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Social capital, weak ties and patronage as alternative paths for poor  
communities to get access to collective goods.\*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the issue of the relationship between social capital and “weak ties” in the poor communities’ context. I suggest that the concept of social capital refers to the interaction density within a community; as such it must be seen as a collective property (J. Coleman 1990). On the other hand, weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) can be defined as connections between the poor community and the institutional actors as local public agencies, politicians and altruistic NGOs (Non Governmental Organizations). These connections (weak ties) relating the community with the public local agencies may be of two kinds: the first one is the connection made by the civic associations coming from the community. In this case, it is clear that there is a stock of social capital being used; the second one, are the connections (weak ties) articulated by “rent-seeking” leaderships or politicians, through patron-client ties, looking for winning, for example, elections. In this case we think that there is no social capital in action, but **individual social capital** that is being used for providing collective goods or public benefits to poor communities. The research’s methodology is mainly a qualitative one, but we also work with some descriptive quantitative data.

**Key Words:** social capital, weak ties, leadership, poor communities, collective efficacy, patron-client ties

## I - Introduction.<sup>1</sup>

The main objective of this paper is to discuss the empirical relationships of two strategic dimensions of collective action: social capital (strong ties) and inter-group connections or inter-institutional weak ties. Although, as discussed below, the current literature on social capital does not make a theoretical or analytical distinction between these two dimensions, this article will argue that they are analytically independent, and that this distinction is heuristically useful to understand adequately the issue of collective action. In this study we try to understand if, in view of the significance of the action of the residents of poor communities, the analytical distinction, as suggested above, was adequate to explain the spread of collective efficacy in poor communities to pursue public and collective benefits.

## II - The Concepts of social capital and its theoretical traditions.

A brief exploration of recent literature on social capital, allow us to identify, immediately, two major conceptual clusters. The first one, centered on the individual-utilitarian dimension, can be illustrated by the following definition that shows a polarized conception of social capital on this dimension:

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“a person’s or group’s sympathy toward another person or group that may produce a potential benefit, advantage, and preferential treatment for another person or group of persons beyond that expected in an exchange relationship.” ( Robinson, J. L., Schmid, A.A. and Siles, E. M., 2000, p.14)

The second one, centered in a typically culturalist definition that identifies the social capital with institutionalized praxis of civic culture, "the systems of civic participation are an essential form of social capital ..." (Putnam, R. 1996, p.183). Between these two conceptual clusters we found innumerable definitions closer to one of the conceptual continuum poles. Bourdieu’s definition is a good example:

*“Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition — or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and/or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them...” ( 1986, p.248-9)*

In spite of the emphasis on the instrumental-individual character of the social capital, this concept is not so "radical" as the first one pointing to a factor of a "psychological disposition" as primary source of social capital. The emphasis of the normative-associativist tradition is, also, redundant to the political culture concept. Fukuyama, on the one hand, and Putnam, on the another one, emphasize the role of values and norms as the basis of attitudes directed toward the collective interest, or "public thing" and, as such, they function as psychological pre-dispositions to minimize the costs of the collective action or of the associativism. In this perspective the "internalization" of typical values of a civic culture would stimulate the individuals, from inside themselves, to act in a cooperative way.

Distinctly of the others two traditions, the third one, here called of Interactionist<sup>2</sup> one, has to with Coleman’s concept of social capital focused on the social

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<sup>2</sup> The term Interactionist used here there is nothing to do with the Chicago School’s Tradition known as Symbolic Interactionism.

relationships<sup>3</sup>. The major theoretical advantage of this concept is, on the one hand, to look at a specific phenomenon (in contrast to the concepts mentioned above) and, on the other hand, to incorporate the contributions of the classic traditions of the sociological theory. The Interactionist Tradition inherits from founding fathers, as Durkheim, the idea of social density given by the intensity of the social interaction. In this tradition the idea of "closure", as suggested by Coleman, as a basic condition of existence of social capital is consistent with the Durkheim's suggestion related to the concept of "mechanic solidarity" when talking about high density of the collective conscience. In this case, the "strong ties", to use Granovetter's terminology, explain the emergency of social capital within a group. Following our definition, social capital is an available potential resource to the members of a group or a community, interested in mobilizing the community's members for promoting some collective good... This concept does not exclude, as it was suggested by L. N. et al (2001), the importance of the "weak ties" or the "structural holes", in the terminology of Ronald Burt, as a community strategically condition for getting collective efficacy when putting in action their stocks of social capital.<sup>4</sup>

The classic theoretical tradition that feeds this perspective comes from Simmel (1922/1964), with his idea of the social structuration "form". Following this theory, we have that more concentric (closed) networks (concentric circles) or more diversified (open) ones express distinct social structures: in the first case, we have typical social structure of "the traditional" societies, and in the second case, a typical structure of the "modern" societies.<sup>5</sup> Simmel's theory makes possible to articulate the two concepts we are trying to differentiate: the first one of social capital and the second one of social networks. The concept of "concentric circles" has to do with the concept of "closure" or social capital in the Coleman's sense, and the concept of open intersections in the social

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<sup>3</sup> As Coleman puts it, "unlike others forms of capital, social capital inheres in the in the structure of relations between persons and among persons. It is lodged neither in individuals nor in physical implements of production." (1990, p. 302)

<sup>4</sup> Our point goes directly in opposition to that one put by Lin, N. et al. Following their proposition, there is not difference between the concept of social capital and of the weak ties. In their own words, "I believe that the linkage between network density or closure to the utility of social capital is too narrow and partial. Research in social networks has stressed the importance of bridges in networks ( Granovetter, 1973, Burt, 1992) in facilitating information and influence flows. To argue that closure or density is a requirement for social capital is to deny the significance of bridges, structural hole, or weaker ties." ( 2201:10)

<sup>5</sup> Obviously, we are quickly simplifying the Simmel's theory on social interaction, but for our purposes on here this brief reference is enough.

interactions, has to do with the concept of networks based on "weak ties", in the M. Granovetter's sense, or on the "structural holes" in R. Burt's sense.

The concept of social capital, in the interactionist perspective, allows us to open a communication window between the theories of the social networks and of the social capital without assuming conceptual redundancy or equivalence between them. From our viewpoint, it is exactly in this "window" that we find the theoretical "trump card" of the concept of social capital to explain the capacity of a group or community to get efficacy in accessing public benefits.

\_\_\_\_\_ In contemporary literature, the theory of social networks arises as an alternative to both micro-macro dualism and hiper and hipo socialized conceptions of the social actor dualism (Wrong, D, 1961). In the first case, P. Blau's theory (1987) of marriage integration of different ethnic groups is a good instance of overcoming the micro-macro dualism. P. Blau, in this study, demonstrates, with good empirical evidence, that the social heterogeneity constitutes a structural parameter, of macro-level, that produces marriage integration inter-groups in the society, independently of cultural values that could prescribe exogamy or endogamy. Even if the decisions on marriage at the micro-level are individual in nature and that, obviously, norms and social values are brought in to justify the choices, the structural standard of the social networks determines, to a large extent, the possibilities to prevail exogamic or endogenic standard of familiar union. Yet, Granovetter's (1995) and B. Wellman's (1999) theories are successful in overcoming the second type of duality having to do with hiper and hipo individual socialization. As these authors have suggested, with good empirical evidences, the decisions on strategies of individual behavior reflect their involvement (embeddeness) in social networks. Even so, the sociological unit of analysis keep being the individual, is the context of specific social relations, where he is Involved, that is relevant to the determination of his behavior, even assuming that these individuals act as rational agents.

The concept of social networks is, therefore, central for the theories intending to surpass the current dichotomies in contemporary sociological literature and, in this way, is not related to the contemporary theory of social capital. This one has to do with the supply of credibility and confidence among people, generated by the involvement in groups or in communities with specific systems of solidarity. This type of capital, as pointed by Coleman, must be distinguished from the other forms of capital, for being the only one where the capital stocks grow with its use, in other words, we can suggest

that the greater will be the mobilization of the supply of trust for collective action in a community, the greater will be the supply of social capital within the community. Certainly this relationship would depend on some situational contingencies as, for instance, the degree where the collective action is perceived by its members as having reasonable probability of being successful.<sup>6</sup> Taken this condition into account, we may suggest that the connections of weak ties with persons or organizations outside the community will determine the rational disposal of the individuals for taking part in collective action. In other words, the social power, generated for the weak ties network, determines, to a large extent, the capacity of collective mobilization of the group or community. This point qualifies correctly, in our view, the relationships between social capital, social networks and power structure<sup>7</sup>. The diagram below illustrates the relations between the two concepts: social capital and social networks relatively to the getting amount of the collective efficacy.

### Social Capital

		High	Low
Weak Ties	Present	High efficacy	High individual efficacy ( social power)
	Not Present	Low efficacy	No efficacy

\_\_\_\_\_ In accordance with our theory, the general level of efficacy would be, still, affected by the amount of social power lodged in the weak ties networks. It is obvious that as much as the networks are well located in the power structure, the greater will the members' visibility be of the success of collective action results. In this way, predisposition to take part in collective action is stimulated by the degree of social power enjoyed by the group.

### III - Empirical reference

Three case studies were conducted in 2007 and 2008 in neighborhoods located in the north of the state capital. The districts were selected by the advice of the technicians at

<sup>6</sup> Certainly, individuals acting under norms of rationality will tend to perceive much more costs for highly risky collective action, in terms of its results, than for those with high expectative of success.

<sup>7</sup> With this qualification, we are thinking of the Bourdieu's confusion on the concept of social capital and that one of social power. This last one has much to do with weak ties network than with social capital.

Regional Northern City Hall of Belo Horizonte in accordance with the criteria defined by us, such as: the degree of internal organization of the communities, degree of participation in the City Hall's "Participatory Budget" policy.

### **III.1. - The Analytical Dimensions.**

The case studies sought to identify as the independent variables the volume of social capital and the existence of external connections, and as the dependent variable "collective efficacy", that is, the communities' capability for collective mobilization and the volume of gains in terms of collective benefits provided by the City-Hall to the community.

The data collection tool was semi-structured interviews and ethnographic field-work<sup>8</sup>

a - social capital.

The dimensions of social capital selected for study were: a) frequency of informal interaction among neighbors - chats, visits and casual talks on the streets or at home front door, - b) mutual aid and helpfulness among members of the community - small loans of household items, as cooking pots, ladder, hammer, etc.. and foods like salt, cooking oil, rice etc., eventually babysitting the neighbor's children, helps in small home repair and so on, - c) sense of security: how the residents feel when moving through the village during the day and at night, how they feel while getting in the collective places such as pubs, grocery stores, churches and parties and confidence on neighbors - d) participation in collective actions of the village, such as the Residents Association meetings, City Hall's participatory budgeting, collaborative efforts to promote parties, campaigns to get something for the community - e) informal meetings at the neighbors' home for talking about any subject.

b) - weak ties: connection to external networks.

This dimension was strongly emphasized in these case studies due to the fact that this methodology makes it easy its identification. The community leaders were taken as the potential outside channels of relationship. It is important to remember here that our study has as unit of analysis the community taken as whole, not resident individuals. In

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<sup>8</sup> The interviews were selected from suggestions by the formal leadership of the villages - directors of the residents' association - and thereafter via the technique of "snow-ball, always seeking to balance the number of interviews with leaders and with ordinary citizens of the villages. We interviewed about 13 people in each village over a period of one year. The interviews were always conducted by two interviewers and were recorded with permission of the interviewers. The NVivo 8 software was used to code and analyze the interview data.

this case we are not interested, for example, in individual social ties as an individual's resource for getting private benefits. For our purpose here, leadership means channels that connect different groups within the community or between the community and outside institutions. From the interviews and the ethnographic observation we have distinguished three ideal types of leadership:

- 1- Institutional-formal leadership: it is that one typical of members who occupy positions in the community associations;
- 2 - the altruistic informal leadership is that typical of people who seek to produce collective goods regardless of their own interest;
- 3 – patron-client leadership: it is that one primarily oriented to the production of collective goods, but it brings also individual lateral incentives derived from success in getting collective goods. Usually these individual incentives are of a political nature, such as partisan influence or personal loyalty.

Obviously, these types of leadership are not mutually exclusive, we can find them side by side in the communities. This typology points only to the predominance of one or other of them in the realm of social practices.

#### c) Social Disorganization.

Although this dimension of analysis about the social order has been recurring in sociological theory since Durkheim's concept of anomie up to contemporary studies on quantitative researches on social organization and crime (Sampson, et al. 1997 op. cit), our intention here is not to revisit the concept. The term "social disorganization" is here used as a reference to two variables: the first one has to do with latent "alienation", seen as low motivation (be it for whatever reason) to take part in community action, and the second one has to do with "violence" produced by outside criminal organizations, such as drug traffic, and its effects on the moving rates from the community.

#### d) collective efficacy.

As indicators of collective efficacy we took, as indicator, the community production of any collective good, be through the City Hall such as a health center, street pavement, sanitation policies; be through inner collective action, such as the community groups mobilization to repair a sidewalk, a square, or a daycare center, etc.



### III.2.2 - A Brief description of the Communities in light of the analytical dimensions.

#### III.2.2.1 - Santa Rosa Community

The community is located in the region of Pampulha, Belo Horizonte, close to the two major access roads to downtown: Antonio Carlos Avenue and the Ring Road. It occupies an area of 0.04 Km<sup>2</sup>, bounded by a perimeter of 1.01 km and its population density is 28,125 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. The village's site is predominantly steep, the homes - 266 in total - are poorly built and the space between them, when they exist, is tinny, making it a typical Brazilian slum. The community population has the following age structure:

Table II: Population of the community Santa Rosa by age

<i>Pop/ Santa Rosa</i>	<i>Up to 14 years old</i>	<i>Between 15 and 24 years old</i>	<i>Between 25 and 64 years old</i>	<i>65 years old or more</i>	<b>Total</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	393 (35%)	257 (22,8%)	436 (38,8%)	39 (3,4%)	1125 (100%)

Source: Atlas of Human Development in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, Fundação João Pinheiro / UNDP.

The community has a high child mortality rate: 45.6 / 1000 for children under five years old and 41.7 / 1000 for children up to one year old. However, the services of sanitation, garbage collection and electricity cover all the households (100%).

The table below presents some indicators of education of Santa Rosa Community

Table III: Education indicators - Santa Rosa Community – 2000

School years\Age	15 through 17 years old	18 through 14 years old	25 or more years old
Less than 8 years	68,28	53,89	-----
Mean of school years	-----	-----	4,49

Source: Atlas of Human Development in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, Fundação João Pinheiro / PNUD

Santa Rosa community is the oldest of our case studies. It was created in the 60's when the Pampulha region was still a space far away from the central urban network. In this period there was still no urban infrastructure, such as sanitation and electricity. This situation stimulated community residents to get in collective action searching for urban

improvements.

The squatter is an "island" surrounded by middle-class neighborhoods that are very well supplied by public facilities such as schools, hospitals, day-care centers, and retail shopping centers. As it would be expected, the residents did take advantage of these facilities getting in social networks that have access to them. Although, factors as population growth and geographic expansion of the squatter had been accentuated in the 90's, we found that these processes did not affect sociability: the sense of community remained alive. Often, in the interviews, there were references about exchange of favors, fellowship and informal talks between neighbors and festive gatherings, especially at the end of the year. The community daily life used to be a clear case of peaceful environment.

It is important to make clear that the neighborhood association come to play an important role within the community only after the emergence of Participatory Budgeting (PB)<sup>9</sup> in 1993. On the one hand, because this City-Hall policy had assigned to the Resident Association a strategic role for mobilizing community's members for taking part in the local budgeting process. On the other hand, because the PB had increasingly monopolized the decisions on the criteria that should be applied for the distribution of the public resources to the communities. This fact does not eliminate, however, the use by the community of alternative channels for the articulation of its demands. Both kinds of leaderships, patron-client or altruistic ones work as "weak ties" linking community to politicians and City-Hall authorities. In the case of this community, the concomitant use of the three types of channels - institutional leadership, selfless and patron-client ones - enabled a significant degree of collective efficacy. (See Table VIII below).

The community landscape of a peaceful daily life, quiet and orderly, remained until 2000. In 2001 the drug trafficking organizations arrives in the squatter, recruiting teenagers as consumers and then as members of these organizations. The youth violence expressed by fights, threats, degradation of the urban environment, noise in the early hours, public vandalism in squares and on walls of homes, produced a strong feeling of insecurity among residents. It is noteworthy to say that armed conflict did not reach the community heart as it occurs in most urban areas of major Brazilian cities, but it generated threat and feelings of fear among residents, making them reluctant to act or

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<sup>9</sup> The Participatory Budgeting is an official program of the City Hall as incentive to people take part in the decision making process of municipal budgeting.

to exercise his individual rights as that one of freedom of “coming and going” in the neighborhood.

Clearly, drug trafficking, an outside factor of the community, has triggered a process of fear and of perception of increased violence within the community, leading often to a alienated behavior in relation to the residents’ motivation for involvement in informal collective practices. Is worth noting that this process of "social disorganization" was not due to endogenous community factors as "family breakdown", unemployment, and anomy in the sense of some classical theories of social disorganization, but rather to a factor, clearly exogenous to the community, namely, the strong organizations of drug trafficking.

### III.2.2.2 – Community of St. Thomas

St. Thomas was also situated in the northern region of Belo Horizonte, next to the Pampulha Airport. It occupied an area of 0.48 km<sup>2</sup> bounded by a perimeter of 3.9 kilometers and with a population density of 16,487.5 people per km<sup>2</sup>. It had a total of 2,081 households and, unlike the Santa Rosa squatter, there was a slightly more urbanized area with some roads paved. But it is still a vulnerable and impoverished area.

Table IV - Population of the Santa Rosa Community by age -2000

<i>Pop / S. Tomás</i>	<i>Up to 14 years old</i>	<i>Between 15 and 24 years old</i>	<i>Between 25 and 64 years old</i>	<i>65 years old or more</i>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Total</b>	2398 (30,3%)	1722 (21,76%)	3476 (44%)	348 (3,94%)	7914 (100%)

Source: Atlas of Human Development in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, Fundação João Pinheiro / UNDP’

The infant mortality rates were 43.55 / 1000 for children under one year old and 47.6/ 1000 for children up to five years. The percentage of households with tap water was 92.3% and 95.9% having garbage collection service. 99.8% had home electricity. The following table presents some indicators of education of the village

Table V: Education indicators - S. Tomás Community – 2000

School years\Age	15 through 17 years old	18 through 14 years old	25 or more years old
Less than 8 years	70,84	53,80	
Mean of school years	-----	-----	4,86

Source: Atlas of Human Development in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, Fundação João Pinheiro / UNDP

The per capita income is \$94.00 and the average income of household heads is \$249.00. The Human Development Index (HDI) was 0.716 - was slightly higher than that of Santa Rosa and it is also considered by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as being on the mean of human development (HDI between 0.5 and 0.8). Compared to other units of HDI of Belo Horizonte Metropolitan area, St. Thomas in 109th place among 268 boroughs.

The family structure was predominantly a female single-parent with children from different fathers.

As Santa Rosa Community, St. Thomas is a small island surrounded by middle-class neighborhoods with all kinds of urban infrastructure. But unlike Sta. Rosa, St. Thomas community is more urbanized in terms of access roads - paved streets - and in some areas have households with a standard construction above those often found in urban slums of big cities.

The village is also quite old, it emerged in the mid 60's when then there was no access to sanitation infrastructure. During this period the Pampulha region was sparsely inhabited, with a weak urbanization and small amount of commercial activity. Differently of the others case studies, S. Thomas has a spatial and social system of stratification. The higher part of the borough, next to a large and important road of an urban middle-class borough - the Itapoã - was rather urbanized with large and paved streets and well-built medium-sized residences, this scenario integrated it with the surrounding middle class neighborhood. Meanwhile the lower part of the slum, close to Pampulha Airport, presented all kind of urban slums typical characteristics, such as irregular urbanization, homes with unfinished buildings and many alleyways used as circulation routes. But we must point that this pattern of spatial and social stratification, although clearly visible, did not produce a segmentation of identity that could endangers the community collective sense. There was a strong network of service offer, which stimulates a creation of social capital (see Table VIII below), associated with a rich network of informal ties that consolidate the social cohesion in the community. On the

other hand, the squatter was rich in external connections building efficient networks for providing collective goods. There were several NGOs and associations in the village such as Brazilian Community Association for the Prevention of Drug Abuse (HUG), Brazilian Legion of Good Will (LBV), Education of Young Adults (EGV), and several religious groups. The presence of these institutions connecting the village with the outside world is the result of the action of formal and informal leaderships of all types: "altruistic", "institutional" and "patron-client" ones.

### III2.2.3 – Paqueta Community.

Paqueta community was, also, located in the Pampulha region. But unlike the others communities investigated here, its location was far away of any access to expressways going to downtown. Its area formed by a single block was 0.01 km<sup>2</sup> and it was bounded by a perimeter of 0.66 km. Its terrain was entirely flat. The houses were also poorly finished and the space between them was very thin. The age structure of the community was the following:

Table VI – Paqueta population by age -2000

<i>Pop / Paqueta</i>	<i>Up to 14 years old</i>	<i>Between 15 and 24 years old</i>	<i>Between 25 and 64 years old</i>	<i>65 years old or more</i>	<b>Total</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	219 (31,3%)	188 (27%)	275 (39,4%)	16 (2,3%)	698 (100%)

Source: Atlas of Human Development in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, Fundação João Pinheiro / UNDP

The infant mortality rates were the same of Santa Rosa's: 45.6 / 1000 for children under one year old 41.7 /1000 for up to five years old. The urban public services covered around of 100% of the all households. The table below shows some Community's educational indicators,

VII: Education indicators - Paqueta Community- 2000

School years\Age	15 through 17 years old	18 through 14 years old	25 or more years old
Less than 8 years	68,28	53,89	
Mean of school years			4,49

Fonte: Atlas do Desenvolvimento Humano da Região Metropolitana de Belo Horizonte; Fundação João Pinheiro/UNDP

The squatter's per capita income was of \$ 100.00, while the average income of household heads is \$ 146.00. As in , As in the village of Santa Rosa, the HDI is of 0.709,

considered by UNDP as being on the mean of Human Development Index (HDI between 0.5 and 0.8). Comparing with other units of Human Development of the Belo Horizonte metropolitan area, Paquetá stood in the 122 position on the rank of 158 communities.

The predominant family structure was a nuclear one, father-mother and children. It was the smallest community of our case studies and, against our expectation just because of its size, it was also the less effective in terms of achieving success in the pursuit of collective benefits (see Table VIII). Although it had a reasonable stock of social capital, it was clear, for us, that there were no links connecting the community with the outside.

Although, we found a strong sense of community and consequently a strong social cohesion, that is, a lot of social capital, this resource, however, was not translated in collective efficacy (see Tab VIII below). The reason for this was in accord with our main hypothesis, the almost complete absence of "weak ties" (leaderships) connecting the community with public service providers. The Residents Association was out of work because it had been object of law suit.

With respect to the level of "social disorganization", Vila Paqueta had little to complain, it is spatial and demographically very small, so the community does not seem to be a target for criminal traffic gangs. In this sense, people liked to live in there just because they didn't feel the insecurity that marked some time periods of the other communities' life trajectory threatened by drug traffic organizations.

#### **IV - Data analysis: construction of interpretative models.**

We present now the relative position of each community with reference to those four analytical dimensions discussed above.

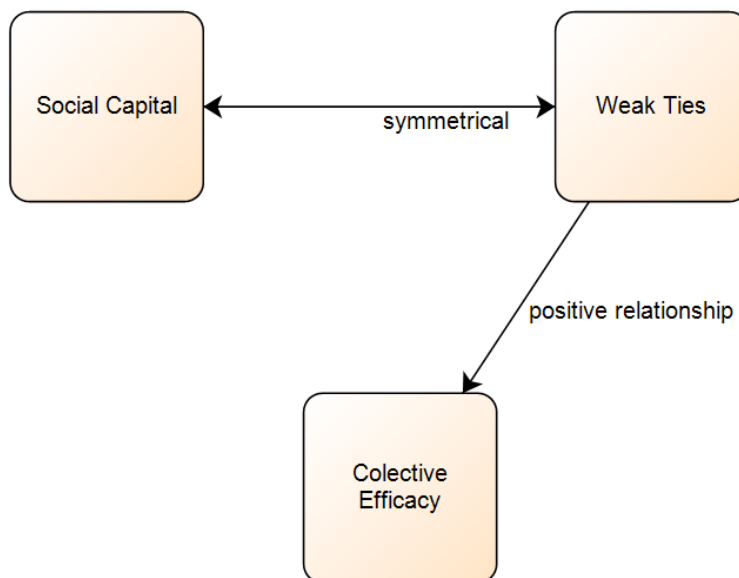
Table VIII - Occurrence of indicators of the theoretical dimensions: social capital, weak ties, collective efficacy and social disorganization

Percentages of of the interviews' coding references associated with the dimensions by Community.

Dimension/Comm.	Santa Rosa	St. Thomas	Paquetá	Total
Collective efficacy	43.21	35.80	20.99	100
Weak ties	41.98	50.62	7.41	100
Capital Social	38.31	29.03	32.66	100
Social Disorganization	25.00	45.12	29.88	100

Source: author's research primary data

The first and main hypothesis of our study can be illustrated by the following diagram:

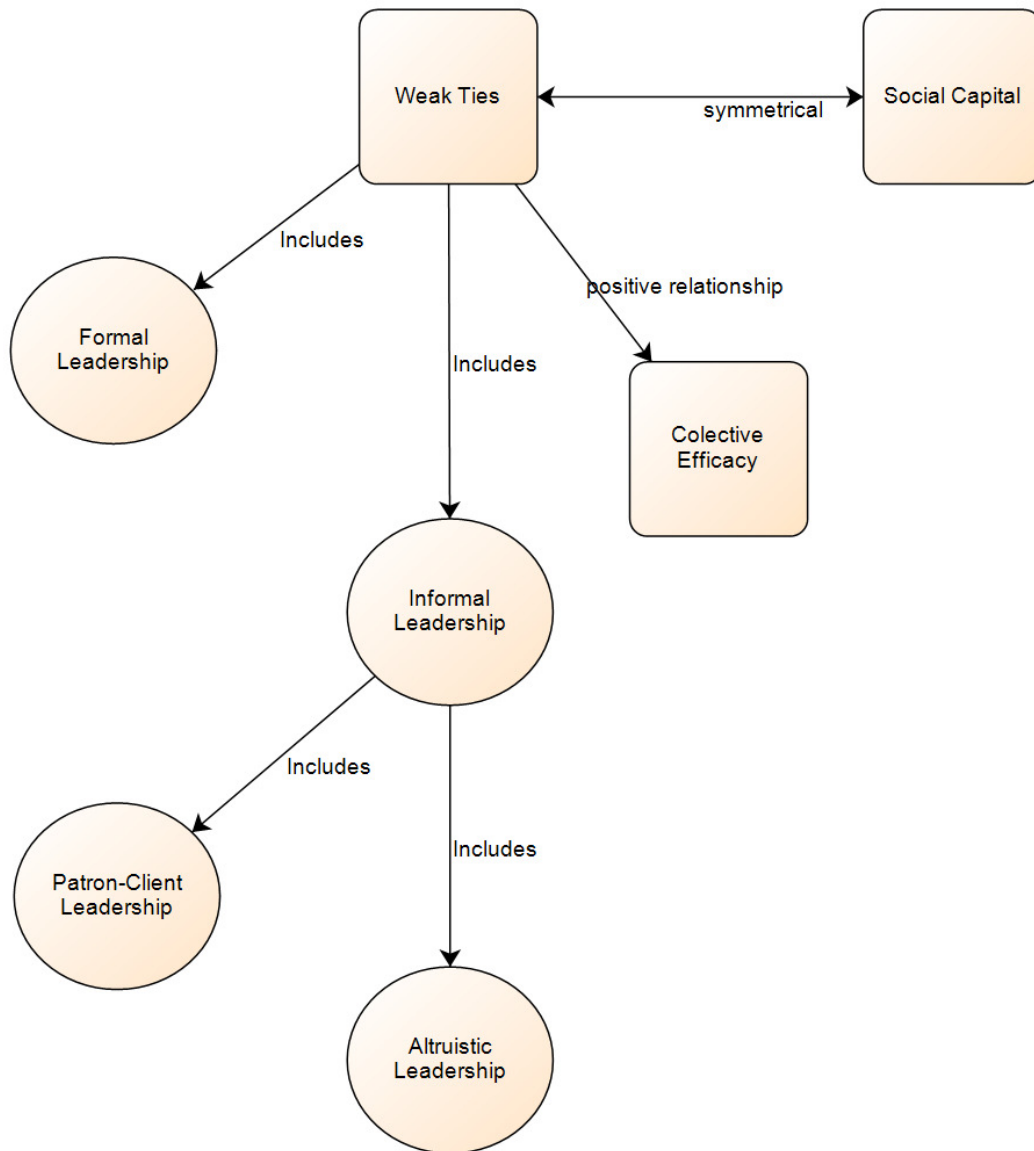


The dependent variable "collective efficacy" was positively related to weak ties - outside connections - and these, in turn, correlate positively with social capital. It was this hypothesis that led us in the field-work.

When comparing the three communities on the dimensions "weak ties", "social capital" and "collective efficacy" in TAB VIII, we can see that pattern of the distribution of the references in these dimensions is consistent with our hypothesis. While we find more references to weak ties in Santa Rosa's community than in S. Thomas,' which, on the other hand, has more references to collective benefits (collective efficacy), we can see that this is derived from the existence of more social capital in S. Thomas than in Santa Rosa. This indicates that in S. Thomas there was a greater chance of occurrence of collective action, thus facilitating the production of collective benefits through internal mobilization. In the case of Paqueta community, the number and direction of references compared with the other ones, fully corroborate our hypothesis.

When we look at the nature of weak ties we found that the behavior that articulates state-civil society does not differ from the dominant pattern of Brazilian society. The prevailing weak ties are those of client-patron type followed by the altruistic or charismatic ones, both of them informal in nature. Finally, it arises the formal-institutional type but in weaker and less frequent pattern than the other types. From this observation we added this variable in our initial model, now represented by the following diagram:

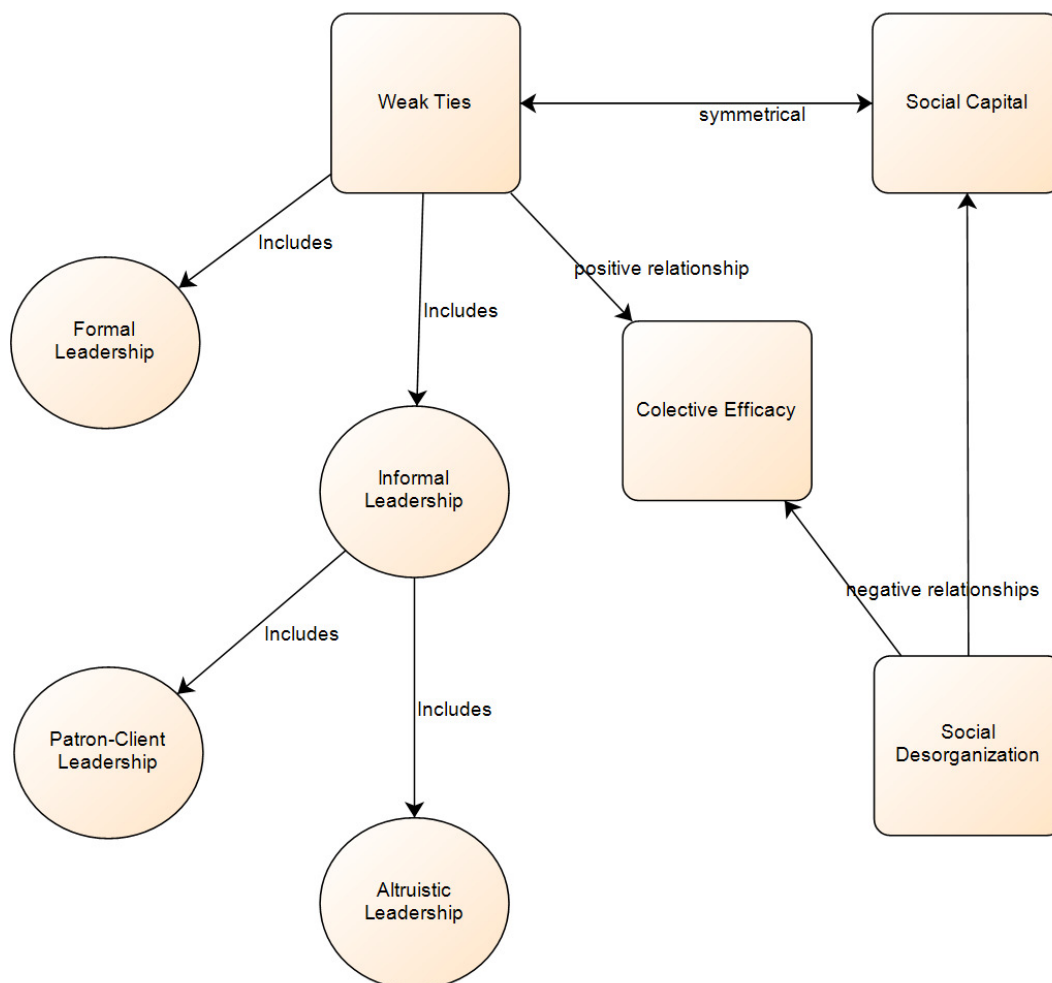




Focusing now the existence of social capital, we found the undeniable strength of this dimension to sustain the sense of order and solidarity within communities and, as noted above, this factor reduces the costs of collective action, thus facilitating the community internal mobilization.

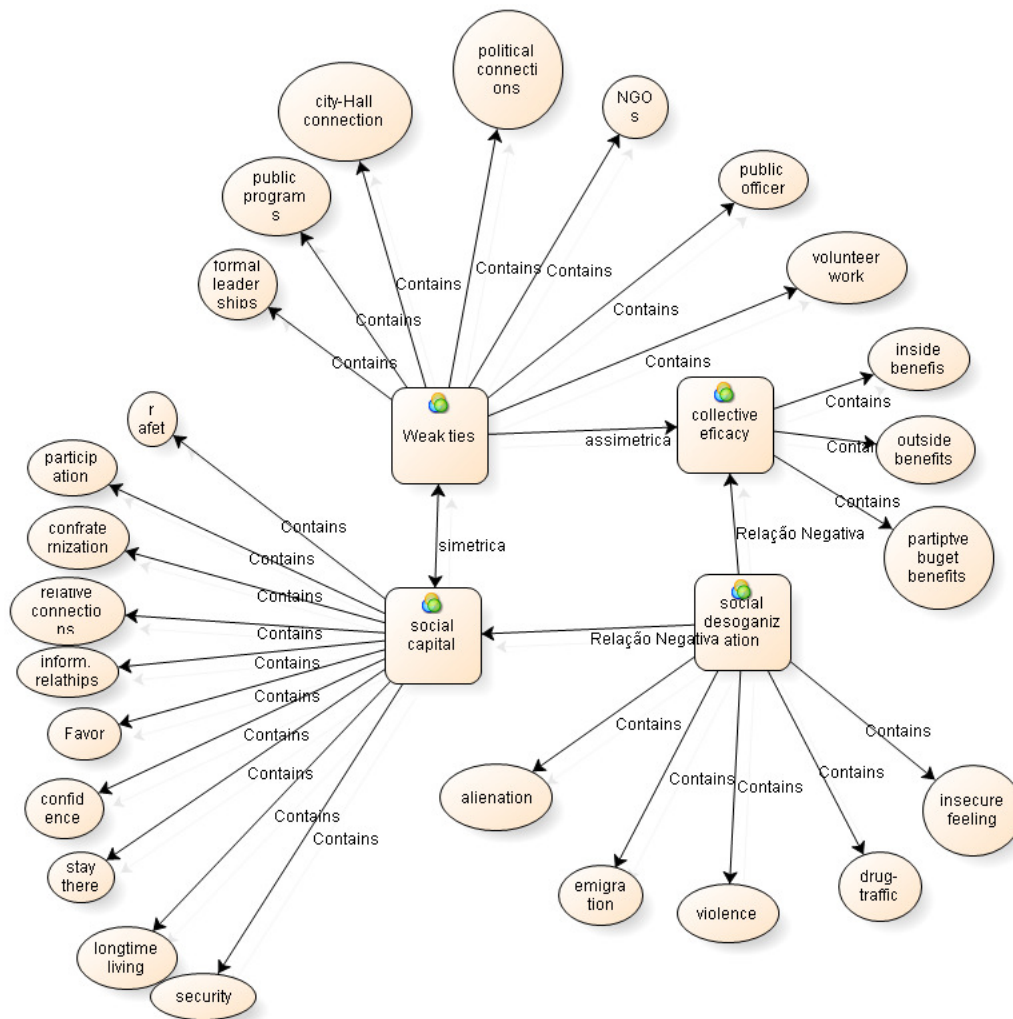
In addition to the paternalistic practices of patronage and altruistic leadership that produce collective goods, without any requirement for beneficiaries investment in

participation, what, obviously, favors the free-ride logic, there are also exogenous factors that go into the social context of the community greatly increasing the cost of participation. These factors are the dimensions of "social disorganization" in the community, emphasizing, as the most important, the violence generated by drug trafficking. The comparative analysis of this dimension in the three communities, as shown by TAB VIII, clearly demonstrates this fact: the Santa Rosa community is that one that shows more strongly a sense of insecurity related to the threat of drug trafficking. 47% out the 75 specific references to violence in the three communities, were reported by the Santa Rosa community. As one might expect, this community is also that one that presents less indicators of social capital. This fact led us to reshape the Model II by adding the dimension of social disorganization that has taken the following form:



#### IV-CONCLUSION.

The final conclusion of our study is well illustrated by the diagram of the model presented below:



This diagram summarizes the following conclusions:

##### 1 - Weak Ties.

Weak ties are of fundamental importance to the community collective efficacy in so far as it makes her able to be efficient to achieve public goods. These ties can be of three types:

a) the altruistic type: represented by spontaneous leadership driven to the achievement of collective benefits. This type of leadership is informal and mediates between the demands of community members and public officials or politicians who are qualified for providing these goods.

b) Patron-client type: this tie represents a kind of informal leadership driven to benefit the community or part of its members through particularistic connections with governmental politicians or public officials.

c) formal-institutional type: This last type of weak tie refers specifically to the formal leadership of the board members of the Community Association. As one would expect, the primary function of this type of leadership is precisely to articulate the demands of the community and take them to public agencies.

## 2 - Social Capital.

It is a strategic resource for collective action aimed at the production of collective goods, such as mutual aid, participation in construction or repair sheds, helpfulness and participation in Participatory Budgeting (PB). However, we found in our study enough evidence that this factor alone, facilitates collective action, but it is not the most one critical in determining the effectiveness of the collective community, except in the case of the PB which is a formal channel of induced participation (Prates, A.A.P, ANDRADE, L.A.G, Fernandes, C., Munding, R, 1982).

3 - The three basic variables of our main hypothesis: the independent ones - weak ties and social capital – and the dependent one, the collective efficacy.

These variables are related to the level of social disorganization of the community, indicated by the violence (especially those produced by the outside drug traffic gangs) and the level of community members alienation decreasing the interest in taking part in the production of collective goods. These two variables are negatively related to social capital that, in turn, indirectly affects the ability for domestic production of collective goods.

Finally, we can say that this study brought evidence to our central hypothesis arguing that it is heuristically important to distinguish the two sociological concepts - social capital and social network – as referring to different phenomena of social relationships. This distinction enables a significant improvement for understanding the phenomenon of collective action and its effectiveness. The indiscriminate use of these concepts in the sociological literature, as if they were interchangeable in theory, have generated more "confusion" than clarity in the discussion of the relationship between social capital and collective action.

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