SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

Kevin Steed  
Macquarie University  

Social exclusion has its genesis in France during the 1970s and exhibits the following general characteristics:

**Social exclusion is multidimensional:**  
It encompasses more than just material poverty. Further, it also comprises other forms of social disadvantage including unequal access to such things as education, health care, employment and housing. Individuals can also be excluded from socially valued resources as a consequence of discrimination in all its guises (eg age, gender, class, race ethnicity etc). In short, one can be socially excluded in many ways and for various reasons.

**Social exclusion is a process:**  
Social exclusion is not an outcome of a process it is a process in and of itself. Social inclusion is generally multidimensional in nature. Consequently, it is difficult to interrelate these dimensions over time. Indeed, the accumulation of a number of disadvantages may result in a self-reinforcing cycle and, as such, it is often a challenge to pinpoint the precise reason for the societal exclusion that may emerge in any given context.

**Social exclusion is context-specific:**  
Different nations and cultures have over time embraced different interpretations of what it means to be socially excluded.

**Social exclusion can be understood from both an individual and collective perspective:**  
Some individuals in society do not have the capacity to access social opportunities (eg they do not have family contacts/connections). Alternatively, social exclusion can exist collectively on a class basis whereby “haves” and “have-nots” emerge.

**Social exclusion is relational:**  
The social exclusion mechanism comprises two parties namely, the “excluder” and the “excluded” eg The Aboriginal Protection Board and those individuals living on Aboriginal Reserves during 19th and early 20th Century Australia.
ACTIVITIES:

1. How was the term “social exclusion” originally defined?

2. Explain how “social inclusion” differs from “social exclusion.”

3. According to Hunter, why can’t indigenous disadvantage be reduced into one simple static notion?

4. Upon what general measure does social inclusion focus?

5. According to this report, what crucial aspects are often overlooked by governments when they attempt to measure the degree of indigenous social inclusion in our country? Why is this problematic?

6. What was the major problem associated with the Howard Government’s Northern Territory National Emergency Response (NTER; also known as the NT Intervention)? How do you think this impacted upon Indigenous Australians in terms of their level of social inclusivity?

7. Visit the following URL (“Tracking the Intervention”) and make brief notes on the 2007 NTER in terms of its impact on:
   a) Indigenous inclusion
   b) Indigenous exclusion
   http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/special_eds/20071105/intervention/

8. Why was the NTER introduced in June 2007 by former Prime Minister John Howard and Minister Mal Brough?

9. Briefly outline the 3 pieces of legislation that were introduced by the Howard Government to augment the NTER. What are your views on each?

10. What do you understand by the notion of a wicked problem? According to the author, why was the NTER classified as such?

11. According to the author, why did the NTER fail? In his view what was required to ensure it’s success?
12. Former Minister Gary Johns argues that the underlying cause of Indigenous disadvantage in the NT is the “wicked policy” of self-determination. How helpful is that particular view if the goal is the social inclusion of all indigenous Australians?

13. Former Minister Gary Johns argues that the underlying cause of Indigenous disadvantage in the NT is the “wicked policy” of self-determination. How helpful is that particular view if the goal is the social inclusion of all indigenous Australians?

14. Should the government encourage indigenous mobility to urban labour markets where more employment opportunities are available? Why?

15. Outline some of the difficulties that Indigenous workers encounter when attempting to secure jobs in urban labour markets.

16. According to the author, why is it “not clear” that employment mobility will be beneficial to Indigenous workers?

17. On July 1, 2013 the Remote Jobs and Community Program (RJCP) integrated Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) and began delivering reforms to employment, participation and community development services in remote Australia. This was implemented to help more indigenous people attain employment and participate in their communities. Do you think this program will enhance the social inclusion of indigenous people? Why?

18. The Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage (OID) framework (developed by the Productivity Commission) is a product of the Council of Australian Governments (COAGs). Briefly list the 3 priority outcomes that comprise this framework?

19. Why does the author believe the OID program to be inadequate when it comes to the measure of indigenous well-being in our country?

20. Hunter suggests that the disadvantages measured in the OID priority outcomes accumulate over time with the social problems in many Indigenous communities reinforcing one another over several generations (cumulative causation). Briefly outline some of these societal issues.

21. What is the main challenge for Australia’s social inclusion framework that has emerged from recent public debate about Indigenous disadvantage? Explain why this is significant to the fostering of inclusivity.