decentralisation of public sector services to sub-national levels of government would be taken over by the market with less government visibility on desirable programmes.

In Brazil’s case Elias and Cohn (2003) illustrate the dichotomy that the Elois Law created in the health care system. They note that there was a genuine obstacle to public health care
because the formal economy was tied to social security and supplied limited services only to formal workers in organised sectors, while the general public remained ostracised and dependent on resources from a government apathetic to the needs of the poor. For example in 1975, 68.4% of the hospitals beds in Brazil were private. This distinction is that private practice medicine was reserved for the empowered. Individual’s social and civil rights were directly related to their position in the labour market. Concurrently, government administered medicine was only delivered to clinics and hospitals and was not adequate to cater to the needs of the wider populace (Elias & Cohn, 2003).

However, the impetus that led to the construction of Brazil’s *Sistema Unico de Saude* (SUS) or the Unified Healthcare System was promulgated by progressive political parties (Communist Party and Workers’ Party), and social movements (including the Catholic Church) in solidarity with a coalition commonly referred to as the Brazilian Sanitary Reform Movement or *Sanitaristas*, which was fundamentally opposed to privatisation. This movement began in the mid-1970s during the quest for democracy. This movement simultaneously challenged the hegemonic medical framework, which excluded primary health care from the public. Similar to the Venezuelan experience, the World Health Assembly of 1977, in which the WHO in partnership with UNESCO, proposed for ‘Health for All by the Year 2000’. In addition, the first International Conference on Primary Health Care in Alma-Ata in 1978 would give great drive to the developing nations particularly in Latin America. Furthermore, the Ottawa Charter (1986), influenced by Alma-Ata, further promoted the ‘notion of health as quality of life, resulting from a complex process conditioned by various factors, such as diet, social justice, the eco-system, income and education’ (dos Reis Moreira & Dwyer, 2013, p. 2).

One effective tactic that became synonymous with general dissatisfaction with the military regime was to have massive cycles of strikes and rallies which were in essence led by the labour movement (Haag, 2012). It was sparked by the 1978 metalworkers’ union downing of tools in the industrial belt of the São Paulo ABCD region for a salary increase. The strike action spread into other sectors but would be curtailed by the economic recession of 1980 to only start back in 1983 in the form of a more “class conscious, radicalised and new trade unionism” (Santana & Braga, 2009). This period would also coincide with the formation of the Workers’ Party in 1980 which would be instrumental in propelling an invigorated
activism in Brazil led by future president Lula Inacia da Silva. In the health sector this cycle of strikes would be used to articulate the real effects of the miserable state of Brazilian health under the primarily private system. These public events drew large attendance of 300 to 3000 people per event, where findings and statistical data were discussed and debated for appropriate strategies of taking on private entities and the cruel regime. This tool was useful to promote the Alma Ata vision of universal health care. It highlighted the intellectual framework under which the general public was working, whereby the current political dispensation could be taken on through empirical data. As such, the movement founded strong research organisations in 1979; namely the Brazilian Health Studies Center (Cebes) and Brazilian Association for the Post-graduate Studies in Collective Health (Abrasco) (Dowbor, 2011). One could argue that the Alma-Ata Conference was used as a political cover for an intensive mobilisation tool against the oppressive regime and in conscientising the popular masses at the same time.

Another example is the second momentum shift that was built on the movement towards the historic 8th National Conference of 1986. This was assisted by the Ministry of Health, who empathised and supported the position of the Sanitaristas against the military regime. They ensured a congregation of thousands of community health activists were present at the conference. Members of Sanitaristas manoeuvred into strategically viable bureaucratic positions that would facilitate crucial steps in the realisation of universal primary health care. This was done in the mid-eighties via the Ministry of Social Security and Assistance and the Ministry of Health. They were leveraged to further consolidate the path towards a unified health system (Elias & Cohn, 2003). The 1986 national conference would in the past only be open to private health companies and government officials. With the Sanitaristas embedded in it, it led to health being held under the slogan “the duty of state and the right of the citizen” (Cornwall & Shankland, 2008). It would only be through the National Constituent Assembly (1987-1988) that the movement would have the approval secured. The SUS was ensured and enacted in the 1988 Constitution which stated that health care was to be recognised as universal right and not merely reserved for the privileged.

Brazil Constitution
As the result of the 1988 constitution health in Brazil is considered to be the right of all and a duty of the State and is guaranteed by means of social and economic policies aimed at
reducing health risks of illness. Article 198 in the Brazilian Constitution states that health is a social right:

Health actions and public services integrate a regionalised and hierarchical network and constituted system, organised according to the following directives: i) decentralisation, with a single management in each sphere of government; ii) full service, priority being given to preventive activities, without prejudice to assistance services; iii) participation of the community.

It further continues in paragraph 4 that;

The local managers of the United Health System may admit community health agents and enemy combat agents, by means of a public admission process, in accordance with the nature and complexity of the assignments and with specific requirements of performance

(Constitution of Brazil: Article 198 paragraph 4).

This article can be viewed as one that allows favourable assertion for participatory democracy at the grassroots levels, which further appreciates the role that was played by groups such as the Sanitary Reform Movement and civil society groups in the formation of the SUS. The struggle for democratisation was borne out of cynicism and distrust of the dictatorship and bureaucratic partiality of an oppressive state whereby health reformers aligned to these groups \textit{(Sanitaristas)} would innovate towards policies aimed at addressing Brazil’s inequalities. The formal introduction of “popular health councils” which grew out of a need for service accountability not met by the São Paulo residents who would eventually formulate a legitimate position, which ensured that it would be mandatory for each municipality and state in the country to establish Conselhos de Saude or health councils (Costa cited in Cornwall & Shankland, 2008). Furthermore, Conselhos were attributed extensive power of spending oversight, and federal transfers of funding made provisional on their approval of budget and health plans. Cornwall and Shankland (2008) illustrated that by 1999, 85% of Brazil’s 5,560 municipalities had established a health council. One can observe that São Paulo was a pivotal point for continued participatory democratic action that was sparked by workers’ unions of the mid-seventies.

On the other hand, Article 198 articulates the role of the private sector which was for them to take advantage of as their democratic right, it states that:
Private institutions may participate in a supplementary manner in the unified health system, in accordance with the directives established by the latter, by means of public law contracts or agreements, preference being given to philanthropic and non-profit entities (Brazil Constitution: Article 199, paragraph 1).

The traditional conservative political parties had enough lobbying power to ensure that the private sector was represented in the body of the constitution. It is significant that this fact would be further exploited by neoliberal policies that were pushed by the Presidents who were to follow the military regimes.

As a means to solidify the constitution, Law No. 8080 was established on September 19, 1990 regulating, in all its territory, the actions and health services, carried out independently or together, permanently or intermittently, by individuals or public or private legal entities. The law further determines that the duty of the State to guarantee health consists of the planning and execution of economic and social policies... and to guarantee the universal and equal access to the actions and services for its promotion, protection and recovery (Law Library of Congress, 2009).

Arretche (2005 cited in Cornwall & Shankland, 2008) highlights that the rights based SUS has an unlikely possibility of undergoing any significant change; it is a document that is depoliticised, in that it has no political and policy affiliation to a party or regime. The document is distinctive because it has become embedded in the very fabric of the state, and become very difficult to supplant. The implications of this suggest that even if there was to be a more conservative party in power in Brazil, as illustrated firstly in the form of Collor de Mello, who supported a neo-liberal policy on health and remained aloof to the founding principles of the binding document and after his impeachment in 1992, the health sector reform strengthened and revived its position (of universal health) to a decentralisation stance. This would ensure the process of ushering in the family healthcare strategy that would benefit all of its citizens. Similarly, with Fernando Henrique Cardoso in 1994, (when he was elected and re-elected in 1998) he opted to continue with market-friendly policies that promoted the structural adjustments that allowed private institutions free reign. The kind of changes desirable on an inclusive level are only notable with the commencement of Lula da Silva in 2002 who was a member of the Workers’ Party. There is greater veracity in
implementation of the programmes, however, these are only visible in his second term when he adopts a more developmental stance on policies.

**Primary Health Care**

Referring to the Alma Ata Conference of 1978 primary health care is promoted within the community sphere as most essential for a successful model. For instance they report that primary health care

> Requires and promotes maximum community and individual self-reliance and participation in the planning, organisation, operation and control of primary health care, making fullest use of local, national and other available resources; and to this end develops through appropriate education the ability of communities to participate (Alma Ata Declaration 1978).

In Brazil the SUS takes this route. What is significant in the level of involvement in Brazilian communities is both ideological and political expediency. People understood that if it is their right (as well as in the Alma Ata motto of ‘Health for All’) they should play an active role in their health system. Government also acknowledged that there had to be a complementary relationship with municipal governments and that buy-in from the private sector for funding, but primarily as it was predominantly in private hands. This would particularly aid in ensuring that the decentralisation at the municipal level was achieved. To demonstrate this, Melo (1993 cited in Cornwall & Shankland, 2008) highlights the lobbying efforts of health professionals before the existence of the SUS programme. Melo and Rezende (2004 cited in Cornwall & Shankland, 2008) further asserts that greater initiative was taken by municipalities by playing a fundamental role in driving the health programmes through health councils especially in massively populated areas like the south-east region, but equally essential in rural areas where of the North East had previously been excluded and where unacceptable disparities existed.

Decentralisation was achieved through adopting specific financial incentives i.e. direct payment for services provided to the SUS (ambulatory care and hospitalisation by private companies) and fixed “per-capita” transfers for basic health epidemiological activities, etc. (Elias & Cohn, 2003). This tactic was useful in the proposed approaches to the Family Health Strategy. Professionals were trained for the Community Health Agents Programme (PACS) based on trial developed in the North East of the country. Community Health Agents (ACS)
are trained to take on 100-250 families – not more than 750 people. Initially, there were no physicians in PACS, as a result the work was supervised by a nurse. Now they are composed of one doctor, one nurse, one auxiliary nurse, and four to six community health workers. The family physician provides the highest level of healthcare within the family health-care team (FHT) and is responsible for advancing the affected persons to secondary and tertiary care. Victora et al. (2011) underscore the fact that healthcare clinics reported that referrals to secondary care services are more effective when the referrals come from FHT. They further assert that while progress may have been minimal in the initial stages in the North and North-eastern region where programmes began, the emphasis was on reducing care gaps where public primary care networks had not existed before or had displayed minimal activity. The PACS and Family Health Programme was part of the government’s restructuring primary health care and indeed the SUS health care models (dos Reis Moreira & O’Dwyer, 2013).

The Family Health Programme through the FHT provide the first contact point with the local health system, coordinate care and work towards integration with diagnostic, specialist and hospital care. Each FHT is responsible for a defined catchment area consisting of approximately 1,000 families or between 3,000 and 4,500 individuals. For services such as health promotion, activities take place at health facilities including family health units and in households whereby responsibility is shared amongst the FHTs. The team is extended to also include one dentist, one oral health assistant and a single oral health technician. This is an initiative experienced a positive surge at the commencement of Lula da Silva’s presidency in 2003 after the Smiling Brazil Programme was introduced (Mesquita et al., 2014). In essence these are two programmes, one which is integrated within the Brazilian primary health system and the other (Smile Program) coincides with an international oral programme that seeks to improve quality of life. The smile programme is elaborated on under the secondary health section. Navarro et al. (2012), illustrate that there is a direct correlation in health disparities and general vulnerability with the level of education (of one’s parents), geographic location, family structure, age and gender. Oral health also correlates with the question of sustenance and the ability to eat food and may further highlight the kinds of nourishment the family receives. The government’s attempt of
ensuring these are tested in an appropriate environment (through FHTs), it assists in mitigating a levelling of socio-economic deficits.

The Family Health Programme has expanded significantly since its inception in 1994. There has been gradual improvement in the amount of people affected. Results show that in 1998 there were 3,062 family healthcare teams in 1,134 municipalities, by 2011 numbers had increased to 31,981 healthcare teams from 5,279 municipalities (dos Reis Moreira & Dwyer, 2013).

**Secondary Health Care**

The question around secondary health care in Brazil has been contentious because of the nature of the public and private relationship involved (Victora et al., 2011). Secondary health care is primarily administered by the private sector to which the public sector remains dependent through contract agreements (paid for by the SUS) out-of-pocket hospital and ambulatory care as mentioned above. This is also done through the supply of medication/drugs, private health care and insurance. This is a result of private health care historically being privileged by the state, where specialist, diagnostic and therapeutic clinics and private hospitals existence remain protected and under private control (International Business Publications, 2013). Private health care and insurance plans are not readily available for the poor majority as these forums are primarily utilised by private and public employees i.e. middle and upper class clients (Victora et al., 2011). Due to Brazil’s federal state one could also understand that the distribution of resources has been a matter of dispute. The South East region (made up of Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Espírito Santo) for instance, is the wealthiest and most populous area with 42% of the population. According to the National Health Agency it has 65% of private health care (Gordon, Xu and Xie, n.d.).

To gauge how government’s response has been effective, the following programmes are worth observing: The National Health System was able to introduce emergency mobile

---

14.“From 1999 to 2012, 66% of the country’s 7,806 hospitals, 70% of its 485,000 hospital beds, and 87% of its 723 specialised hospitals belonged to the private sector. In the area of diagnostic support and therapy, 95% of the 7,318 establishments were also private. 73% of the 41 ambulatory care facilities were operated by the public. Hospital beds in the public sector were distributed as follows: surgery 21%, clinical medicine 30%, paediatrics 17%, obstetrics 14%, psychiatry 11%, and other areas 7%” in International Business Publications 2013, USA Washington DC USA-Brazil Healthcare Sector Organisation, Management and Payment Systems Handbook: Volume 1 Strategic Information and Regulation
medical services or **Serviço Atendimento Móvel de Urgência** (SAMU) 24 hour clinics in 2008 to assuage the pressure on hospital emergency departments. The call for emergency treatment can be traced to approximately six years earlier by the Ministry of Health in the document “Portaria 2048” (Vieira & Mussi, 2007). The purpose of SAMU is to ensure free primary level healthcare to those affected on levels that require clinical, surgical, traumatic and psychiatric intensification outside the premises of hospitals. Government has to ensure that secondary health care confronts the structural inequality that Brazil has accumulated over time. This has been achievable through the reinforcement of the rights of those with mental illness.

The Psychiatric Reform Law was passed in 2001 and ensured outpatient services where psycho-social care centres and psychosocial support and rehabilitation centres are made available for those leaving primary care (Victora *et al*., 2011). While this may be viewed as commendable, this psychiatric reform has also received criticism as an expedient means to limit supply in poorer communities and reduce the budget of mental health (Andreoli *et al*., 2007). This is to say that community health programmes can be further disadvantageous to many, particularly due to Brazil’s demography which hinges on significant racial and class disparities. The goal of the psychosocial support is to aid the individual and the family, through the process of social inclusion, abstinence and prevent them from further harming themselves.

Since 2003 specialised centres for oral health have also been created. It is suggested that before the oral health team was integrated into the family health strategy 80% of adults and more than 90 % of the elderly had dental difficulties or complications (Navarro *et al*., 2012). Smiling Brazil was driven around the following strategies as Navarro *et al*., (2012) further suggest, are promoting the reorganisation of primary and specialised care by implementing Dental Speciality and Regional Dental Prosthesis Laboratories with the subsequent principal services that are readily accessible; oral diagnosis, with distinctive consideration to oral cancer diagnosis, specialised periodontics, minor oral surgery on both soft and hard tissues, endodontics and services for patients with special needs.
Tertiary and Hospital Care

Tertiary health care is specialised consultative care from either primary or secondary medical care staff. It has been particularly challenging because of the high-cost of the procedures that are required for implementation. Since government pays for the services of the private sector contractors through the SUS programme (including hospitalisation, facility maintenance) and the increasing pressure of having medical personnel unwilling to work in the destitute branches that are historically disadvantaged, poor and on the periphery has challenged the question of quality of care. The structural inequality, the relative deprivation of the favelas to wealthy areas or the remoteness of areas i.e. the Amazon, are unappealing to traditional doctors, but become attractive to young doctors. One effective way of dealing with such strains of a lack of doctors has been for the government to invest intensively in Integrated Management Illnesses (IMCI) or syndromic management of sexually transmitted illnesses (STI). These are specialised intensive courses that supplement the family health care strategy. The WHO (2013) highlights this approach as one of the most effective means of combating STIs, particularly where laboratory facilities are lacking for appropriate etiological diagnosis of STIs. Although there are specialised centres made available for counselling and treatment in some cities, these may not be enough. One way to overcome the question of health professionals in Brazil was to import the service of Cuban medical workers.

This is a highly publicised and contested programme between the two governments. The programme is called Mais Medicos or More Doctors and since 2013 the Brazilian Federal government has agreed to pay the Cuban government US $700 million (The Economist, 2014) in exchange for 11,456 Cuban medical professionals. The first 400 of the agreed number arrived in Fortaleza on 26 August 2013. The health workers were dispersed in over 2,700 towns and cities across the length and breadth of the Brazil. In Brazil there are 1.8 doctors for every 1,000 inhabitants. This is one of the lowest doctor patient ratios in the world. Mais Medicos seeks to raise the rate to 2.5 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants. Additionally there are fewer nurses than required. Brazil ought to be operating at 3 nurses per doctor but they are only able to manage 2 per doctor. This has been met with fierce disapproval by the local doctors who feel that the government is unduly disadvantaging them against foreign nationals. They reacted in a predictable manner similar to the way in...
which Venezuelan traditional doctors reacted to *Barrio Adentro* use of Cuban health workers.

**Salário Mínimo**

While the objective is to highlight the measures carried out by the Workers’ Party government to alleviate poverty through the sectors of Education and Health, it is equally imperative to highlight the mammoth contribution made by this Government in advancing the idea of *Sálario Mínimo* or Minimum Wage. Before unpacking the politics that surround *Sálario Mínimo*, it is necessary to provide a formal definition. According to a notion endorsed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), minimum wage may be defined as:

> The minimum sum payable to a worker for work performed or services rendered, within a given period, whether calculated on the basis of time or output, which may not be reduced either by individual or collective agreement, which is guaranteed by law and which may be fixed in such a way as to cover the minimum needs of the worker and his or her family, in the light of national economic and social conditions.

International Labour Conference, 103rd Session, 2014 (p19)

From this definition, one can deduce from its elemental conception, that minimum wage safeguards workers and ensures a just and equitable wage system against poor work pay and therefore estimates how much a worker “needs” in order to have “a living wage.” The argument often brought forward against minimum wage, and perhaps adopted in the spirit of competition (as it pertains to capitalism), is the worker’s skill level, experience or general productivity. What is meant by this is that the exploitation conundrum of low wage stresses the callousness of the employer rather than the inherent consequences of competition. The nature of economics is such that it tends to be drawn to all matters relating to profit making. Arguing for this view, Thomas Sowell (2015) highlights that “hiring low paid workers presented such an opportunity, that is, if exploitation had some substantive economic meaning, the competition attracted would bid their wages up and keep more fully employed than others. In fact however, their marginal desirability to employers is indicated by their precarious and intermittent employment patterns and by their generally high rates of
unemployment.” By this argument, it would seem that, the unintended consequence of minimum wage is how uncertainty is created for the continued employment of people, especially when one looks at the prices versus demand concept of economics. When the price of labour is raised, then the demand for such labour almost incidentally drops. The rationale for the Workers’ Party however, considering its constituency and the history of low wages, is precisely based on the cruelty of a system work and the need to regulate it. Complementing other social policies (Bolsa Família, Bolsa-Alimentação etc.), Sálario Mínimo was introduced to create a more equitable society against hazardous effects of the market. Observing the impact of the 2008 financial crisis in Brazil, regularising employment and further raising minimum wage value, was an effort to stimulate economic growth through increasing income. What this enabled was to create a long term basis for security levels, favourable for investments related to the increase in local consumption and demands for infrastructure which stimulates growth (Barbosa de Melo et al. 2012). We should also be reminded, that minimum wage, as an idea, appears throughout the key moments of the ILO, when principles and priorities were defined. These include the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and then at the 26th Session of the International Labour Conference in Philadelphia in 1944 (Reynaud 2017). In view of this, and in light of Brazil’s dexterity and usage of multilateral platforms (Mantzikos, 2010), galvanising for the principle that improves workers’ lives and having it legitimised internationally, would be the ultimate win, at home and abroad. Contrary to how opponents of minimum wage may view this policy, Brazil’s multi-sector approach to curb the deep inequality gap, has resulted in a decline in unemployment, an increase in formal employment and the augmentation of the Brazilian consumer market.

Racial Redress in Brazil
As a matter of geographical coincidence and practicality Brazil became the first contact point of the Americas between Africans on board slave-ships taken against their will to the New World. As a result, only Nigeria has more black people in one state than Brazil - 40 percent of all slaves in the Americas were brought there (Ribeiro, 2000). One should be reminded that the Portuguese colony was the last Latin American country to abolish slavery in 1888; this was predictable as the colonialist there had the most to lose. It would also seem plausible that Brazil through the elements of its Eurocentric and the severity of the “coloniality of power” referred to by Quijano (2000), were undeniable.
While these constructs of race pervaded the Americas, Brazil’s Iberian lineage is worth acknowledging as key factor in understanding the dynamics of the question of race there. *Mestiçagem* or miscegenation of society stems from the Iberian Peninsula’s culture which blurred the lines on race as the Spaniards and Portuguese have a mixed heritage through wars, the interaction of religion, and trade with North Africans. It should however be mentioned that racial discrimination and racist sentiment against people of African descent are traced back to this period before global mercantilism, the industrial revolution or even the development of capital markets (Hanchard, 1994). Russell Hamilton (cited in Moraña et al., 2008) highlights that Brazil was far more accepting of intellectuals, novelists and other celebrated figures of Afro-Brazilian origin, where *mestiços* and *pardos* have represented the racial hybridity, Afro-Brazilians and the indigenous population add to the configuration of a unique Creole civilisation. For instance, the leading nineteenth century novelist, Machado de Assis was *mestiço* (mixed race), or more precisely, a quadroon (i.e. one quarter black and three quarters white). This mantra became worthwhile and opportune as Brazil was almost able to extricate whatever notions that may have come to represent the region as particularly racialised. This ‘inclusivity’ illustrated the ambiguity of the nationalism that symbolised Brazil’s unique miscegenation experience (Cleary, 1999, p. 5). Such triumphalism was exhibited by the 1930s work by Gilberto Freyre, the *Master and the Slave*, a romanticisation of Brazil’s uniqueness that celebrates all cultures and races. Brazil’s “racial democracy” was thus born.

When one scrapes the surface of Brazil’s racial democracy and looks at the demographics, statistics per region, perceptions on race and socio-economic status (Perlman, 2006; Burgard, 2002), it becomes clearer to see why such a notion as racial democracy seems embellished at a social and political level too as primarily to eliminate responsibility of the elites to endeavour for change and transformation against their White privilege (Blum, 2008).

The persistence of racism means that racial ascriptions have negative consequences for some and positive consequences for others – creating, in particular, the white skin privilege that it is so easy for people who have it to

---

15 Pardo is sometimes taken to mean ‘mulatto’ in Brazil, however it is sometimes also used to refer to other mixed bloods. e.g. European/Black, Black/Indian
forget; and it is clear, too, that for those who suffer from the negative consequences, racial identification is a predictable response, especially where the project it suggests is that the victims should join together to resist it (Appiah, 1996)

The above-mentioned Appiah quote is significant because it reflects the unacknowledged and insufferable condition under which Afro-Brazilian continued to exist – in what became a normative societal description that was promulgated by advocates of the so-called racial democracy (Hanchard, 1994, p. 105). However, from the 1950s to the 1980’s intellectuals like Florestan Fernandes vociferously dismissed racial democracy as a virtuous state of existence primarily as a disingenuous tool of maintaining an unjust and unequal state (Guimaraes, 2003). In the Preface of the book by Abdias do Nascimento “The Racial Democracy in Brazil: Myth or Reality?” she asserts that:

(ABdias) does not speak of a “Second Abolition” or locate black and mulatto segments of the Brazilian population as African stocks with peculiar cultural traditions and historical destinies. In sum, for the first time, the definition of democracy in a multiracial society emerges: either that society is democratic for all races and confers economic, social and cultural equality on all of them, or there is no such thing as a multiracial democratic society (Guimaraes in Souza & Sinder, 2005, p. 131).

The quote above illustrates the unambiguous notion to which racial democracy should be held and that in the form in which it was corroborated by the elite and indeed the military regime, was a myth. Furthermore, this false nation-building mechanism of racial democracy enabled only a few light-skinned and mixed-race Brazilians to move up the social mobility ladder. Activists against it sought to highlight how through branqueamento (whitening) and Mestiçagem the Brazilian society through a combination of European immigration incentives which encouraged racial mixture only to diminish and render invisible the persons of African descent (Martinez-Echazabal, 1998). Thus the protests against the oppressive military rule that had begun through Sanitaristas, trade unionists including the Workers’ Party and nationwide activism for human rights and dignity also encouraged a
movement that inspired the formation of the Unified Black Movement (MNU) in the late 1970s.

**The Unified Black Movement (MNU) in Brazil**

Nationwide activism included environmental and indigenous groups such as MST (Landless Rural Workers Movement) as well as women’s and student groups. The MNU was to be the most significant push against racism due to the historical moment to which ordinary Brazilians were driving. It was prompted by the torture and killing of a black taxi driver by the São Paulo police in April 1978. On 18 June 1978 black activists met and formed the *Movimento Negro Unificado Contra a Discriminação Racial* (MNUCDR). The purpose was firstly to have a united voice under which Brazilians of African descent could rally against the inequality, exclusion and hypocritical manner they believed to have been subjected to in the normative Brazilian society. Racial classification in Brazil has been challenging due to the nature in which ‘blackness’ has been a historically pejorative feature in the Brazilian society. In 1976, The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) conducted a study whereby it requested people to identify their own skin colour. There were 134 terms recorded (Classifications in L. America, 1999), perhaps desiring to distance themselves from the colour black primarily through the racist cultural project of *mestiçagem*. The MNU initiated the process and afforded people the opportunity to self-identify as Black which was much more politically assertive. Today the official classification of race/skin colour in Brazil is composed of five categories White (*Branco*), Brown (*Pardo*), Black (*Preto*), Yellow (*Amarela*) and Indigenous.

This self-realisation process was a contribution to the Brazilian socio-political space. It was also consistent with the international climate they had found themselves immersed in. Afro-Brazilians drew encouragement from Black Nationalist and liberation movements in Africa, especially in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau as Lusophone states. Youth simultaneously identified with reggae, soul and funk musicians like Bob Marley, Aretha Franklin, and James Brown. It also included looking at the achievements of the civil rights movement through leaders like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr.

Siwi (2004) illustrates the importance of events in the Salvador region with an even more pronounced Black identity through groups like Ile Aiye and Olodum. The 1980s in Brazil
depicted a growing movement from Afro-Brazilians who drew symbolism from ancient civilizations – those of Egypt, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and elsewhere, including welcoming the histories of the quilombos as part of their heritage. This overt showing of Black pride and anti-racism was frowned upon on the level that it was “un-Brazilian” primarily as it discomforted those that hung on to illusory claims of racial democracy. Sansone (2004) asserts that the drive by MNU and Blocos Afro like Il Aiye and Olodum (Cultural Community Groups) through symbolism is as much the opposition to racism as it is the articulation of black pride. From this pride, which is sought foremost within “black spaces,” (through those representations), blacks seek to relate to non-blacks from a position of strength. Similarly, in the quest towards understanding public spaces, “subaltern counter-publics,” a term adopted from Nancy Fraser suggests these groups signal “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinate social groups invent and circulate counter-discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs.” (Fraser, 1990, p. 67).

The early and mid-1980s was the same period in which the Workers’ Party started changing its appeal towards electoral power. Social movements within civil society had become attractive for exhibiting the openness of the party led by Lula da Silva. In this period a group of centrist petistas, in an effort to appeal and maintain the relationship between party and various social movements, including MNU, formed a group called Articulação. Articulação sought to have party members to increase membership in social movements and for party leaders to promote internal democratic debate and thereby maintain the openness of the party, but race was hardly an important question, precisely because the party did not have visible Afro-Brazilians leaders (Warner, 2005, p. 14). Simultaneously, for MNU, the democratic process was incomplete precisely at the time of Brazil’s 1988 Centennial celebration of the abolition of slavery which coincided with the writing of the new constitution. While the constitution remains one of the more progressive of any country seeking to address racial redress and discrimination, in 1989, along with Ile Aiye and Olodum, the MNU rallied against state government to adopt an amendment to the Bahian Constitution condemning racial discrimination. This was an illustration of the importance to which groups such as MNU further contributed to the early domestication of the Federal Republic’s new laws, which had a direct bearing on discriminatory practice affecting

The UN Commission of Human Rights special reporter (1995) highlights how Mrs Ruth Cardoso, first lady at the time; criticised the Brazilian education system referring to it as ‘discriminatory’ and further engendering that it produced a ‘racist form of society.’ We can deduce from the history and the agitations of MNU that the nature of racism, as covert as it has been in Brazil, has simultaneously appeared as a denial of Blacks and the presence of Blackness have been particularly deleterious and harsh. It has been dehumanising. Through centuries of oppression, segregation, ill-treatment and exclusion on all levels of society – it is rather difficult for one to argue for the racial harmony so professed in the ‘racial democracy’ rhetoric, including when the structural inequality has such racial overtones, and when social stratification has been slanted against people of a darker hue and through Brazil’s own pervasive prejudice, discrimination and racism as the report by Mr Maurice Glelehanhanzo entails (UNCHR Report, 1995). Essentially, in the aspect of education and socio-economic impact; which has manifested in the manner which Mrs Cardoso describes it, is that Afro-Brazilian Culture is presented as folklore. Not as a living, perpetuated and inhibited reality, but as living in the past. Black children were previously unable to identify with the education provided. The inclination and societal norm was to train them as footballers, musicians and artists. In 1995, it was highlighted that 12 Whites out of 100 attend university whereas barely 1 out of 100 Blacks manages to make it. President Cardoso’s 1996 Human Rights Plan was the first time that Brazilian government admitted the presence of racial inequality (Warner, 2005). It was, however, a vague response that had no valuable articulation of a way forward (Toste Daflon et al., 2013). His attempts at both the 2nd National Plan on Human Rights in 2002 and the Affirmative Action National Plan in the same year were unsuccessful, perhaps because of a lack of conviction for authentic programs that addressed racial inequality. Adversely, it was *Bolsa Familia and Zero Fome*
through greater impetus from the Workers’ Party that sought to address the majority of poor homes in which largely Afro-Brazilians were consequently positively affected. By enabling poor families to take their children through basic education the payoff has been such that it has become an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty. Immediately after being elected in office, Lula established the Secretariat for Policies Promoting Racial Equality (SEPPRIR); a ministry-level agency that dealt with discrimination. As of 2000, 42% of the black population had no education compared to 23% of Whites and 1.41%; Blacks held an advanced degree, compared to 6.59% among Whites. In 2003, the year Lula da Silva took office more than 72% of the undergraduates at the University of Rio de Janeiro, the country’s largest university, were white, even though 54% of Rio de Janeiro State is white according to the 2000 census (Toste Daflom et al., 2013).

However, the most challenging issue for the Workers’ Party government has been to build on those gains to the tertiary level. One mechanism used to enforce on the stringent, traditional bureaucratic space of tertiary has been through direct imposition of Affirmative Action.

**Affirmative Action and Tertiary Education:**
Affirmative Action can generally be defined as redistributive programmes targeted at providing goods to specific groups who are discriminated against: i.e. victims of past and/or present socio-economic, political and cultural exclusion. It is centred on promoting equality and opportunity. In this spirit, affirmative action pointed in the direction of public universities is a much desirable good and capable of maintaining and improving one’s social status and increasing one’s income.

The Workers’ Party government that took over from the Cardoso Administration, 14 years after independence from the military regime, asserted itself to bring about fundamental change, and has undoubtedly been the most effective in transformative justice and racial inequality for all Brazilians. In essence, Brazil began instituting affirmative action policies in 2001 when the Minister of Agriculture issued an executive order mandating that twenty percent of his staff be Black, that twenty percent of the staff of firms contracting with the agency be of Afro-descent and that another twenty percent of each firm’s staff be women (Hernandez, 2004). Thereafter, the Federal Supreme Court and all other cabinet agencies
instituted affirmative action policies as well including, through tertiary education which has proved to be controversial.

As elaborated in the previous chapter on the consequences of racial inequality, the effect it has had on the disproportionate availability of resources limits continuation of formal schooling at the basic education level and by definition to higher education. The disempowerment (through lack of representation of history) and enforcement of children into labour curtails any inkling that one may remove oneself from the vicious circle of abject poverty. It is the very conditions to which “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” underlined an urgent need for new education models and also to oppose inherent racism and inequality in a traditionally segregated Brazilian structure. Thus it was an opportunity to challenge higher education structures which, through their autonomy from the state, has had debilitating effects on the practice of both informal and de facto forms of racial discrimination and exclusion of both students and professionals of Afro-Brazilian descent. One should also be reminded of the elitism that is generally associated with higher education. Brazil has a first class public university system. However there is a standardised, rigorous exam known as the vestibular for admission which has proven to be an obstacle for learners from poor public schooling and has proved favourable for private school learners (Cicalo, 2013, p. 115). With a far greater number of white learners in private schools it underlines and perpetuates the discriminatory conditions whereby already privileged groups find themselves (Oliven, 2012, p. 1304-1305).

A system of quotas was first introduced for ‘black’ students in 2003 by the University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ). UERJ also followed financial criteria: quota applicants independent of their pigmentation have had to prove their legibility and that they are carente, or in need, specifically on the issue of their family per capita income. A percentage of places for these students are allocated. Currently, the State of Rio de Janeiro’s law reserves 20% of places on each course for students who have self-identified as negros (Black) indígena (Indigenous), a further 20% for students from public schools, while a remaining 5% are assigned to disabled people and other combined residual categories (Cicalo, 2013, p. 116). The same procedure occurred in the region synonymous with a thriving participatory democracy system (Aragones & Sanchez-Pages, 2009). Porto Alegre has been an appropriate location for an inclusive mechanism utilised within public
universities. Driven by the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), one of Brazil’s top research universities – the inclusive participatory culture of Porto Alegre was captured when the UFRGS academic community deliberated on implementing quotas for its different courses. Interest groups which included leaders of black movements and indigenous communities were heard. The University Council instituted an Affirmative Action Programme which targeted places in all undergraduate courses for candidates produced through public elementary and secondary school with self-declaration of race also being a pivotal factor\textsuperscript{16}.

Another form of an inclusionary policy in higher education has been through the Restructuring and Expanding Federal Universities (REUNI). It was launched by the Lula administration in 2007 and aimed at expanding the availability of placement for undergraduate students in the federal higher education sector. The objective was to target the elitist disposition of public higher education by making junior degrees more accessible to low income students in urban and less developed areas. As such there has been an increase in the number of new institutions since 2003. 14 new federal universities and more than 100 campuses of new and existing universities were produced. This resulted in the establishment of new undergraduate courses, more vacancies and a greater reach of the public sector in less developed areas (Oliven, 2012).

Detractors of affirmative action policies include much of the media, which is largely criticised for the portrayal of Brazil as an entirely white population, private school students, their parents and institutions that value racial democracy. They cite values of meritocracy and the suggested belief that affirmative action admits unqualified students to higher education institutions and for the first time divides Brazil into a country of Black and White. One of the challenges of the policy stems from the high levels of miscegenation which have

\textsuperscript{16}In UFRGS, in 2007 only 3.27% of admitted students self-declared as black. In the following year, this figure rose to 11.03%. In the higher density courses a fivefold increase in the number of blacks. In the medium density courses, the increase was almost fourfold that are less appealing to the better-off students, as they provide fewer opportunities in the labour market (Oliven, 2012)
made it difficult to distinguish people according to the race to which they belong. Fifty-one percent of Brazilians self-identify as Black (6.9%) or pardo (44.2%) according to the 2010 Brazilian Census. It was considered a landmark because prior to that Brazilians often self-identified as white primarily due to the stigmatisation of being black historically.

On 29 August 2012, President Dilma Rousseff enacted Lei de Cotas (Law 12. 711, known as the “Law of Social Quotas”) which obliges all public federal educational institutions to ensure the reservation of at least half of their seats for applicants who graduated from public high schools in four years. Half of the seats kept for low-income families (regardless of their race) and for those who declare themselves as black, pardo or indigenous with respect to demographics. The ground-breaking law arose from Action of Brazil’s Democratic Party (DEM) v. Quotas of the University of Brasilia (UNB) and in Brazil. The case was brought by DEM against the UNB, which reserves twenty percent of its enrolment positions for Afro-Brazilians, Pardos and indigenous students. The DEM disputed that the policy was unconstitutional under Article 5 of the Brazilian Constitution which protects equality for all citizens regardless of race. The Tribunal rejected DEM’s claim, finding the quotas to be the best method to remedy the racial inequalities that were never confronted after the abolition of slavery in 1888. The Tribunal believed that racial quotas are the best transitory option to significantly reduce the inequality gap in the sphere of higher education.

The State of Rio de Janeiro’s Law School has 100 total seats for its incoming class. Under the first part of the Quota Law, at least 50 of those spots must be reserved for public school students. Then, within that sector, a minimum of 25 spaces must go to applicants whose families are 1.5 times the minimum wage. Last, if we assume that 51% of the state of Rio de Janeiro is populated is populated by black, pardo, and indigent individuals, then 13 spaces must be reserved for those demographics whose family incomes are less than or equal to the income threshold, along with 13 other seats guaranteed for that same demographic with more financially stable families... Within this framework, a low-income black or pardo student applying to a state university (which in Brazil are traditionally the best and cheapest schools), has four distinct scenarios of review by an admissions counsel regarding admission: one under general admissions, the second under the public school quota, another under the low-income sub-quota, and lastly under the state demographic sub-quota. In a way, therefore, Brazil uniquely addresses “critical mass” in its own way: the requirement for certain individuals from public schools and of a certain ethnicity will presumably have some overlap – to the point where potential psychological stigmatization can be defended by a sufficient group of individuals who do not share the same views (Davis, 2014, p. 76-77)
Brazilian Politics Today
In early 2014 the biggest corruption scandal, *Lava Jato* or Operation Car Wash, was uncovered in Brazil by little known judge, Sergio Moro. Unbeknownst at the time, this seismic investigation would completely thwart Brazil’s political and economic equilibrium as Judge Moro uncovered bribery, kickbacks, illicit financing of parties, and plunder of public assets at a resounding scale, all centred on the oil giant Petrobras and its contractors, predominantly in the manufacturing/construction sector. On the eve of hosting two of the biggest world events, the Football World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016, Brasilia was slowly showing signs of a seething malaise that would take great strides to cure, especially since more and more people rejected the idea of hosting such big tournaments when social ills and corruption had not been entirely overcome (Spalding et al., 2014). By late 2015, Brazil was pronounced to be in junk status as investor confidence waned specifically as the implication of the convolutions this corruption scandal exposed (Reuters, 2015).

Following a decision undertaken by the lower house of the Brazilian parliament for the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, she was removed as President and subsequently replaced by Michel Temer of the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDS) on 12 May 2016. She was accused of having manipulated government accounts and for having misled the Brazilian public leading up to the 2014 presidential elections. It should be noted however, that Ms Rousseff has not been implicated in the scandal but some in the Workers’ Party have, including Lula da Silva. President Temer, and much of his cabinet, has been implicated in the scandal, and there has been talk that Rousseff was pushed out of office so as to impede the investigation (Sreeharsha, 2016). This includes Eduardo Cunha who led the impeachment against Rousseff, who was forced to resign as speaker of the lower house due to corruption charges.

When President Temer assumed office, he immediately reduced the number of Ministries from 32 under the PT government to 23. Some of the casualties included removing the Ministry of Human Rights; the Social Security was removed under the Labour Ministry and added to the Ministry of Finance. Similarly, the Ministry of Agrarian Reform and Ministry of Culture would no longer be stand-alone but placed under the wing of Social Development and Ministry of Education respectively. Also, the Ministry of Science and Technology was placed under the Communications Ministry. One of the most astonishing concerns with the
make-up of President Temer’s newly appointed cabinet as he entered office was that they were all white and only men. It was the first all-male cabinet since the end of the dictatorship in 1985, almost immediately putting to rest any illusions of the much vaunted racial and liberal democracy. With regards to their foreign policy strategy, newly appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Serra had announced that Brazil would realign its foreign policy toward their traditional partners, which include: the United States, Europe and Japan (The BRICS Post, 2016) which may have raised alarm with the South-South cooperation partners including their commitments to the developmental agenda and how their interaction at multilateral level would be impacted.

**Conclusion**
The extent to which the PT government has fought for change in the face of historical structural inequality and poverty has brought as many enthusiasts domestically and internationally as it has opposition. The current political situation, nationally, emphasises how Brazil’s elite have perceived PT government intervention. Having seen their influence eroded since 1985, after the end of military repression, the assumption of power now suggests that Brazil will likely reverse the progressive, socially driven policies. The PMDS government, a representation of the reactionary elite, has demonstrated their true objectives under the veneer of responding to austerity measures and a fiscal policy that enhances investor confidence; to take Brazil back. We can simultaneously argue that the developmental agenda that Brazil has championed internationally under the PT government will be reconsidered. Bearing in mind that they led the MDGs through their social programs; the SDGs going forward face a tougher opponent in the current government, which is seemingly fighting for its legitimacy both domestically and internationally.
CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusions and Recommendations

General Conclusions
Chapter one served as a general background of the study and outlined the purpose, research design and the methodology and limitations of the study. The researcher utilises a case study approach using Venezuela and Brazil for comparative purposes. Chapter two observed the literature utilised and consulted during the research process and focused on the key concept of transformative justice and the role of human development which remains pertinent for this study. The researcher has highlighted the two countries mentioned above and argues through concepts based on theories and ideas and how they emphasise their relevance within the reality of social and transformative justice. Chapter three focused on the processes that were undertaken to formulate the MDGs at the UN. The chapter illustrates how the MDGs were then advanced and linked with the adoption of the SDGs. Chapter four focused on the political parties governing in each country, illustrating their origins and the political rhetoric of the leaders. Chapter five and six focus on Venezuela and Brazil respectively. The chapters have illustrated how social justice has been advanced through health and education, thereby demonstrating how the MDGs have been met.

This chapter will reflect on the study and the process of data collection, its limitations and the analysis of concepts discussed and why such a study is significant. The researcher will make recommendations for further research to advance the Sustainable Development Goals in the future.

In 1998 Hugo Chávez Frías was elected president of Venezuela and this signalled a new dawn in Latin America politics. It was the first time that a leftist government would be democratically elected in a traditionally conservative region wrought with militarism, coup d’états and a history of caudillismos. As a populist leader he not only rallied his people toward a renewed patriotism and love for the history of struggle, but Chávez sparked an
entire region to awaken and resist the systemic structural imbalances caused by colonialism and imperialism. He believed that these were further perpetuated by capitalism that enables racist dogma, promoting inequality, poverty, a lack of opportunities and unemployment. This new wave of democracy would also shift towards the left in Brazilian politics, culminating in the elections by the Workers’ Party that would lead to their leader, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva being elected into office in 2003.

While the Workers’ party had come from a tradition of social movements which upheld participatory democratic values, they were gradually abandoned during the process of running for office and became almost non-existent at state level. In Venezuela, on the other hand, participatory action as a methodical approach would be resuscitated to reach new levels where the substantive measures of democracy would be undertaken on these principles. By articulating the Bolivarian Revolution Chávez fashioned Venezuela’s Constitution with the objective of transforming society and advancing social justice.

These two leaders, who took office in 1999 and 2003 also coincided with the same period of discussions and the eventual adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000, where a universal outlook on poverty alleviation and human development, measured through what Armatya Sen (1999) prompted as “human capabilities”. Targeting health and education have proved to be far more sustainable in the pursuit of improving capabilities while simultaneously improving human development, which correlated with reaching the MDGs in Venezuela and Brazil. The Misiones were developed to address structural deficiencies, especially in education and health. In Brazil the drive on Fome Zero specifically highlighting Bolsa Familia and the government supported SUS programme are shown to be vitally important.

The SDGs that follow the MDGs, seek to accelerate health equity with a goal of ensuring universal health coverage and targeting poverty in all its forms. These are simply not achievable without targeting education. This highlights that for sustainable development to occur in developing countries, there is a need for multidimensional and multi-sectorial interventions as a matter of urgency in order to ensure efficiency. And indeed, a strengthening of South-South cooperation whereby, countries in the developing world have better control of the direction they wish their countries to go. This is not only a historical
imperative but the urgent and real structural conditions that face developing nations cannot be assumed from above. The Brazilian case, which has borrowed considerably from the Barrio Adentro programme, is an example that shows that endeavours in this trajectory of multi-pronged mechanisms are necessary to combat health deficiency and historical structural inconsistencies. When the SUS was underway, and they realised the snail-paced impact on the poor and historical antagonism from the private sector, the introduction of Cuban medical staff in their thousands would undoubtedly lead to positive outcomes for Brazil. Similarly, the conditions that were put in place for poor families who receive the Bolsa Familia health monitoring benefits are noteworthy, because not only are communities playing an active role in their health but it becomes a responsibility on their part to be conscious of their role and state of health. To be conscious of one’s health condition suggests that one would be equipped with preventative tools. This has been the stronghold of Cuban health for the past fifty years.

The relevance of Thabo Mbeki’s emphasis on South Africa’s case of ‘two nations’ (highlighted on pages 13 - 14), is ultimately allegorical to describe a world of the rich and of the impoverished in a single country, and to understand that these conditions are not natural, but were engineered in the same way as Chávez speaks of, in his own country. Therefore, these should be combated with decisive veracity by states. Antagonisms that come with addressing these disparities operate within a capitalist system that seeks accumulation first. When governments seek to address inequalities as in the case of Venezuela and Brazil, they are also tempering with large profit seeking pharmaceutical companies who, through curative measures of managing health, and by definition oppositional to preventative healthcare, make it almost impossible for the poor to access those medicines. This is demonstrated with the SUS in Brazil. It is only through state intervention that these issues can be ameliorated. And it is the same message that Wainwright (2003) highlights when she alerts us to the state’s susceptibility of onslaught from neo-liberalism. In view of this ensuing battle, which is dogmatic and real, the political rhetoric from the ruling parties as illustrated in Chapter 4, is combative and urgent because these leaders view their people’s conditions not merely as political, but enduring and material. Using state resources, and appealing to civil society members who appreciate the cruelty of social-economic conditions wrought by deliberate social policies which have
preserved the status quo, have become insufferable. What has been clearly articulated and microcosmic in the cases of Venezuela and Brazil, is the comprehension that such conditions are not unique to them alone, but are universal. The international space is by definition contestable and as such hegemonic as some states, as the history of war has illustrated, are more equal than others. It is thus logical that impulses that inspired the growth of South-South cooperation (within the UN paradigm) toward a developmental agenda, not for competitive purposes but to transform our world toward a common destiny. It is principally countries in the developing world, led by the PSUV and PT Governments in Venezuela and Brazil, which understand this requires transformative approach.

Similarly, unlike the widely known overt racism of apartheid South Africa, in Venezuela and in Brazil the historical remnants of slavery and inequality, as Galeano (1971) illustrates, are so entrenched and deep-seated that undoing them requires far more than mere acknowledgement that they existed in the past. Transformative justice requires that a greater commitment must be undertaken to ensure that the perpetual cycle of poverty and inequality and the lack of opportunity be minimised through utilising appropriate programmes. Brazil has found it expedient to utilise affirmative action in education as demonstrated by Brasilia to equalise society.

In the same manner, while simultaneously combating education in content and curriculum, an important tool has been the literacy drive and it has been a conscious decision and mission by government to capacitate adults through adult literacy. Following on Cuba’s example and eradicating illiteracy in Venezuela (UNESCO, 2015), is a concept related to Paolo Freire’s (1970) seminal work. Then it becomes easier to address health. In implementing Barrio Adentro the government utilised the mechanisms that enabled its citizens to take charge and lead the programme themselves. This requires a level of social participation. Transformative justice in the quest to achieve human development is then not merely left to the government to execute. The PSUV government has a symbiotic relationship with the citizens just as the Workers’ Party through Bolsa Familia especially. Much of it is dependent on active citizen engagement and participation. One cannot look after one’s own health if one cannot articulate oneself through reading and writing. It could be concluded then human development in the manner in which it is articulated by the two countries is emancipatory by definition. The state, as President da Silva mentions, makes an
investment in its people. The two sectors, education and health are inseparable when it comes to combating poverty alleviation – meaningful and confrontational means are required. These two Latin American States, though differently executed and ideologically dissimilar, have demonstrated the way to reach the MDGs. Concomitantly, these tools are essential for achieving the SDGs in the future.

The aim of the qualitative study was to explore the various social policies that Venezuela and Brazil have taken in the last fifteen years critically, with a particular focus on health and education. The researcher decided to assess the two Latin American countries because their coming into power coincided with the adoption of the UN Millennium Declaration and MDGs. The leftist wave of democracy brought new hope in the region and how this would impact on substantive democracy. The researcher decided to assess Venezuela because it not only inspired the leftist wave, but has been the most radical in addressing issues of social justice, while the focus on Brazil as a traditional social democracy has been instrumental in addressing poverty alleviation in its own unique way.

The aims of the study were to:

- Analyse the context of Venezuela and Brazil’s approach toward transformative justice and poverty alleviation
- Assess the impact of social policy toward reaching the MDGs and as measurement toward the SDGs
- Explore the effectiveness of social policy in Health and Education.

This study has explored the perspective of transformative justice in the field of human development in Brazil and Venezuela. It has illustrated the difficulty of the interpretation of the concept of development on a global scale and how this was to be articulated as an agreed method to work towards in the MDGs and the SDGs. The study explores how the two countries are finding mechanisms to transform their societies via social policy. The study was designed and undertaken in an accurate, principled and qualified manner to ensure its validity, reliability and credibility. The researcher believes that findings that have emerged from the research will contribute to an improved understanding of the perspective
of transformative justice and human development. The researcher believes a better understanding for the rationale of Brazil and Venezuela who have taken these steps towards their social policy and in their endeavour to alleviate poverty, is important.

The methodology used in this study is a descriptive and exploratory study underpinned by the interpretative social science approach. The researcher explored an area that is ‘foreign’ to his own and the objective was to interpret the social reality, by revealing how Brazil and Venezuela conduct themselves in their situation. The researcher believes that this research methodology was competent for exploring the aims and to interpret the perspective of transformative justice in the two states.

The researcher used a case study research strategy in examining the contemporary events that took place in Venezuela and Brazil. Because the researcher should also provide how and why questions, the researcher has provided a historical context of the political situation in Brazil and Venezuela in this regard. As the study is located in a specific time period, i.e. that of assessing the achievements of the MDGs, the researcher has also utilised longitudinal quantitative data on which to base his conclusions. The measurements for human development e.g. exploring the number of people that have been taken out of poverty, the number of people with access to education and health and child mortality rates are all measuring tools recognised by the UN Development Report and these have been utilised in coming to conclusions.

The researcher also utilised a multiple-case study approach which is known as a comparative case study. This is primarily due to the influence Cuba has had in the policies undertaken in Brazil and especially in Venezuela. A multiple-case study utilises certain generalisabilities (Meyer, 2001), that is, assumptions that the theory may be useful in making sense of similar persons or situations. The advantage of this is the ability to replicate findings from one case to another. In essence the researcher seeks not just to illustrate the realistic situation for Brazil and Venezuela but also to replicate the findings and indicate how these can benefit other developing countries; if there are any available that could benefit from achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The study was conducted using secondary data.
Recommendations:
Based on the multiple-case study approach to address the fundamental issues of education and health in Brazil and Venezuela and to an extent in Cuba, governments from developing nations should have the following approach to poverty alleviation and human development. While Venezuela may have taken an overtly radical stance to transform society, their approach has been noteworthy regarding the tackling of social disparities. Similarly, Brazil as a social democracy has utilised tools that they emulated from Venezuela’s experience. The following could be utilised by other developing nations:

It is essential that governments have determined adult literacy and literacy drives for citizens to be actively engaged in working with government in advancing human development and improving their quality of life. This will assist in achieving some of the SDGs. Before embarking on health initiatives, basic levels of reading and writing are essential for any people to have the ability to teach themselves and their loved ones how to better protect themselves, and to use literacy as an empowerment tool. Cuba eradicated illiteracy in 1961 before improving its health. Venezuela eradicated illiteracy in 2005 before Barrio Adentro. It was through Paolo Freire’s work in Rural Brazil and later as principal contributor to the education policy in Brazil that all three countries have attained impressive social participation.

Barrio Adentro is an excellent example of broadening the idea of social participation. Having been conscientised about the role and the assistance from doctors, it gives the communities first-hand experience in the value of volunteerism and further developing one’s skill in working with professionals. This can also work especially well in rural areas. The strength of Barrio Adentro is that it utilises preventative mechanisms to combat health. Medicine is generally very expensive and by investing in people’s literacy and education and combating health in this manner becomes highly recommendable.

The Conditional Cash Transfers of Brazil are very important. Enforcing participation from people ensures that parents especially take interest in the human development experience of their children. This system of government investment in its human capital has been very popular in much of Latin America, Similarly Bolsa Familia has been successful because of its
multi-pronged approach in dealing with poverty. Because it is driven within the context of a community school, it also allows the public to identify with the school as a safety net that is beneficial to the family and simultaneously combats any inkling of regressive tendencies that linked child labour and school attendance. This had been prevalent before the Workers’ Party took office in 2003.

Curriculum development which related to the realities and history of a country must be interrogated and explored. Curriculum development that addresses issues of language and traditions and alternative means of solving our world problems are essential, because they may very well contribute to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. The argument against homogenising culture (in the manner in which western civilisation has done), is what Archie Mafeje (1988) underlines as being “is inimical to development.” He means that solutions only come from one purview. Curriculum development, one could argue, must be focused at both the basic education level where children can be taught in their mother tongue first, but also in the higher education sector where ideas are contested. Enabling different knowledge systems to flourish would benefit society much more.
Bibliography


Fraser, N., 1990. Rethinking the Public Sphere. A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy *Social Text*, 25/26, pp. 56-80.


179


