Interrupting the Cycle of Moral Exclusion: A Communication Contribution to Social Justice Research

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This research broadly maps the territory of moral exclusion to include communication within its boundaries. Communicative strategies may provide the means for the interruption or even the reversal of the moral-exclusion cycle. While the current studies do not provide empirical verification of the reversal mechanism, they do prepare the theoretical groundwork through the use of a contemporary example: Romanian orphans. The first study is a survey of 225 Romanian students designed to reveal how they analyze the social issue of orphans and whether it is possible to differentiate between those who have and those who have not excluded orphans from their scope of justice. The second study consists of 2 focus-group discussions conducted in Bucharest: one with project managers from nongovernment organizations working with children in crisis, and the other with ordinary citizens. The results and discussion concentrate on the implications and practical applications for potentially countering moral exclusion.

This paper explores the communication discipline’s potential contribution to the interruption or reversal of the moral-exclusion cycle (Staub, 1989). Scholars (e.g., Opotow, 1990b) have explained this process, but relatively little has been done with respect to its management. Arguably, the communication discipline offers a starting place to tackle such a formidable task and may be an indispensable concept for social justice research (Tyler & Smith, 1998).

Communication is one of the primary means by which people affect, and are affected by, others. While numerous disciplines (e.g., philosophy, jurisprudence, psychology, sociology, social psychology, political science, economics) have informed the issue of justice, the contribution of the communication field is relatively untapped (Frey, 1998). The present paper integrates two research

1I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Peggy Bowers for her insightful feedback during various drafts of this article, as well as Ruxandra Dorobantu, Vasile Dorobantu, Megan Rice, Claudia Suh, and Andreea Szabo, who helped in the various stages of data collection and analysis. In addition, I thank two anonymous reviewers for their useful suggestions that improved the article.

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1859

Specifically, I hope to sketch some lines of inquiry and innovation that can bear strongly on the reversal of moral exclusion (Opotow, 1995; Rubin & Bunker, 1995). Moral exclusion is a psychosocial orientation toward certain individuals or groups for whom justice principles or considerations of fairness and allocation of resources are not applicable (Opotow, 1990b, 1995; Staub, 1989, 1990). As Opotow (1990b) explains, “Those who are morally excluded are perceived as nonentities, expendable, or undeserving; consequently, harming them appears acceptable, appropriate, or just” (p. 1). This position would constitute one end of a continuum that Deutsch (1985, 1990) refers to as the scope of justice. Those at the opposite end of the continuum are morally included. That is, concerns regarding justice and fair treatment govern conduct for those within this boundary. In addition, if morally included people suffer harm, others respond with remorse and outrage.

Opotow (1995) and other moral-exclusion scholars contend that we all have boundaries for justice and that they are finite. Our obligations are stronger for those who are psychologically close, as opposed to distant. Deutsch (1995) draws a distinction between exclusion, which connotes intention, and a simple failure of inclusion, which reveals no such motivation. Although this is conceptually interesting, for the purposes of the present study, the distinction (evil vs. passive unconcern) is not fully developed. It is sufficient for this study to focus on people who are generally excluded, regardless of intent, as exclusion is experienced in both cases.

It is also important to acknowledge that the concept of moral exclusion is ubiquitous. Numerous issues and contexts can be linked to it readily from topics studied in both the social sciences and humanities; such as prejudice (e.g., Allport, 1979), discrimination (e.g., Banton, 1994), stereotyping (e.g., Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994), altruism (e.g., Batson, 1991), stigma (e.g., Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Herek, 1998), and marginalization (e.g., Clair, 1998; Habermas, 1984), to name but a few. The goal of this paper is not to provide an exhaustive interdisciplinary literature review of such connections, but rather to offer a preliminary contribution from the communication discipline.

Social psychologists have clearly documented antecedents (Opotow, 1993, 1994), occurrence (e.g., Cook, 1990; Nagata, 1990), and detection and possible deterrents (Cook, 1990; Opotow, 1990a) of moral exclusion. Specifically, two broad factors—a situation of conflict and a feeling of unconnectedness—can predict moral exclusion. Detection and deterrence are often overlapping, in that detection is needed for deterrence. Several symptoms have been identified (cf. Opotow, 1990a, 1990b) through processes that are what Opotow terms exclusion-specific (e.g., dehumanization, fear of contamination) and ordinary (e.g., psychological distance, condescension). She clearly defines the scope of justice.
as a continuous rather than a dichotomous construct. That is, moral exclusion occurs in degrees, covering the gamut from mild (ordinary) to severe (exclusion-specific). This study’s focus of attention will be narrowed to a more severe instance of exclusion, however.

Generally speaking, little research has examined how to reverse the cycle once it is identified. Some preventive measures have been proposed to minimize its occurrence, such as resolving conflicts early, avoiding win–lose conflicts, and engaging in perspective-taking (Opotow, 1995). Yet an empirical knowledge base that would inform attempts to interrupt the cycle is practically nonexistent.  

Communication may be the mechanism to help institute intervention efforts. It is through language that we establish, maintain, legitimize, and change the status quo or essentially construct a social reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Giles & Wiemann, 1985). Recently, Graumann (1998) has critiqued moral-exclusion scholars for overlooking the role of discourse in the exclusion process (e.g., Riggins, 1997). Not only can the groundwork for exclusion be prepared via language, but often it is the primary means by which psychological distancing occurs. Research on deprecating speech (e.g., Leets & Giles, 1999) and on intergroup linguistic bias (e.g., Maass & Arcuri, 1996; Maass, Ceccarelli, & Rudin, 1996) provides examples of language-related areas that hold relevance for the scope of justice. Furthermore, I contend that the inverse of Graumann’s assessment is plausible; that through communication we also can return people to the moral realm. Many scholars (e.g., critical, postmodern, and feminist) have noted both the oppressive and emancipatory potential of communication.

Having raised the importance of communication influence for reversing moral exclusion, it is important to consider the ongoing dialectic among thought, behavior, and speech. The interrelationships among these three fundamental processes have not received research attention commensurate with their significance. Yet it is safe to posit that there is a complex interplay among them. An attitude is a relatively enduring predisposition that consists of a favorable or unfavorable response to something (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993), but behavior refers to overt acts. Research has shown that attitudes can be precursors of behavior; as well as the reverse, that behaviors can shape subsequent attitudes (cf. Chaiken, Wood, & Eagly, 1996).

The interdisciplinary literature on applied social research is voluminous. Many fields have subdisciplines that focus on intervention research in applied domains where a particular group of persons serves as the recipient of a treatment (intervention) intended to help solve or prevent a social concern, such as poverty, AIDS, environmental pollution, or racism. Moreover, nonacademic (for-profit and nonprofit) organizations are often involved with parallel social-political action. Hence, there are many ongoing efforts to improve societal welfare, and some of these undertakings can alleviate manifestations of moral exclusion. For example, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is an international Jewish human-rights organization committed to monitoring and combating intergroup hostility and hate. Without meaning in any way to disparage these efforts, this article arises out of a need for empirical studies that are theoretically grounded in the social justice literature.
With respect to communication, it is generally defined as the creation and negotiation of meaning through the use of shared symbols (Wilson, Hantz, & Hanna, 1992). Social psychologists acknowledge that communication mediates much social behavior, but generally they have not examined how (Krauss & Fussell, 1996; Markus & Zajonc, 1985). Rather, they have emphasized the cognitive processes that mediate the effects of information on attitudes (e.g., Chaiken et al., 1996). Similarly, Opotow (1990a) pointed out that people’s attitudes and behaviors can influence society and vice versa, but the link between this relationship, communication, has not been developed. Arguably, communication is the major vehicle for social influence (Miller & Burgoon, 1978).

This presumption that persuasive communication is a tool for producing social change via the shaping, reinforcing, or changing of attitudes and behaviors has been a cornerstone of democratic political process over the centuries (Miller, 1985). One relevant example of how communication can construct and negotiate social knowledge is through the public-opinion process. Opinions are verbal statements of attitudes and extend from both individuals and social groups. Price and Roberts (1985) argued that in the course of discussing a public issue, people create shared ways of understanding the problem and can identify alternative solutions: “individual opinions arise out of public communication, consisting mainly of a person’s ongoing effort to organize both cognitive and behavioral responses to a public issue. Opinions are thus linked to their surrounding social environment, originating and developing within the context of public discussion” (p. 787).

Hence, individual thoughts about a social issue and resulting behaviors can be largely dependent on public discussion and not based on isolated contemplation. Along these lines, the theory and techniques of one of the oldest specialty fields of communication—communication campaigns (cf. Rogers & Storey, 1985)—can apply to the reversal of moral exclusion.

By looking at a contemporary case study (orphan children in Romania), the present paper lays the intellectual groundwork to remove the psychological distance as well as the behavioral inaction that allow people to be morally excluded. That is, the paper reflects a justificatory basis for intervention, rather than a specific action plan. In other words, it is a call to action that is given in broad strokes, in part because the communication intervention needs to be adapted to the current Romanian context. It is beyond the scope of this paper to provide an operational description of what programs to implement or how to allocate resources to change society’s attitudes and to modify its corresponding behavior. Rather, the goal of the paper is to examine the efficacy of a proposed media campaign to change society’s attitudes and modify its behavior in relation to the children. I will provide a brief background of the plight of the Romanian children and then an overview of a two-part study.

Romania is a developing country that has inherited a child-welfare problem from its not-so-distant communist past. While authorities are unable to provide accurate figures of the number of children in institutional care and on the streets
interrupting moral exclusion

1863

(U.S. Department of State, 1998), attempts at a census reveal that there are more than 100,000 children living in orphanages or private shelters, and more than 2,500 on the streets (e.g., Perlez, 1998). The problem stems from former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu’s pronatalist policies (cf. Kligman, 1991), in which the State attempted to further socialism by building a solid work force. Not only were abortion, contraception, and family planning services forbidden, but in the early 1980s, women were told to bear four or more children. At the same time, the standard of living had declined tremendously, with little food, heat, or electricity available for households. Many unwanted children were born into families struggling merely to survive. In despair and with an internalized dependency on the State for the basics of life, many parents left their children to government institutions (Kligman, 1991). The communist government even encouraged this on the grounds that the children would be better off in the State’s care than at home (Triseliotis, 1994). Current statistics reveal that more than 8 in 10 abandoned children have parents (Aratani, 1998). It is not difficult to see how moral exclusion has relevance for this situation. The conditions in Romania closely imitate the theoretical environment thought to lead to a narrowly drawn scope of justice.

Opotow (1990b) argued that moral exclusion will precipitate under two conditions: a perception of conflict, and a feeling of unconnectedness. Both have been present in Romania regarding abandoned children. First, economic hardship is evident in that by the end of 1989, Romania had the second worst starting point for reform of all central and east European economies (Treptow, 1997). The staggering financial woes continued into the 1990s so that Romanians were unable to shoulder responsibility for social services as readily as other countries making the same economic transition (Williams, 1992). The majority of families are often struggling just to eat, so it is not uncommon for Romania to be described as a country where survival, not children, has been the priority. Second, several decades of communism have left their mark on people’s attitudes and mentalities (Conn & Crawford, 1999; Mihailescu, 1993). As Kligman (1991) notes, under communism, people were recognized by their contribution as workers, not by some inherent value. If an individual were nonproductive, that would result in a social death. Along these lines, “There was no explicit eugenics program [for the orphans], but rather systematic neglect” (Kligman, 1991, p. 367).

Although symptoms of moral exclusion are sometimes difficult to detect, former Romanian President Emil Constantinescu was quite candid and sympathetic about the plight of the “orphaned” children. Unlike the communist government, the new democracy is encouraging Romanian families to adopt children. Nonetheless, symptoms of moral exclusion are identifiably present (Conn & Crawford, 1999). For example, an American reporter described a cab driver’s comment to a social worker: “With so many decent people struggling to get along, why do you bother with the kids? They are no good; they are trash” (Aratani, 1998, p. 20).
Using Romanian children as a case study of ongoing moral exclusion, two studies examined issues relevant to reversing the process. Both studies can be framed theoretically from either an instrumental justice motive or a relational one (Tyler & Smith, 1998). An instrumental view (Foa & Foa, 1974; Homans, 1961) posits that people are excluded from competition for limited resources, whereas the relational perspective (Tajfel, 1982) contends that limits to the scope of justice stem from issues of social identification (e.g., status, identity, in-group vs. out-group dynamics). Potentially, both rationales apply to this context. The key factor is the ethnicity of the orphan: Romanian versus Gypsy (also known as “Roma”). Discriminatory policies and ill feelings toward Gypsies are widespread throughout Europe. They are a nonterritorial minority group usually viewed as an out-group by the countries they inhabit. In the postcommunist era, they still remain a target of vehement Romanian hostility. Thus, if it involves a Gypsy orphan, exclusion can be based on maintaining a positive and distinct social identity (relational model). When it is a Romanian orphan, however, the source of the abandonment is the child’s own social group. In this case, the instrumental model appears to be more appropriate. In addition, the conflict between Gypsies and Romanians is often explained on an economic basis.

Regardless of whether the instrumental or relational justice model applies, a communication campaign may be able to interrupt the cycle of moral exclusion. According to Rogers and Storey (1985), a minimum definition of a communication campaign includes four features: (a) “A campaign intends to generate specific outcomes or effects (b) in a relatively large number of individuals (c) usually within a specified period of time and (d) through an organized set of communication activities” (p. 821). This broad definition can incorporate the related terms of social marketing and media advocacy. Social marketing usually refers to the application of commercial marketing to areas that do not involve for-profit sales, such as health campaigns (Goldberg, Fishbein, & Middlestadt, 1997). Media advocacy focuses on mass-media strategies for advancing a public-policy initiative (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). Bear in mind that while communication campaigns are persuasive messages aimed at creating change, they do not constitute propaganda.⁵

⁴The Gypsies call themselves Roma, from the old Sanskrit word meaning “man” and claim a heritage from old tribes that migrated from India to Europe in the early Middle Ages. Some human-rights groups such as Helsinki Watch have published special reports detailing acts of violence against Gypsies. The main conglomerate of the Gypsy population is in the Balkans, and they constitute a solid minority in Romania.

⁵Jowett and O’Donnell (1986) note that propaganda is the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist. The point is that the propagandist does not regard the well-being of the audience as a primary concern. Especially in the communist era, the media were mechanisms to disseminate propaganda rather than to promote civic cohesiveness (Mondak & Gearing, 1998).
A good example of a communication campaign is America Responds to AIDS (ARTA). The United States government, through the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), implemented a national communication campaign to address the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s (Roper, 1991). It evolved into an extensive and comprehensive program that successfully changed public attitudes toward those with HIV and with regard to safer-sex practices (Ratzan, Payne, & Massett, 1994). ARTA incorporated multiple communication channels across several levels of analysis (e.g., interpersonal, organizational, mass media). Successful campaigns have many common components, and the communication techniques that ARTA employed can be adapted to other situations, such as Romanian orphans.

The Romanian Department of Child Protection (DCP) and the World Bank (1998) Resident Mission in Romania have recently mapped out a blueprint for reforming the child-rights protection system over a 3-year period from 1998 to 2001. Their strategy includes a two-pronged prevention/intervention approach to confront both future needs and current demands. The prevention efforts center on major areas such as family planning, birth control, and education. The intervention strategies involve creating short- and long-term emergency humanitarian aid programs, such as providing a legal framework, strengthening institutional services, promoting alternative child care, training a cadre of well-trained health professionals, and increasing the role of civil society. Importantly, they recognize the need for public awareness in order to increase support for the reforms and to change the underlying values of society.

As the reform initiatives become somewhat established, the government desires further collaboration with businesses, educational institutions, and health and social policymakers. A time of unified social and political action is the ideal moment for a communication campaign. If the government is efficient in implementing its reforms, the climate of opinion toward the orphans could be initiated from the top down. Historically, as Zamfir (1997) notes, the DCP has been “severely understaffed and the existing staff does not have appropriate qualifications, so they cannot provide quality social services, only the simplest administrative tasks” (p. 73). If, on the other hand, the implementation of the reforms is delayed, it is still possible to launch a grass-roots communication campaign.

An effort to examine the viability of such a campaign in Romania requires comprehensive knowledge about the issue and target audience (Maiback & Parrott, 1995). As a point of entry, I incorporated a multimethod design with both quantitative and qualitative data-collection procedures. The first study surveyed several hundred Romanian university students to investigate their perceptions of, solutions to, and attributions of responsibility for Romania’s child-welfare crisis. University students are well suited for this task because they are learning to be thoughtful critics of society and will be its future leaders. As McMurrin (1980) pointed out, not all university students will prove to be societal leaders or cultural
sculptors, but they do constitute a population with a potential for such powerful influence and leadership.

In addition, I adapted several measures (e.g., scope of justice scale, utility) used in Opotow’s (1993, 1994) environmental studies to see whether the students’ scope of justice differed. This significantly extended her experimental research on severe instances of exclusion. Rather than a natural, nonhuman entity (i.e., beetle), this study targeted humans. Even though Opotow (1993, 1994) had many practical reasons for using a beetle as her stimulus, such as eliminating the issue of social desirability, her findings are not automatically applicable to humans. For instance, a philosophical debate on what defines humanity (e.g., de Waal, 1996; Taylor, 1985) may inform this discussion. The controversy hinges on the view of people as being merely animals or as profoundly different. Yet, even those willing to extend similarity to other mammals may not include insects. Conversely, the same mediating processes that influence judgments of inclusion and exclusion may be operating regardless of the target. Opotow’s (1995) qualitative research regarding milder instances of exclusion found in junior-high-school students’ interpersonal conflicts appears to support this idea. Based on the above discussion, two research questions are posed.

**Research Question 1.** How do Romanians analyze the social issue of orphans? Specifically, how do they perceive orphans, to whom do Romanians attribute responsibility, and what plausible solutions might eliminate this situation?

**Research Question 2.** Will people’s perceptions of orphans’ utility, deservingness, and neediness differentiate between inclusion and exclusion in the scope of justice?

The second study used two strategic-planning focus groups, one consisting of managers from nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and the other containing “ordinary” people. Although this procedure is limited and partial, successful campaigns engage in extensive research on the target audience before developing messages or interventions (Maiback & Parrott, 1995; Salmon, 1989). As Slater (1995) notes, “any data . . . that sensitizes an intervention planner to the concerns, needs, or constraints of the intended audience should only serve to improve the communication effort” (p. 196). The interviews were conducted in Bucharest, a natural location for a campaign. Consultation with the Romanian embassy confirmed that the capital would have the largest possible impact in the shortest amount of time. The purpose of the focus groups was fourfold: (a) to rank the child welfare crisis among the major issues facing the city; (b) to explore existing perceptions of orphans/street children; (c) to explore solutions, interventions, and barriers to civic engagement; and (d) to obtain initial planning inputs for a
communication campaign regarding messages, themes, media channels, advocates (public personalities), and so forth.

**Research Question 3.** Do Romanians believe that the child welfare system merits community action? If so, what sort of action? What are some of the problems, solutions, impediments, and required actions associated with intervention?

**Study 1**

**Method**

**Respondents**

The respondents were 225 volunteers (83 males, 142 females) from three different universities in Timisoara, Romania. Based on their majors, 23% \((n = 52)\) studied engineering, 34% \((n = 78)\) studied medicine, 11% \((n = 24)\) studied social work, and 32% \((n = 71)\) studied psychology. They ranged in age from 18 to 42 years, with a median age of 21 years. According to their national identity, participants were 91% \((n = 204)\) Romanian, 7% Hungarian \((n = 16)\), and 2% \((n = 5)\) other. All non-Romanian respondents were excluded from the study. The majority of the respondents (70%, \(n = 158\)) reported having had contact with the orphans. Usually the encounters were on the street (e.g., parking lots, bridges, bus and train stations) or in orphanages (staff member or visitor).

**Measures**

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first section included three open-ended questions: “How do you view orphans?”; “Who is responsible for the plight of the orphans?”; and “How do you believe the orphan issue can best be addressed/solved?” The second section included 10 closed-ended items and five standard demographic questions. All questions were rated on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (definitely).

**Scope of Justice Scale.** Measures developed by Opotow (1993) assessed the disadvantaged group’s rights and entitlements. The scale consisted of five items: (a) willingness to allocate resources; (b) considerations of fairness; (c) willingness to make sacrifices to foster a person’s well being; (d) difficulty making the allocation decision; and (e) willingness to support concrete protective measures. Additionally, one question asked about people’s willingness to help. All six items were reworded to reflect the contexts under investigation and were summed across scores for an aggregate measure (Cronbach’s \(\alpha = .69\)).

**Utility.** The operationalization of utility was also based on Opotow’s (1994) work. A semantic differential consisting of four bipolar items (helpful/nuisance,
valuable/worthless, beneficial/harmful, and useful/useless) recorded how respondents perceived the disadvantaged group. The four items were incorporated into one utility measure by taking the average across the scores ($\alpha = .84$).

A gifted translator with native language skills in both English and Romanian translated the questionnaire from English to Romanian and translated the subsequent non-preceded responses from the Romanian participants to English. The process of translation is inevitably a source of error; however, the careful selection of a translator reduced that error. While the technique of backtranslation is potentially helpful, Triandis (1983) points out that it is no guarantee of a perfect translation. It is costly, time consuming, and the quality still depends on the translator’s skill. He argues for a one-time short translation by a skilled translator, rather than engaging in backtranslation exercises. I opted for an alternative check and had another bilingual reader examine the translated material.

Procedure

Researchers presented the in-class questionnaire as an investigation concerned with how people view social issues, telling participants that their particular survey would focus on orphans. The questionnaire required approximately 10 minutes to finish. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the students received thanks for their participation.

Results

Research Question 1: Romanians’ analysis of the orphan issue. Two coders (independent of each other and naïve to the research questions) listed participants’ perceptions, responsibility attributions, and solutions from the open-ended questions into general categories based on similarity, with no restriction on the number of classifications. A second set of two coders took these preliminary categories and (after discussion and frequency counts) collapsed participants’ responses into 8 categories for perceptions, 10 categories for attributional responsibility, and 9 categories for solutions. The responses coded in a miscellaneous or “other” category comprised a small percentage of the entire sample. Interrater agreement was satisfactory, with levels of simple agreement at .95 for perceptions, .86 for attributional responsibility, and .88 for solutions. A calculation of Scott’s (1955) $\pi$, correcting for chance agreement for each set of categories yielded .94 for perceptions, .84 for attributional responsibility, and .87 for solutions. Table 1 displays a summary of the results, and Appendix A provides examples from the three questions.

Research Question 2: Determining the scope of justice. A stepwise discriminant analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996) investigated whether perceptions of utility, deservingness, and neediness could differentiate between psychological
### Table 1

**Distribution of Responses to the Orphan Issue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptions of orphans</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need support</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evoked compassion</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal humans</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and moral problem</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack utility</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgotten</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attributional responsibility</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents/family</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphanages</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No blame</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphans</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested solutions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special institutions</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption/foster family</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal responsibility</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial help</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved orphanages and personnel</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change general mentality</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family planning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
inclusion and exclusion of orphans in the scope of justice. While most of the assumptions for discriminant analysis were met, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated (Box’s $M = 93.34$), approximate $F(3, 3807197) = 30.65$, $p < .000$. Consequently, there is a greater risk of misclassification. With this in mind, the holdout sample was purposefully defined as one third of the total sample so that it could be used to determine the degree to which chance fluctuations affected the derivation of the discriminant functions. The holdout sample received particular attention when results were analyzed in terms of classification accuracy. In addition, all of the independent variables were skewed, which may suggest a violation of the assumption of multivariate normality. Discriminant analysis is robust to a failure of normality when it is caused by skewness and not outliers.

One discriminant function differentiated respondents’ scope of justice. Before removing the discriminant function, sufficient predictable variation between those who had included and excluded orphans in the moral realm existed to justify extraction of the discriminant function, canonical correlation = .38, Wilks’s $\Lambda = .85$, $\chi^2(2, N = 148) = 19.35$, $p < .001$. Two factors defined the discriminant function: deservingness and utility. Hence, the respondents who rated orphans as more deserving of help and as having utility (i.e., useful, helpful, valuable, beneficial) were more likely to include the orphans in the scope of justice or the moral realm.

The classification accuracy varied across the two conditions. The classification of people who had a more limited scope of justice was what would have been expected by chance (50.0%), whereas the classification of people who had a wider scope of justice was well above chance (83.6%). As expected with the violated homogeneity of variance assumption, there was some loss of accuracy between the original and holdout samples in classification accuracy. It does not appear, however, that chance fluctuations overly affected the derivation of the discriminant functions. Furthermore, the ability to distinguish between inclusion and exclusion was above chance (66.7%), using either a maximum chance criterion (chance = .50) or a proportional chance criterion (chance = .49). The classification ability represented a 34% reduction in errors of prediction over what would have been expected by chance ($\tau = .34$) and was significantly better than what would have been expected by chance alone, Press’s $Q = 16.33$, critical value of $\chi^2(1, N = 148) = 10.82$, $p < .001$. Consequently, knowing how a person evaluated orphans in terms of deservingness and utility can help delineate between those who have included or excluded them in the scope of justice. Future research is necessary to locate other variables that can improve predictive ability, especially with regard to accurately classifying those with a more limited scope of justice.

**Discussion**

Research Question 1 addressed how Romanians view the orphan issue. It is important to remember that the sample is not representative of all Romanian
citizens. The survey was conducted in Timisoara, a city known for its well-educated population and as the place where the revolt against the Ceausescu regime began in 1989 (Treptow, 1997). In particular, these students were pursuing professions (e.g., medicine, social work) through which the humane character of society often emerges. Not surprisingly, the majority of respondents were sympathetic to the plight of the orphans. Interestingly, respondents frequently used two phrases to describe the orphans’ victimization: “wronged by fate” (≈30%), and “disadvantaged” (≈70%). The first phrase insinuates a more fatalistic approach to the situation, with some degree of resignation and powerlessness, whereas the second implies a social relation with a possibility for change. It appears to be a distinction between an impersonal, external force responsible for unfortunate circumstances and a lack of responsibility for civic obligations from members of one’s own society. Fortunately, the majority of students recognized a need for reform, believed that it is possible, and thus can potentially serve as important agents of change.

While the predominant societal view of the orphans is one of exclusion, clearly not every subgroup accepts this perspective. In addition, their attributions of responsibility and suggestions for change acknowledge the complexity of the situation. The answers reflect an understanding that the problem will not be solved quickly and needs a combined effort of the government, charities, community leaders, and citizens. Most answers reflected such a multipronged approach. Interestingly, the most frequently reported solution was institutionalization, and second was alternative family placement. The historical preference to institutionalize the children is still apparent, but not at the expense of other more efficient solutions, such as adoption or foster care (Zamfir, 1997). On the other hand, these results are presented cautiously.

Unlike American university students, Romanian students are not accustomed to completing questionnaires. The fact that their opinions were surveyed may have impacted their responses; that is, the Hawthorne effect. While there is no complete protection against this effect, Romanians are especially sensitive about their public representation. According to a recent opinion poll, Romania was more eager than any other country to join NATO (Nastase, 1997), but was turned down recently because of domestic difficulties. They are slated for review again in 2002, and the most powerful voice in this decision is the United States. An alternative but related explanation is that their responses reflected a social desirability bias.

Research Question 2 confirmed that deservingness and utility were able to differentiate between inclusion and exclusion. The discriminant analysis replicated Opotow’s (1993) finding that inclusion can be distinguished from exclusion by concerns of worth. Opotow’s work on the environment was successfully

6I am grateful to Ruxandra Dorobantu for her insight regarding this distinction.
generalized to humans. Future research needs to ferret out the role of moderating variables for exclusion, especially given the societal implications.

Study 2

Method

Respondents

A total of 20 people from Bucharest participated in two focus groups. The first group consisted of 10 managers (3 male, 7 female) from NGOs who assist Bucharest children in crisis. Of the first group, 2 managers had vocational training, and the other 8 had some higher education. They were experts in part by training and by practice. Among them were social workers, psychologists, teachers, and engineers. In terms of their marital status, 4 were single, 4 were divorced, 1 was married, and 1 was widowed. The second focus group included 10 ordinary people (6 male, 4 female). All of the participants had finished high school, with 4 having additional vocational training and another 4 finishing higher education. This group included 1 student, 1 retiree, 1 government worker, 3 private business owners or self-described entrepreneurs, 3 military personnel, and 1 of unknown occupation. In terms of their marital status, 2 were single and 8 were divorced.

Both groups believed that the orphans and street children were very deserving of help ($M = 6.7$), $t(18) = 0.40$, $ns$. Not surprisingly, the NGO managers were more involved with the child-crisis situation ($M = 6.7$ vs. 1.8) $t(18) = 12.56, p < .001$; and rated its importance higher ($M = 6.8$ vs. 4.8), $t(18) = 4.57, p < .001$, than did ordinary citizens. Consistent with Study 1, researchers obtained a scope of justice ($\alpha = .84$) and a utility ($\alpha = .88$) measure from the focus-group participants. There was no difference in the orphan/street children’s perceived utility ($M = 4.0$), $t(18) = -0.13$, $ns$, but the NGO managers were more likely to have included them in their scope of justice than were the ordinary citizens ($M = 5.7$ vs. 4.1), $t(18) = 4.42, p < .001$. Interestingly, the ordinary citizens appear to be more noncommittal, not necessarily excluding or including the children.

Procedure

Institutul de Marketing si Sondaje (Institute of Marketing and Polls, IMAS)\(^7\) conducted the two focus groups. The professional pollsters recruited a purposive sample of NGO managers in Bucharest, based on their knowledge of legitimate

\(^7\)IMAS was established in 1992 as the first private company in Romania to specialize in polls and marketing.
organizations (i.e., ones who send annual reports to the Romanian Justice Ministry). Through random-digit dialing, they recruited ordinary people who earned more than the median income (25.5% of the city). The income filter served to tap into “the influentials” of Bucharest; that is, people who tend to legitimize ideas and make concepts acceptable to people in general (cf. diffusion of innovations theory; Rogers, 1983).

Each group had a female facilitator. The facilitator introduced the probes, allowed each person the opportunity to speak, and kept the group focused on the questions. All focus groups took place in the same room (IMAS office) with participants seated around a table, and lasted about 90 min. The group conversations were videotaped, transcribed, and then translated into English.

The focus groups were tightly structured by the use of specific probes outlined in Appendixes B and C. The probes were designed to elicit responses in three areas: (a) city issues; (b) perceptions of the orphan/street children; and (c) impediments, solutions, and suggestions for intervention. The exact items were adjusted to each group. At the end of each session, participants filled out identification cards that included basic demographic information and Opopow’s (1993, 1994) scope of justice and utility measures.

Data Preparation and Analysis Plan

Based on initial readings, the transcripts were coded for themes. A theme comprised a subject and complete predicate phrase for one event (Holsti, 1969). For example, if the transcript read “The children are defiant and potential criminals,” it would be converted into the following themes: (a) Children are defiant, and (b) children are potential criminals. Two people independently coded the transcripts into themes. A comparison of the two versions also addressed discrepancies and resolved them through discussion. Scott’s pi values for interrater agreement for these dimensions were at acceptable levels for each focus group: .84 for NGO managers, and .88 for ordinary people.

Results

As shown in Appendix D, both focus groups identified the same issues confronting the city of Bucharest, but the rank order varied. The NGO managers were primarily concerned with a lack of community, and the ordinary citizens were primarily concerned with the street children. Notably, the child-welfare crisis was in the top three concerns for both groups. In fact, when asked to describe their perceptions of the children, the ordinary people generated no positive attributes associated with the orphans, and the NGO managers mentioned only two.

The overwhelming perception of the children was pessimistic. Both groups recognized the orphans’ relational and skill deficiencies. As the participants
discussed ways to improve the situation, they noted several barriers along institutional and personal dimensions. While the ordinary participants were able to suggest viable interventions on behalf of the children, no one had actually assisted the children. They claimed that they were powerless to help, without recognizing the inconsistency between their answers to the abstract, philosophical questions and the concrete, personal ones. This failure is disturbing for observers who value civic participation.

The NGO managers also critiqued their organizations’ effectiveness. They agreed that NGOs could initiate reform, serve as alternative models to the state institutions, and make a difference for some of the children at risk. Yet they realistically acknowledged that they have helped only a small number of children and could not satisfy the overwhelming need. Moreover, only a few NGOs are operated in a professional, systematic manner. All NGOs struggled with funding and finding qualified personnel to work with the children (Triseliotis, 1994). The NGO managers were disappointed with state taxes and with the lack of recognition by the Romanian Department of Child Protection Services.

All focus group participants were favorably inclined toward the idea of a communication campaign. They believed that it would educate the community as well as help change the attitudes and behaviors toward the orphans and street children. The NGO managers suggested focusing media messages on positive examples of children being reintegrated into society (perhaps even with nationalistic undertones) and adoption. The ordinary people thought Romanian television talk shows would be another forum to publicize the message. Effective communication campaigns often attract public attention by embedding themselves in entertainment programs (Backer, Rogers, & Sopory, 1992).

None of the participants was in agreement on which public personality could serve as a spokesperson for the campaign. Suggestions ranged from specific politicians, businessmen, sports figures, and priests, to the orphans themselves. Positive role models for social learning need to be chosen carefully, as they can compromise the campaign if a segment of the population dislikes them or later they are discovered to be involved in immoral activities (Backer et al., 1992).

Discussion

Overall, the focus groups were helpful in gauging public knowledge and understanding of the child-welfare crisis. Even though the ordinary citizens perceived the orphans and street children negatively, they had placed the children in a transitional position, between inclusion and exclusion on the scope of justice scale \( M = 4.1 \). For example, the following comment by one participant appeared to be representative of the group’s sentiments: “You would like to help them and it is very difficult . . . the lack of time, financially, and you have the feeling that you could help them somehow but . . . rarely happens.” Opotow
(1996) describes this as a transition phase or a willingness-to-help phase. In a research study on adolescents, she found that if they did not exhibit concern regarding an opponent’s welfare but were still willing to help the opponent, it hindered total exclusion. The transitional phase appeared to be a strategic orientation for moving people to a psychological stance of inclusion.

According to Opotow’s (1996) research, this group of Romanian citizens would be in a good position to reverse the moral-exclusion cycle. For example, encouraging small helpful acts toward the children would potentially be enough to reinstate them into the moral realm. In persuasion literature, this strategy is called foot-in-the-door (cf. Baron & Paulus, 1991). The goal is to gain compliance from another person on a small initial request, and thereby increase the chance that he or she will agree to future and larger ones. Once individuals agree to help, they supposedly undergo subtle shifts in their self-perceptions. Namely, they perceive themselves as people who enact a particular behavior; for example, helping when others are in need. Additionally, Opotow proposes that small acts of assistance can promote a better perception of and greater concern for others’ welfare.

As revealed by the issues that Bucharest citizens identified, the living standards are in a state of deterioration. Most scholars point to the communist legacy and the double transition to marketization and democratization to explain the slow pace of reform (Firebaugh & Sandu, 1998). The NGO managers stressed that citizens do not view themselves as civic actors, capable of addressing the problems of their polity. Indeed, the ordinary citizens never considered how their action or inaction had contributed to the child-welfare crisis. Rather, they blamed the parents of the unwanted children for not using birth control or for being irresponsible. Zamfir (1997) describes this as a traditional Romanian tendency to transmit the negative characteristics of parents (e.g., easy women, irresponsible parents, drunkards, mentally ill) to the abandoned children, leaving them with a strong social stigma. When considering solutions to the problem, they expected others (i.e., the state or foreigners) to solve it. Their approach was not unexpected. In contrast to Westerners, Eastern Europeans often view democracy in terms of economic rights where the state promotes economic prosperity and meets basic needs (Firebaugh & Sandu, 1998). Ideologically, they have not internalized individual freedom. Liberal democratic societies value freedom of choice and responsibility, expecting citizen input in community affairs and participation in addressing collective needs via churches, schools, and voluntary institutions.

Arguably, Romanian citizens are simply not practiced at civic responsibility (Triseliotis, 1994). The Ceausescu regime had established the Securitate (Romanian KGB), which was the largest and most effective force of its kind in Eastern Europe (Mondak & Gearing, 1998). Surveillance of private citizens was routine and created an obstacle for participation in community affairs.

On a broad level, the focus groups suggest that the citizens of Bucharest need help in thinking about their obligations as citizens; for example, boosting people’s
civic skills and self-confidence about how they can make a difference. While research (Yates & Youniss, 1999) points to the importance of the family for fostering the development of socially responsible thinking and behavior, all of Romanian society is undergoing socialization into a new set of attitudes and values. As the focus group participants acknowledged, a communication campaign appears to be well suited to help promote, legitimize, and transmit these orientations and goals. Using the orphans and street children as one example, a communication campaign can encourage citizens to responsibly tackle the child-crisis issue instead of ostracizing the children because they are “criminals” or “destitute.”

The focus groups also revealed that Romanians are cynical toward the NGOs (Conn & Crawford, 1999). While there are legitimate NGOs helping the children, many were established out of the self-interest of the directors, who wanted to tap into the vast sum of foreign aid donated to Romania on behalf of the children. Hence, many makeshift organizations emerged that can be aptly described by the Romanian proverb, “He who shares, gives himself a share.” The NGO managers recognized that their organizations have had a minimal impact on producing a civic society. In order to establish long-term change, the reputable NGOs and the DCP ideally should develop links. A trustworthy organizational structure must be in place to maximize community-based involvement.

Finally, communication campaign scholars (e.g., Witte, 1995) recognize that to maximize the possibility of changing attitudes and behaviors, it is important to uncover the current mind set of the target audience, and in particular barriers that may act as obstacles to the adoption of the recommended change. Only after beliefs about self-efficacy and barriers to self-efficacy are determined can actual messages for a campaign be developed. Significantly, the focus groups did identify psychological and social barriers perpetuating the moral-exclusion cycle, such as considerations of finances, time, ability, resources, sense of civic responsibility, and so forth. Future research should be careful to document these barriers across different contexts and severity (mild to severe) levels in order to map out possible interruption strategies.

General Discussion

The general implication of the present paper is that communication could interrupt moral exclusion. Specifically, two studies addressing the moral exclusion of Romanian orphans served both to inform the groundwork upon which a communication campaign can be built, and to encourage such an endeavor. The first study demonstrated that university students in Timisoara have a sophisticated understanding of the orphan issue and acknowledge a need for societal reform. The second study suggested that Romanians would be receptive to 8Andreea Szabo provided this proverb.
broadening their scope of justice with regard to the child-welfare crisis. Interestingly, the ordinary citizens who participated in the focus groups had drawn their boundaries in a way that calls into question the distinction between exclusion and failure of inclusion (Deutsch, 1995). As Rubin and Bunker (1995) ask, “Are people included unless and until rules for exclusion are derived? Or is it possibly the reverse, namely, that people are excluded unless reason can be found for inclusion?” (p. 414). Regardless of the answer, people in this transitional position are more willing to respond to those in distress, thus making a communication campaign more opportune.

As we consider ways to interrupt the cycle of moral exclusion, it overlaps, but is not identical to, discussions of civil society (Mondak & Gearing, 1998; Yates & Youniss, 1999). The present paper argues that communicating effective strategies for how Romanian citizens can assist the orphans and street children may lead them from behavioral inaction to action. Planned, sustained helping is known as volunteerism (e.g., Stukas, Snyder, & Clary, 1999). In this context, volunteering can foster a feeling of belonging, enhance the welfare of the community, and potentially expand the scope of justice.

For the purposes herein, there are two main explanations of how people become volunteers (cf. Janoski, Musick, & Wilson, 1998). One is called the normativist perspective and asserts that unpaid assistance stems from socialization into prosocial attitudes, usually by the family of origin. It emphasizes the role of values in guiding conduct. The other, the social practice perspective, asserts that altruistic behavior reflects habitual ways of acting, acquired through structured opportunity and social resources. While research has shown that prosocial attitudes have a stronger impact on volunteering than does social participation (Yates & Youniss, 1999), the approaches are not mutually exclusive; either can create an ethic of caring. As Janoski et al. note, most people are empathetic to some degree, but only a minority actually act on their feelings.

Consequently, when the scope of justice is narrowly drawn, it may be important to encourage people to consider their obligations as citizens. As the results indicate, the university students and NGO managers concur with this strategy. Citizenship attitudes are multidimensional (Funk, 1998). In cases where moral exclusion may be prevalent, norms of civic duty that require active contribution to the welfare of the community may be optimal to instigate change. Other definitions of civic duty that stress the compulsory, such as being law-abiding or minding one’s own business, are not as conducive to changing the status quo. By no means am I suggesting that volunteer effort should replace state agencies, but volunteer labor can help remove the psychological distance that leads to moral exclusion. This study provides initial evidence that Romanians would be open to persuasive appeals for greater civic engagement when offered structured opportunities.

Furthermore, when considering the reversal of moral exclusion, it is important to understand the perspective of those excluded. In the face of inhumane
treatment, the experience of an indifferent, uncaring, or even hostile world may be more salient than issues of justice and fairness. In fact, Janoff-Bulman and Morgan (1994) argue that victims of traumatic life events are more concerned about a morality of caring than a morality of justice: “It is not the unwritten rules of fairness—equality, equity, reciprocity, impartiality—that have been violated, but the unwritten outcomes of caring—protection, security, freedom from harm—that have been betrayed by the [exclusion]” (p. 58). It is important to note that after traumatic life events, victims spend most of their effort rebuilding a protective sphere of psychological comfort and safety. Thus, both justice and caring reflect people’s moral orientations (Batson, 1991, 1996). Given that the results from Study 1 demonstrated that inclusion can be distinguished from exclusion by concerns of worth, future research may explore ways to operationalize the effects of such expressions. For example, studies can assess how compassion influences bystanders and victims, and how communicating concerns can be effective for reinstating the excluded into the moral realm.

Inevitably this investigation, like all research, has weaknesses. The studies are limited by self-reported data. When respondents are asked to provide an assessment of a sensitive social issue, there is always a concern about social desirability biases. In addition, generalizability is restricted by the subject populations—university students and focus groups—both of which are not representative. In other respects, justice may not be based on universally accepted principles (Habermas, 1984), even though some claim that the modern era of the “global village” has made the world interdependent (Leung & Morris, 2001). The underlying rationale for communication campaigns is that they promote the public interest and enhance the lives of individuals in society (Salmon, 1989). As the focus groups revealed, the participants were supportive of this proposed intervention. Even if this justification remains a point of contention, few would disagree with intervening at all on behalf of needy children.

The two investigations presented here bridge theory and practice in order to encourage the eventual resolution of a contemporary problem. It is hoped that this preliminary effort will sow seeds in fertile research ground. The challenge with all intervention proposals is that it is easier to stipulate desirable goals than to design, implement, evaluate, finance, and sustain an effective program. The next logical step would be to design and implement a communication campaign. If such a campaign were successful, its application could alleviate cases of moral exclusion across multiple contexts. Certainly its fruit can have important implications for the world at large, such as establishing more civil societies where people are guided by concern for one another.

References


INTERRUPTING MORAL EXCLUSION


Appendix A

Romanian Opinions About the Orphan Issue

Perceptions of Orphans

Victims (innocent, helpless, hard life, disadvantaged). “The orphans are people wronged by fate. They lack parental love and a family life.”

Need support (intervention, protection, attention). “The orphans are a disadvantaged group of people who need special care and education for a successful integration in society. Unfortunately, many people in Romania have no interest in helping them. Real help comes from families of kind foreigners.”

Evoked compassion. “I feel sorry for them.”

Equal humans. “They are human beings like all the rest, who should not be brushed aside like they are now.”

Social and moral problem. “The orphans are ‘accidents’ of human society, who bring to light human imperfection and moreover, the imperfection of today’s world.”

Unhappy. “They are unhappy people who should receive more help.”

Lack utility. “They are a nuisance to society, trying to survive by stealing.”

Forgotten. “They are alone in the world, disoriented, demoralized, and forgotten.”

Attributional Responsibility

Society (country’s mentality). “All of us, from regular individuals to the country leaders. It’s the mentality of the people, our prejudices.”; “Society is responsible for what happens to the orphans. I actually think that this society is too putrid to work, and it will not last much longer. If it were built on different principles, this society would not tolerate as much the injustice to which some of its categories are subjected.”

Parents/family. “The parents who cannot raise their kids, who make them leave their homes and become ‘orphans.’”

Government. “Romanian politics—whenever you want to do something to help, you stumble across bureaucracy.”

Economics. “The economic situation is responsible, because it promotes the struggle for existence and leaves no time for reflection about the less fortunate.”

Orphanages (institution and employees). “People directly involved in their lives, such as the directors of the orphanages, their educators. Orphans are also disadvantaged by the weakness of social work institutions.”

Education. “Education or rather the lack thereof.”
Legislation. “The lack of adequate legislation (or of the necessary procedures for a new legislation), lack of services.”

Don’t know. “I do not know.”

No blame. “Nobody. Some things just happen like that.”

Orphans. “Responsibility varies from case to case, from the ignorance of society to the ill will of the orphans themselves.”

Suggested Solutions

Special institutions (e.g., job training, education). “There should be programs that teach them various skills that would enable them to have a job so they do not have to beg to make a living.”

Adoption/foster family. “By giving them away for adoption to families with a more secure financial situation.”

Personal responsibility (care, involvement). “Through affection and concern from us all.”; “By treating them seriously, seeing in them not ‘worthless’ people, ‘useless’ but capable people.”

Financial help (state or private funds). “By allocating special funds or bank accounts for orphans. Perhaps giving them a percentage of everyone’s salary, like the retirement fund.”

Improved orphanages and personnel. “There should be new orphanages with better living conditions and dedicated people who do their job right. Aren’t there enough examples of orphanage personnel that are either immune to suffering, or too busy or indifferent? We are not helped by this attitude of ‘let the strongest survive.’”

Legislation (address issue, protect rights). “New laws, new ways of looking at things, and especially the right to give all equal chances.”

Other. “By raising the global standard of civilization, which involves solving more than one problem.”

Change general mentality. “By changing mentalities and promoting the idea that a child represents a very important accomplishment of a family.”; “People should be sensitized through media messages and convinced to take part in actions dedicated to the orphans.”

Family planning. “Women should consider whether they are able to raise their kids before they have them. Sexual education should be taken more seriously.”
Appendix B

Focus Guideline for Project Managers

Introduction

• The moderator will introduce herself and explain what a focus group is to the participants and ask if there are any questions about the procedures before beginning.

City issues

• In your opinion, what are the most serious problems of the city? List the problems on the clipboard, rank them, and then ask “Why?” Probe for each issue on the list.
• If the orphan/street minors problem was not mentioned, ask “What about the orphan/street children? With respect to the serious problems facing the city, how does the orphan issue rank?” Use the list already written on the clipboard.

Perceptions of the orphan/street children

• What are both the positive and negative traits associated with the children (based on your interaction with others and your personal experience)? Try institutionalized children/street children the ethnic aspect—Gypsy/Romanian
• When did you first see, find out about these children? What do you remember from that time?
• Where did you first hear about these children?
• In your opinion, what do the institutionalized orphans need? Why?
• What do the street children need? Why?
• Who should provide these needs? Why? Ask for each of the items previously mentioned.
• How do you perceive the role of NGOs in meeting these needs?
• How do the NGOs fit into a larger society?
• As project managers, what is working well?
• As project managers, what problems are you facing?
• Describe an ideal organization that could fix the problem.

Impediments/Solutions/Suggestions for intervention

• Based on your experience, do you have any suggestions for improving the situation (if any changes are needed)?
• How would you like the community of Bucharest to address this issue? Any strategies for change?
• Based on your experience, what prevents people from helping the children?
  Try no motivation, no time, no money, don’t care/apathetic, too many other problems.
• In order to solve the problem, whose behavior and attitude do you think it is the most desirable to change? Whose behavior and attitude do you think it would be possible to influence? How?
• What behaviors do we need to influence? How?
• What attitudes do we need to influence? How?
• Do you think communication media would be an effective tool for change?
• What values do you think would be important to emphasize with regard to this issue?
• Based on the public personalities that you know, who would be the most suited to advocate a change on behalf of the children (in a message on mass media, television, radio)?
• What is the most appropriate media to reach the people of Bucharest with a message advocating the children?
• If you were to compose a message about the children, what themes would you highlight?
• Any suggestions on how we can get (ordinary) people involved with this issue?
Appendix C

Focus Group for Ordinary People

Introduction

- The moderator will introduce herself and explain what a focus group is to the participants and ask if there are any questions about the procedures before beginning.

City issues

- In your opinion, what are the most serious problems of the city? List the problems then ask “Why?” Probe for each issue on the list.
- If the orphan/street minors problem was not mentioned, ask “What about the orphan/street children? If you were to rank the seriousness of the problem on a scale from 1 to 10, how serious do you consider the street/orphan children problem?”

Perceptions of the orphan/street children

- What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you see the street children/orphans?
- How do other people you know (friends, family, colleagues) view street children/orphans?
- When did you first see, find out about these children? What do you remember from that time? Where did you first hear about these children?
- In your opinion, what do these children (orphans/street children) need the most? Why?
- Who should provide these needs? Why?
- Who is responsible for caring for them now?
- Have you noticed, heard about improvements in their lives? If yes, how? If no, what improvements are needed?
- How should the community of Bucharest manage this issue? Is there an ideal way or institution to manage this problem?

Impediments/Solutions/Suggestions for intervention

- What should be done? Any strategies for change (if any changes are needed)?
- How would you like to see the community of Bucharest address this issue?
- Have you done anything in order to help them? If yes, what? Why? List the reasons. If no, why (Any barriers? no motivation, waste of time)? List the impediments.
What prevents you from helping the children? (Any barriers? no time, no spare money, too many other problems)
What do you think you should do to help them? (if anything)
What do you think should be changed in order to help these children? Try people’s behaviors.
In order to solve the problem, whose behavior and attitude do you think it is the most desirable to change? Whose behavior and attitude do you think it would be possible to influence? How?
What behaviors do we need to influence? How?
What attitudes do we need to influence? How?
Do you think communication media would be an effective tool for change?
What values do you think would be important to emphasize with regard to this issue?
Based on the public personalities that you know, who would be the most suited to advocate a change on behalf of the children (in a message on mass media, television, radio)?
What is the most appropriate media to reach the people of Bucharest with a message advocating the children?
If you were to compose a message about the children, what themes would you highlight?
Appendix D

Bucharest Focus Groups

I. City issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO managers</th>
<th>Ordinary people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• No civic mentality</td>
<td>• Street children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack a sense of community</td>
<td>• Corruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of respect toward others</td>
<td>Mafia-type structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of public involvement</td>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of trust in authorities</td>
<td>No accountability for government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of street maintenance (i.e., holes)</td>
<td>Local officials indifferent to people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dirt/filth/roaches/garbage/stray dogs</td>
<td>Black market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Street children/orphans</td>
<td>• Lack of civic mentality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of education</td>
<td>Lack a sense of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poverty/income discrepancy</td>
<td>Lack of street maintenance (i.e., holes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of morality (corruption)</td>
<td>• Lack of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other</td>
<td>• Dirt/filth/garbage/stray dogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No credible, moral leader</td>
<td>• Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy beggars</td>
<td>Family planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family planning</td>
<td>Unemployment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Perceptions of the orphans/street children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO managers</th>
<th>Ordinary people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Positive attributes</td>
<td>• Positive attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children may have potential</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some want a normal life</td>
<td>• Negative attributes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Negative attributes</td>
<td>Beyond reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beg, steal, are dirty, use filthy language</td>
<td>Defiant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a bad image for the city</td>
<td>• Children’s needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized prostitution, immoral relations</td>
<td>Social reintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive and defiant to people</td>
<td>Cultivation of trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incentives for people to hire them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Criminals of tomorrow”
Do not appreciate help people give them
Come from problem families (i.e., inherited a bad gene that makes them unable to become productive members of society)

- Children’s needs
  Social skills/education
  Respect
  Understanding
  Affection

### III. Impediments/Solutions/Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO managers</th>
<th>Ordinary people</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Impediments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of civic responsibility/values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of resources (finances, time)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of generosity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disorganized assistance efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open houses for people to visit children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public awareness (mass media)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Impediments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inferior state and private institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unqualified personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Solutions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>State funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educate the orphans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>International aid</td>
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<td>• Intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donations (clothing, food, money)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home visits</td>
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