



“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.”

- Archbishop Desmond Tutu

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DEPRIVATION AMONGST
MARGINALIZED GROUPS
A Sint-Maarten Case-Study

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Abstract

This thesis researched the perceptions of deprivation that the Sint-Maarten landfill's (*the dump*) inhabitants experience, as a marginalized group in the community of Sint-Maarten. Following the future development-induced-involuntary-relocation-plan of these inhabitants, the research aims to prevent the formation of yet another slum once relocated, and break the cycle of marginalization of this group. Several activities were done, such as narrative interviews and (participatory) observations, to form a five-month-long ethnographic research. The data showed several interconnected depriving factors that influence the lives of these individuals. These factors taken together, also shape how they understand their positionality within the Sint-Maarten community.

Keywords: Deprivation; development; marginalization; SIDS; slum.

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Introduction

Sint-Maarten is a small and multi-cultural constituent country in the Kingdom of the Netherlands located on the Southern part of an island in the Caribbean. Although an attractive tourist destination for many from all around the world, deprivations, and poverty on the island persist. Based on 2011 Census data more than 75% of the households of St Maarten lived in poverty (De Wit, 2015), which based on the Household Budget Survey data of 2014, increased to 94% (Van Arneman, 2017). These trends followed by natural disasters lead to an increase in poverty and especially urban slums¹ found on the island (The World Bank, 2019).

The area very close to the island's landfill, "*The dump*", has been one of the island's slums for many years. Throughout the years it has increased in size and population, currently housing nearly 200 people. The dump is an area characterized by informal and inadequate housing exposed to hazardous fumes and toxic waste from the nearby landfill. Because of this, the group living on this landfill is considered a marginalized group within the Sint-Maarten society and is amongst the most vulnerable to poverty and health issues (Steel, 2020).

The World Bank has recently developed a new waste management program for the Sint-Maarten landfill. This plan, set to begin in 2021, requires that the dump's inhabitants be relocated to properly develop the landfill. However, there is no official plan set in place as yet in regards to where they would be moved nor when they will be moved (Steel, 2020). The urgency of the relocation and the development plans call for research that can prevent a recurrence of social exclusion and particularly the formation of this slum elsewhere on the island.

According to D'souza (1979), the dominant section in society is only concerned with the slums because of the health risks tied to their unhygienic conditions and unattractive appearance, which pose a threat to the beauty of the city/town. The problem of urban slums is thus often viewed in the interest of the dominant population and their economic impression or gain rather than the marginalized positionality and interest of the people living in these life-threatening slums.

Following the planned resettlements, this thesis will take an intersectional theoretical approach to uncover the perceived deprivations and the social positionality that the inhabitants of the dump experience. *Deprivation* covers monetary, material as well as social deprivation which often results in this group of deprived individuals forming a group of "outsiders". This is then perpetually forced with an involuntary (i.e. *marginalized*) disadvantaged positionality (oppressed) (D'Souza, 1979). Intersectionality theory suggests that this positionality is created and perpetuated

¹ Slums are either informal or formal settlements which lack one or more of five basic necessities: sufficient living space, durable housing structures, tenure security, easy and sufficient access to safe water and adequate sanitation (UN Habitat, 2007).

by differential interconnected social systems and infrastructures of oppression and power (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013).

Scientific and Societal Relevance

The broad research field on urban slums and project-induced involuntary displacement and resettlements show that the social and human aspect of slum development is crucial for adequate and effective urban and spatial planning (Perera, 2014). Pre and post resettlement impoverishment is often among the most prevalent issues associated with such developments. Whether in terms of simple urban slum developments or other development-induced resettlements, such as that of the landfill, the actual impoverishment of these individuals before and after these “development acts” is often overlooked. One may thus ask who gains and who loses from *development* (Perera, 2014).

This research aims to understand how the dump inhabitants perceive their positionalities within the dump community and Sint-Maarten at large, by delving into potential interconnected depriving forces that they may experience. It will highlight the formation and expansion of the dump as an urban slum throughout the years. This information is crucial for the mapping out of the potential impoverishment risks associated with the upcoming relocations. Inadequate planning may result in the creation of a new slum once relocated elsewhere.

This research will thus take a people-centered approach through the use of ethnographic research and narrative interviews to identify what, according to the perspectives of the dump inhabitants², shapes and perpetuates deprivations and social exclusion amongst the people residing on the dump. In partnership with the Social Economic Council of Sint-Maarten (SER), this research will be an addition to their research and advice on the waste management of the island’s landfill by looking at the social aspect and implications of the island’s waste management program.

The broader contribution can be made towards understanding the formation of other slums on the island of Sint-Maarten as well as slums found in countries with similar socio-economic structures and ecological and political environments in terms of slum eradication and developments.

Research Questions

The relocation of the dump inhabitants poses a perfect opportunity to remove the slum created on the dump. However, simply relocating this group will not put a stop to their deprivations nor does it necessarily change their marginalized positionality. A thorough analysis of the experiences and perceptions of their social positionality is thus crucial for an effective development

² Hereafter will be referred to as: Inhabitants.

plan for the island and its people. This paper thus aims to identify the intersectionality of specific forces with the following research question:

What are the perceptions of the dump's inhabitants of forces that shape and prolong deprivation amongst them in Sint-Maarten?

The additional sub-questions are:

- *How do the dump inhabitants experience deprivation?*
- *How do they understand their marginalized positionality?*
- *How do the dump inhabitants perceive the interconnectedness of these forces?*

I have structured this thesis as a traditional ethnography inspired by the ethnographic research outline of Predergast (2004). The first chapter will give insights into the literature review and theoretical basis of this research. The following chapter will be of descriptive and informative nature on the historical and contextual setting of the research field. I will then proceed with the findings, which consist of my own observations and understanding of what I have seen and heard, as well as key stories and perspectives of the inhabitants whom I have spoken during my time at the field site. The thesis will be rounded off with an analysis of the findings, a discussion, and a conclusion.

Theoretical framework

There is much research that focuses on urban slums and prevailing poverty issues found within and around these areas (Marx, Stoker & Suri, 2013). But very few researchers intentionally connect the intersectionality of society's infrastructures of power and institutions to the chronic deprivations and socio- and spatial marginality of these individuals. The following section discusses the multi-layered concept of deprivation which has been a characteristic of the dump community for the past years as well as the intersectional nature of the concept in its relation to marginalization.

The critical social theory of intersectionality

Intersectionality analysis emerges once problems are analyzed through an intersectional way of thinking, namely that the differences and similarities of certain problems are related to power structures (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013. p. 795). Intersectionality itself entails multiple interconnected oppressive systems experienced by individuals in society. It is, however, much more than an overlapping of systems of oppression, rather, it concerns the formation and maintenance of social inequalities and marginalization of individuals and groups (Collins, 2019). Collins (2019, p. 26) argues that *“the idea of intersectionality worked in multiple registers of recognizing the significance of social structural arrangements of power, how individual and group experiences reflect those structural intersections, and how political marginality might engender new subjectivities and agency.”* It is thus a concept that has the ability to dismiss and/or reduce human agency. This suggests its regulative role in society and this particular effect on a person's choices. It may determine and/or guide someone's actions with the possibilities and restrictions that it enables.

Allowing intersectionality to be viewed through a *heuristic approach*, has brought new systems of power into sight. A heuristic approach entails that one is actively sharing their experiences and process of transformations. This process allows for someone to discover and learn their positionality for themselves (Brisola & Cury, 2016). Through this heuristic approach, intersectionality thus not only looks at gender, race, and economic class but also nationality, politics, nation-state powers, capitalism, etc. Because intersectionality does not specify the number of categories within an analysis or configurations of these categories, the concept holds a degree of flexibility. This flexibility allows for a more in-depth analysis of complex systems, social phenomenon, and lived experiences (Collins, 2019).

The intersectionality of social marginality and deprivation

Social marginality is best defined through the intersectional lens of deprivation. Braun & Gatzweiler (2014) define marginality as the following:

“Marginality is an involuntary position and condition of an individual or group at the margins of social, political, economic, ecological and biophysical systems, preventing them from access to resources, assets, services, restraining freedom of choice, preventing the development of capabilities, and eventually causing extreme poverty.”

(Von Braun & Gatzweiler, 2014. p.3)

Deprivation is an intersectional concept, is thus measured not only through the traditional monetary and material deprivations but also looks at how social rules, customary laws, social networks, racism, gender, etc., together exclude groups or individuals from participating or belonging within the larger society (Leichenko & Silva, 2014; D’souza, 1979). Deprivation is thus an overlapping of many aspects - i.e health, education, the standard of living –. (UNDP, 2018; Attrey, 2018).

This particular understanding of deprivation is not a matter of autonomous choice but a complex situation in which society creates and perpetuates *social* and *spatial marginalization* (i.e. geographic proximity) amongst specific groups through its infrastructures of power and oppression (Sepulveda Carmona, 2011). For individuals, this disadvantaged positionality may have negative implications on their socio-economic wellbeing as well as their psychical health and psychological state, due to the lack of particular assets and services that they would need to live healthy lives (Vincze, 2013).

In addition to this positionality, one can argue that these historic socio-political oppressive forces hinder the agency of these individuals to ever escape these overlapping deprivations or improve their situation through their own efforts (D’souza, 1979; Sepulveda Carmona, 2011). Because of the structural oppressive forces that hinder them to escape their marginality, it is in most cases inherited and perpetuated through several generations (Eastwood & Lipton, 2001). The social inequalities and inadequacy of state action thus create circumstances in which the uneducated, undernourished, and poor individuals cannot escape deprivation nor avoid exposing their children to these deprivations (Eastwood & Lipton, 2001. p. 207).

In *“Urban Marginality in the Coming Millenium”*, Wacquant (1999) argues that several factors together shape the marginalization of communities in modern societies. These factors which he theorizes as *the logics of urban marginality* are subdivided into four themes, namely:

macro-social dynamic, economic dynamic, political dynamic, and spatial dynamic. The logics of urban marginality take together the role of the state, the social environment, economic forces in particular that of capitalist systems, and the spatial factors as a tool for understanding the marginalization of particular groups in urban societies. I will use that which Wacquant (1999) has theorized as an analytical tool in my analysis below.

Local and Regional Context

Sint-Maarten is considered one of the many Small Island Developing States (SIDS). SIDS are known to have narrow resource availabilities and are often characterized by fragile economies and unique geographical locations and socio-economic factors. Because of this, SIDS are known to be quite vulnerable to external shocks, especially climate change (Turvey, 2007).

SIDS in the Caribbean particularly, have been experiencing many cases of unequal access to housing, land distribution, land rights, and infrastructure services. There are also issues of sustainability, political instability, unequal power structures, and poverty. As a result hereof, livelihoods are created which enhance the vulnerability of the poorest individuals. There is now a growing number of informal settlements and urban slums in the Caribbean regions due to these inefficiencies (Mycoo, 2018;2020). Unique to the case of the urban poor in SIDS is that they are often unable to recover and/or reduce risks associated with the unforeseen natural disasters because of their already vulnerable positionality and inadequacy of their housing and living situations (Butcher-Gollach, 2015). Informal settlers in this context especially are amongst the most vulnerable to these situations (Mycoo, 2018).

In many Caribbean countries, informality persists in the labor market as well. Approximately 50% of workers in the Caribbean and Latin American regions work in the informal sectors (Bosch & Manacorda, 2012). This would suggest that many of these workers are uninsured against various risks such as those of health, unemployment, old age, and particularly those relating to the risk of falling into poverty. Because of their informal position in the labor force, they do not contribute to the social security system at their jobs or of the national government. They are also vulnerable to lower wages due to the lack of enforcement of labor laws, which additionally negatively affects their ability to cover their necessities (Bosch & Manacorda, 2012). The growing levels of informal urbanism characterized by high levels of poverty and unemployment have caused many to be unable to adapt and/or recuperate from climate change-induced disasters and changes, such as floods, hurricanes, vector-borne diseases, etc. (Mycoo, 2018).

In addition to the spatial marginalization of the urban poor, there is also racial marginality and ethnic group relations that play an important role in the social position of groups within a community and the level of marginalization experienced in Caribbean regions. Integration into the dominant community is often the problem that marginalized communities are faced with (D'souza, 1979). Sint-Maarten accounts for about 100 different co-existing nationalities on its 37 square miles. The population on the Dutch side alone is made up of people from over 70 countries (New World Encyclopedia, n.d). But despite its multi-cultural environment, there are still racial tensions amongst different ethnic groups. In the case of immigrant communities especially, Aymer (2011) argues that

it is the Caribbean historic racial and ethnic myths created by the host society of itself and those about foreigners, which help to determine the degree of access that immigrants may enjoy socio-economic opportunities and social inclusion.

The Field site: “The dump”

The Sint-Maarten landfill, known as “*the dump*”, is located right in the center of the former salt pond which was used for the production of salt for their Dutch colonizers from the 1630s to 1920s (Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance, 2014). The landfill has been lacking a long-term efficient sanitary waste disposal system since the 1990s. The Sint-Maarten population generates the most per capita solid waste in the Caribbean, with approximately 9.7kg of solid waste per day. Hurricane Louis in 1995 and Hurricane Irma in 2017 exacerbated the issue due to the extreme property damages and inefficient debris composition. This alongside the growing tourism and construction boom, the island’s Landfill experienced a steady increase in landfill size throughout the past decades (SER, 2017; GreenSXM, 2018).

In addition to its size, the dump also raised a lot of health and environmental concerns because it regularly catches on fire and produces toxic fumes. It is hazardous for the population at large, but most importantly, the 200 informal settlers there. The World Bank and the Dutch Kingdom’s government have begun *The emergency Debris Management Project* with the government of Sint-Maarten in January 2019. This project aims to build back a better and stronger Sint-Maarten after the devastations of Hurricane Irma. It also consists of a new development plan for the landfill that requires the 200+ people on the dump to be resettled (Rijksoverheid, 2020).

The landfill development plan posed the perfect opportunity to get rid of the informal settlement that has been growing there for over 40 years. The housing situation on the dump is characterized by a series of containers, old school busses, shacks, and un-sturdy homes built from recycled materials. However, there is some concrete housing in between. Some houses do not have access to water and electricity, and there is also no proper sewage system in place for that neighborhood (Steel, 2020). The leading narrative of the dump’s population which consists of mostly immigrants (i.e. from the Dominican Republic, Dominica, and Haiti)³, is that these immigrants are mostly undocumented citizens who also work in the informal labor sector. In addition, the media portrays this community as a group of poor and illiterate waste pickers, with many kids who do not attend school (NOS Pauw, 2019).

³ In the following sections I will refer to migrants from the Commonwealth Caribbean Island Dominica as *Dominicans* and migrants from the Dominican Republic as *Dominicanos* in order to avoid confusion.

Methodology

This research seeks to give voice to the inhabitants and recognizes different and intersecting factors that may affect each individual differently according to their perceptions. This process has taken the structure of an ethnography in which I had both a passive and active observatory role in the data collecting process. The ethnography consisted of contextual (informal) observations and conversations, an informal focus group, and three individual narrative interviews. These different data collection methods did not take a particular order within the ethnography process, nonetheless, each contributed equally to the key findings of the research. Each of these methods will be discussed in more detail below alongside a thorough sample description, an ethics discussion, and the considerations made throughout the research.

Sample

The sample was formed through a mixture of snowball sampling and the purposive sampling method. This sample consisted of 13 inhabitants and one project consultant of the World Bank. The first few inhabitants were accessed through a gatekeeper who is a well-known person amongst the dump community and the Sint-Maarten population at large. The remaining respondents were then gathered by one of the first respondents to whom I spoke. This particular form of sampling helped with ensuring a degree of trust amongst the respondents that were interviewed and amongst particular members of the dump's community. It also contributed to the number of people who were willing to have an interview or simple conversations with me and give me access to their lives and homes.

To attain a purposive sample of the estimated 200 inhabitants, I also actively sought out respondents of diverse migrant status and allowed for comments and observations of inhabitants of different ages. Nine of these inhabitants were Dominican Republic migrants, one was born in Sint-Maarten but to Dominicano parents, two respondents were from the Commonwealth Caribbean island of Dominica and the last was from Aruba, a country within the Kingdom of The Netherlands. Table 1 gives an overview of the inhabitants, their nationality, migrant status, and the number of times that they have interacted with me.

Table 1: Overview respondents (inhabitants)

Respondent	Gender	Nationality	migrant status	Type of interaction⁴	Number of interactions
1	woman	Dutch	Local/Migrant	N, P, C	4
2	man	Dominicano	Migrant	N, P, F, C	5
3	woman	Dominicano	Migrant	N, F	2
4	woman	Dutch/Dominicano	Migrant	F	1
5	woman	Dominicano	Local	F	1
6	man	Dominicano	Migrant	F	1
7	man	Dominicano	Migrant	F	1
8	man	Dominicano	Migrant	F	1
9	woman	Dominicano	Migrant	F	1
10	man	Dominicano	Migrant	F	1
11	man	Dominicano	Migrant	F	1
12	man	Dominican	Migrant	C, P	1
13	man	Dominican	Migrant	C	1

Narrative Interviews

Through the process of narrative interviewing, the stories given by the inhabitants gave a deeper understanding of their lives and the social forces and constraints that shape their choices and overall situation in a qualitative manner. This method was used to understand the social realities of the inhabitants and uncover which infrastructures of power in Sint-Maarten's society have influenced their ability to improve their own lives through their own efforts. This particular method is more likely to identify the structures that guide the actions of these individuals than using interviews (Muylaert, Sarubbi, Gallo, Neto & Reis, 2014).

“The narratives are considered representations and interpretations of the world and therefore, are not open to evidence and cannot be judged as true or false, they express the truth of a point of view in a particular time, space and socio-historic context”

(Muylaert, Sarubbi, Gallo, Neto & Reis, 2014, p.187).

⁴ N = Narrative interviews, P = Participant Observations, C = Informal Conversations, F = Focus Group

The three narrative interviews were either done at the respondents' homes on the dump or at the WIFOL⁵ Building and lasted approximately 45minutes – 1 hour each. During this process, I asked the respondents several open questions based on their complaints surrounding the current relocation plans that have been circulating. The interviews each began with the questions: “How long have you been living here?”, “Why did you move to the dump?” and “What do you think about the relocation plans?”, which served as discussion starters. The respondents then immediately began expressing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with the entire resettlement process. They shared several individual experiences and thoughts on several issues and topics that they recently experienced as well as during their time residing on the dump and in Sint-Maarten in general. These stories included issues which they feared will be perpetuated and/or worsen because of the relocations.

Informal Focus Group

As a gateway to accessing more respondents and developing trust amongst the inhabitants of the dump and I, an informal focus group was formed by one of the first respondents. This group discussion happened in one of the respondent's yards, with a total of 10 inhabitants(six men and four women), and lasted approximately two hours. Nine of these respondents had a migrant status from the Dominican Republic and were above the age of 30. The last respondent was 18 years old and was born on the island of Sint-Maarten to Dominicano parents who were also present. They have all been residing on the dump for either 20 years or more. The 18-year-old respondent has been living on the dump her entire life.

During this session, I took a passive observatory role in the process. I took notes and observed body language and the surrounding factors as the discussion was led by the gatekeeper. Much like the narrative interviews, this focus group had a similar structure with the same key and general questions as the discussion starters.

⁵ Windward Island Federation of Labor

Informal conversations

The research also consisted of several informal conversations with four respondents. Two of these respondents were my key informants. These conversations were crucial for the understanding of the general relocation process that these respondents are currently undergoing as they kept me up to date with any new information they have received. It also helped with gaining trust amongst the respondents. Most of these conversations happened over the phone, on the dump, or at the WIFOL Building in the presence of a few *Consumer Coalition*⁶ members.

(Participatory) Observations

The observations made during this ethnography are what helped tie all of the individual and group stories together. There were observations made of the respondents and their interactions with those in charge of the resettlement, as well as their homes and the dump's neighborhood, and the surrounding areas. I visited the dump for observatory purposes five times, including the times that interviews and the focus group were held.

The research process, considerations, and ethics

I took into consideration many factors that may have influenced the willingness of the respondents to share their personal stories, such as language barriers, undocumented respondents, sensitive topics, etc.

As for the language barriers with the Spanish-speaking immigrants of the Dominican Republic, I facilitated the conversation by having the focus group fully in Spanish. The three narrative interviews and the rest of the interactions with the inhabitants, however, were done in English. Informed consent was the number one requirement to uncover personal thoughts and patterns ethically during the narrative interviews. As for the informal discussions and conversations, I verbally informed the respondents about the research in the presence of my gatekeeper.

I also carefully considered sensitivity to terminologies and concepts used. I required a thorough understanding of the positionality of the individuals as well as that of myself in this process. I was born on the island of Curacao but have migrated to Sint-Maarten at the age of 8, where I lived until I moved to the Netherlands at the age of 17 to further my studies. This connection that I have to the island has helped me to access the respondents and gave me a better understanding

⁶ Sint-Maarten Consumer Coalition

of the contextual factors. As for my own “migrant” positionality and family dynamic, I was able to indirectly connect with the migrant inhabitants, and understand the dynamics around migrant status.

Because of privacy reasons and ensuring that the respondents felt safe, I opted not to record the interviews. This choice was also partly based on the fact that I wanted to create and maintain an informal environment with my respondents to assure as much comfort and confidentiality as possible seeing that this is a quite sensitive topic. Because of this, transcribing the data was done through notes taken during the interviews and immediately working out this information after the interviews. These notes also included field observations and additional notes taken during and after informal conversations.

Coding of the data was done through the use of thematic analysis. This process consisted of first examining the notes taken, and searching for emergent themes. All data related to these themes were then identified, combined, and if needed, redivided into sub-themes. This tool of analysis helped to ensure some overview of all the data collected which then also helped to identify the differences and similarities of the stories and experiences of the respondents (Gavin, 2008). This process was done with caution to assure data accuracy.

Findings and Observations

The lived experiences and social reality of the individuals residing on the dump follow a common general line. Each respondent acknowledged that their marginalized positionality is, according to their perceptions, a result of many interconnected factors that together have an oppressive nature and that hinder their upward mobility. During the ethnographical process, four overarching themes came forth, namely: migrant status, getting by, governmental shortcomings, and coping with the marginalized positionality.

The following section outlines the findings. Throughout the paragraphs, there will be several stories told by the respondents that give a more detailed representation of the perceptions and lived experiences of the dump inhabitants. These stories are elaborated with a few observations made by me during the times I visited the dump and the correspondences with the respondents. This section thus includes my own perspective as well. Although the stories may seem unrelated at first glance, they each highlight slightly different factors that - in combination with one or other factors - oppress these individuals by having a form of power over their lives, their choices, and their general abilities in the Sint-Maarten community.

The dump as a community: Fieldwork Experience

I got the opportunity to walk and sometimes cruise⁷ through the dirt roads of the dump, both during the day and in the evening. Two main roads together make the neighborhood. The roads themselves were not narrow, but the many property debris, old appliances, large shipping containers, old and abandoned cars, and piles of other electronic waste, caused the roads to appear much more narrow than they were (see appendix I).

As I entered the neighborhood, there was always a lot of upbeat, lively Latin music (i.e. bachata and salsa) to be heard. There was a bar to be seen at almost every corner and there were always people standing or sitting outside as I passed. They saw me as I saw them. As I was driving through the area, I had to be vigilant of the children who sometimes played on these roads. They seemed quite young, between the ages of six and 12. There were several babies in the arms of who could be their mothers or grandmothers, I would presume.

In the evening, the bars were filled with about five to ten people, all speaking Spanish laughing and having intense discussions or playing dominoes with one another. I assume that some

⁷ move on a steady paste with the car allowing for visual observations

were Dominicanos and some were Venezuelans, for there was a slight difference in their accents. If I looked closely and attentively enough, I sometimes found a local sitting in between them. There were also plenty of other businesses to see, such as hair salons, daycares, little convenience stores, and recycling companies. Most of these businesses seem to be running out of someone's home or a special part of the home designated for the business. However, I could not confirm this. The businesses were identifiable by their board signs placed outside. Some were made out of sturdy wood with professional designs, and some had a simple handwritten text on a piece of cardboard. The vignette below describes how the inhabitants themselves perceive their environment.



“This is a community, We are like a family”

A husband and wife explained to me how much they enjoyed living on the dump. They dreaded having to move away from its ambiance and their neighbors because they consider their neighbors to be their family. They know more or less all of the people who reside there, especially those who have been living there for over 20 years just like them. They also think that they can find everything they need right there on the dump.

[Narrative interview 2 & 3, 2021]



Vignette 1: "This is a community, we are like a family"

The further in the neighborhood I walked, the quieter it became, more like a residential area. The houses did not have a particular structure, most were made of wood or shipping containers. From the outside looking in, they seemed tiny and dark. Some also had a little porch and were barricaded either by a gate or some curtains. Some houses had a yard, and some did not. In most of the barricaded yards, there were approximately four to five individual homes. This second vignette shows an experience that one of the respondents had with accessing basic amenities for her home because of how it appeared to others.



“How you mean I don’t live here?”

A respondent has been living on the dump since 1997, yet she has no water or electricity.

She is officially registered at this address, but according to the contractors of the utility company -GEBE N.V.-, there is no way that she can be living there. She explained to me that they told her that her container is not considered a home; it is an inadequate place for anyone to live, and it is especially inadequate for any water pipes and/or electrical wiring. She was puzzled because her neighbors across the road - who also reside in a container - have access to water and electricity from this same utility company.

[Narrative interview 1, March 13, 2021]



Vignette 2: “How you mean I don’t live here?”

The dump seemed like a pretty lively neighborhood. However, it was not until my interviews and informal focus group, that I got to see how much of a community they were. After having spoken to one of the Dominicano respondents and his wife, they quickly gathered some good friends and neighbors of theirs to come and share their stories and experiences with me. A group of 10 people came, who all knew each other and had very similar experiences. Although I only interacted with the Dominicanos as a large group, I still got to observe the English-speaking community as they sat outside their homes and the bars communicating and laughing with each other.

Migrant status

Migrant vs local perspectives

One of the first and steadily reoccurring themes found during the interviews and focus group was the migrant status of these individuals and the implications this has on their lives.

There is a lot of tension between the Dominicano migrants and the “local” population as explained by the respondents within the dump community and on the entire island. Interestingly, from a few informal conversations with the Dominican inhabitants, it became clear that the English-speaking community and the Spanish-speaking community on the dump do not interact with one another. I also found that the two roads that make up the dump’s residential area are divided on the one side by the English-speaking inhabitants and the other side by the Spanish-speaking inhabitants.

The vignette below describes how a “local” respondent feels about her Latin neighbors.



“Whatever they do, just make sure they get me away from they”

One respondent expressed her disgust for “those people” as she explained that she thinks the Latin community on the dump is disrespectful. She stated that she would like for them to be moved to the other side of the island so that she never has to see them again. She elaborated on frequently having quarrels with the Dominicano neighbors especially because she thinks that they dump garbage in front of her home to spite her. She also stated that they break into her property - which is barricaded by a container, a fence, and a lock – when she is not home.

She told me that she wished that “the Spanish people” go “back where they came from” (i.e. The Dominican Republic). Despite being neighbors for over 20 years, they just cannot seem to get along according to her. Interestingly enough, her Dominicano neighbor once told her to go back where she came from. The respondent was flabbergasted that someone would have the audacity to tell her that. She stated that she migrated from Aruba, but her father was born in Sint-Maarten, which according to her, makes her a Sint-Maartener. “I from here!” she proclaimed, “Is ayu wha gotta go back where you come from!”

[Narrative Interview 1, March 13, 2021]



Vignette 3: “Whatever they do, just make sure they get me away from they”

The general image of the Dominicano population is that they come to the island and take everything that the island has to offer. They then send it abroad to their families in the Dominican Republic, without actually contributing to the economy of Sint-Maarten. The English-speaking population thinks that the Dominicano migrants form their communities and strive amongst themselves at the expense of jobs created for the locals. It is also often the case that these Dominicans do not pay any tax because of their illegal labor contracts.

I also found that because some Dominicanos are undocumented or unable to get a job, they turn to the informal labor market to make a living. On the dump especially, many small and unregistered businesses collect and refurbish waste for profit. Some recycle copper and other valuable waste to ship to the Dominican Republic. Not all of these businesses are registered at the Chamber of Commerce and they do not pay tax and/or contribute to the economy of Sint-Maarten. Most - if not all - of the employees on the dump are of Dominicano descent.

Stereotype

From the conversations with the inhabitants and a project consultant, it became clear that there is a stereotypical picture of the Dominicano migrants on the island and the dump particularly. This stereotype is mostly geared towards the legality of their residency on the island, their employment, and their level of intelligence. However, there is an unjustified link made between living on the dump and being undocumented citizens and informal laborers.

The dump inhabitants are seen as undocumented people, who are poor, sometimes also illiterate, and in most cases unemployed or employed by the informal sector. This is more or less the universal picture of the characteristics of slum inhabitants. Despite this belief, after the interviews with the inhabitants, it became clear that most of the migrant inhabitants are documented with a legal residence permit or even a Dutch passport. They emphasized the fact that some are now in possession of a Dutch passport which suggests that they have also been through the naturalization process and in all technicality are “Sint-Maarteners”. They possess all of the required social tools and facts needed to participate and contribute to the Sint Maarten society.

In addition to their legal status, contrary to the wide-held beliefs, most Dominicano immigrants on the dump are employed and have contributed for years to the Sint-Maarten economy, as skilled workers. Some now enjoy state pensions. In cases where their pension or wage is not enough, some also receive government financial aid because they are eligible for this as legal citizens of Sint-Maarten. The story below illustrates this finding.



“I’m a Sint-Maartener too!”

One would think that after 40+ years of residency on the island, the Latin community residing on the dump would be considered Sint-Maarteners. Some have raised both kids and grandkids on the island and have contributed many years to the economy of the island, yet no one considers them to be Sint Maarteners. The respondents expressed that Sint-Maarten is their home, their children’s and their grandchildren’s homes. Most even have managed to attain a Dutch passport and thus have been through the naturalization process, but are still not considered Sint-Maarteners. Because of this label, the Dominicanos explained to me that they are also not treated the same as those who are considered to be “local”. Government officials and “locals” perceive the Latin community of the dump in particular to be illegals, - undocumented migrants - simply because they are Latin migrants and reside in a slum.

The Dominicanos present during the focus group expressed their frustrations with this perception that the locals have about them. “I a Sint-Maartener too, I have the same rights that the others do!”

[Focus group x narrative interviews x Interview with consultant, 2021]



Vignette 4: “I’m a Sint-Maartener too!”

The Sint-Maartener

The majority of the Spanish-speaking inhabitants believed that their particular label of “migrant” was created and maintained because they were not born on the island or any other Dutch Caribbean island. However, it became evident that even those born on the island but to Dominicano parents are considered migrants. Some Dominicano respondents have stated that despite living on the island for over 20 years -in some cases over 40 years-, they are still perceived as migrants and treated as outsiders by the locals. Despite having raised kids and grandchildren on the island and in the meantime also attained full Dutch citizenship including a Dutch passport, the Sint-Maarten community does not acknowledge them as “Sint-Maarteners”. They consider Sint-Maarten their home, even more than their country of origin, however, they feel that their migrant status – that of the Dominican Republic- is the reason for the discriminations that they experience.

Aside from their official migrant status, the Spanish language and their racial features⁸ especially are the main predictors of this label. One inhabitant from Aruba for example is according to her perception considered a local despite having lived on the island the same amount of years and also in the same location as those of Dominicano origin. An 18-year-old girl on the other hand, who was born and lived on the island her entire life, but to Dominicano parents, is considered a migrant. There is no clear definition of a Sint-Maartener, but this absence affects how people are viewed and treated by the rest of the population.

Getting by

It is also not as easy for every inhabitant to get by financially. The majority of the people I spoke to were already retired, or working, but had low-income jobs (e.g. bus drivers). The ones retired especially, put a lot of emphasis on the little income that they have each month to survive with. There were some cases where this amount was so low that they needed government assistance to pay for their necessities. Many emphasized that whatever they earned, they would invest in their homes on the dump because having a place to live, that is safe from natural disasters and that can house all of their family members, was one of the most important things to them.

Having sufficient financial means has been a struggle for some dump inhabitants for some time. It is the most recurring reason for moving to the dump. It is only here where the respondents could have found “affordable housing” (i.e an empty piece of land where they could put a container which they got from a government official or someone well-known in the community). Some stated that they hoped to begin with the container and eventually expand on it as they managed to save and/or collect other materials to finish constructing their homes over time. The story below illustrates an inhabitant’s current struggle with getting by.

⁸ This is where my positionality as a researcher from Sint-Maarten comes into play. I can easily pin-point a Dominicano migrant from a "local" but this is a racialized opinion and "fact" that most locals have of the Dominicano community and a majority of the entire Latin community on the island. Just like defining who is black and who is white, actually defining who is local from who is "a Spanish person" is pretty impossible.



How am I supposed to survive?

A respondent expressed his current struggles with access to the healthcare system on the island. The respondent opened up about having various medical conditions (i.e. high blood pressure and diabetes). Unfortunately, he is often unable to treat them because he does not have sufficient financial means nor does he have medical insurance. The little money that he does earn, he would use for the purchasing of medications but then at the expense of other purchases.

This was not always the case, however. He worked as an electrician at a hotel for over 10 years, and through his employer, had access to healthcare insurance. Unfortunately, he lost this access to healthcare once he was laid off from his job. Being unemployed put an extra strain on his health because he was unable to access all of his required medications on time. He had been looking for another job for some time now but claimed that his age and the severity of his medical conditions caused employers to choose younger and healthier candidates over him each time he tried to apply.

He was quite frustrated with the fact that he needs a job to cover his medical cost but is unable to find a job because of all of his medical conditions.

[Narrative interview 2, April 14, 2021]



Vignette 5: "How am I supposed to survive?"

Governmental shortcomings

The respondents often pointed to the government as one of the main discriminators of the inhabitants. In the focus group particularly, the respondents brought forth their perceptions of the island's government. They believed that the people that hold political power would often take advantage of their ignorance and through greed and corruption, fail to assist them with their pressing needs (i.e housing, employment, healthcare, etc.). They believed that their legal rights were being ignored just because of the stereotypes and discrimination against those of non-Dutch migrant backgrounds or other ethnic backgrounds.

The becoming of the dump as a slum, the housing conditions, and housing reconstructions are amongst the many examples that according to the inhabitants showed this discrimination. One

common and the most recent issue that each of these inhabitants has faced, was the relocation plan which has brought up a history of additional inequalities and discrimination of the inhabitants. The following vignette goes deeper into these challenges.



“This is my home, All that I have”

Following the prospect of landfill development plans and the relocation of the dump inhabitants, many additional and underlying issues and concerns came forth. It became pretty clear that resettling these people will not be an easy process.

The majority of the respondents shared that they moved to the dump because they were unable to find affordable land or housing anywhere else on the island. It is government land on which the dump inhabitants are informally residing and have created their livelihoods for over 20 years. Despite the many efforts of most of these individuals to attain legal claim to the land, or at least create a legal agreement to lease this land from the government, they have not succeeded. They thus reside on the land as informal settlers. However, for many of these settlers, this particular address has been acknowledged as their official home address. Through this official recognition, most of these residents are also entitled to water and electricity.

The informality of the settlement unfortunately has caused many to be unable to build strong concrete homes on the land. The sturdiness of the homes is rather important for the Sint Maarten ecological context. Homes are required to be built with the right materials to withstand natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and flash flooding.

Despite the informalities, the dump settlers have claimed this land to be their own amongst themselves and the larger community. They have spent years investing in their customary piece of the land with their home structures built from plywood, zinc, containers, old school busses, and even some with cement. They also have many trees, such as banana trees, yucca trees, mango trees, lemongrass, coconut trees, basil plants, etc. which they use for consumption and beautification of their area. They also have pets whom they consider to be family (i.a. chickens and dogs).

“How will the government compensate us for all of these investments throughout these years” is the most pressing question they have in addition to “where will they put us?”, following the resettlement plans.

[Focus group, May 14, 2021]



Vignette 6: “This is my home, all that I have.”

From the conversations with the project consultant, it became clear that there is no attention for assuring that the inhabitants are moved somewhere that has adequate housing. In addition, the perception of my respondents were unanimous, that the government's only concern is getting the inhabitants to move away from the dump; the resettlement team seemed like they would do whatever it takes to run them away, even if that means throwing money at them. For example, one respondent was offered over 100.000 dollars to move her daughter and three grandchildren from the dump. Where they would go and how they live after they have moved, were of no concern to the organization in charge of the relocations. At first glance, that amount seems like a lot of money, however, a two-person house with one bedroom would cost over 50.000 dollars to build in Sint-Maarten. A house for five people will cost much more. However, to build a house one must first have land. The respondents were especially worried about this aspect of the issue. It is due to inadequate and unaffordable housing and land that caused them to move to the dump in the first place. Their only option with that money is to find a house to rent, but this is no long-term solution for this amount is said to only be granted over two years.

The respondents believed that the government is careless about their well-being because of the assumption of the illegality of the group living there. From my understanding, it is believed that the inhabitants do not deserve a higher-quality house than what they already have. Especially because they have settled on government land all of these years for free.

Coping with the marginalized positionality

The relocation process which I have been able to witness alongside the respondents has shed light on a rather important coping mechanism that these inhabitants possess. These mechanisms include the power of a strong and resilient community, but also creativity and skill. The following story highlights one of the current issues and how they have been coping with it.



“They don’t want to help us”

Hurricane Irma devastated the island of Sint Maarten on September 6, 2017. This category 5 hurricane was the strongest ever recorded by mankind. Some inhabitants decided to remain in their homes and some went elsewhere to seek shelter as this hurricane passed over the island.

Following its groundbreaking force, it left the majority of the dump inhabitants’ homes destroyed. One respondent particularly who remained in his home on the dump explained how he and his family of three looked for shelter in a little bathroom he had built from concrete in his yard. The rest of his home -which was built from an old container and additional wood and zinc- had been destroyed by the hurricane. Most of the inhabitants during the focus group had a similar experience.

The hurricane itself was the least of their problems, however, for they knew that it would come to pass. The after Irma home repairs is what they have been struggling with up to this day. After the hurricane, these inhabitants were not in the financial position to purchase any building materials themselves, let alone let a contractor or architect rebuild their homes after they had been destroyed. Their only hope of rebuilding their homes was to turn to the government for help. It is here where they were denied aid simply because they lived on Pond Island. They stated that they have asked for help countless times, but had been denied help with no explanation. It was organizations such as the Red Cross that helped them with some materials. But unfortunately, not everyone had access to these materials. Some people had to turn to other informal networks for help.

The dump community is still nowhere near finished with the rebuilding of their homes, however, they have slowly managed to build back a place to call home. Their biggest concern at the moment is their inability to build back “stronger and better” after the hurricane because of their informal settlement. Their inability to build their homes from sturdy material has left them worried that another hurricane like Irma will strike the island.

[Narrative interviews x Focus group, 2021]



Vignette 7: “They don’t want to help us.”

As a result of the social exclusion experienced by the dump inhabitants and particularly the Dominicano respondents, they have created a social network and support group amongst themselves, the neighbors, families, and their churches. They are the people who help each other in times when the government fails to acknowledge their needs, but also in unpredictable situations such as natural disasters.

The inhabitants also thought of innovative ways of assuring particular access to services without the help of the government. To secure some sort of income each month, some of the inhabitants rent a little piece of their homes to someone else or allow tenants to live in their yards. Some respondents who did this were tenants themselves but for landlords who did not reside on the dump. Those landlords thus took advantage of this empty lotted area to house other people and their families in exchange for a monthly income as well, without any land lease agreements with the government, - the owner of the land-.

In addition to this, considering that some homes do not have access to the utility lines, - either because they reside there illegally, their homes are not acknowledged by the utility company as livable homes, or because they cannot afford to -, some tenants have managed to extend their electricity lines and water pipes to other inhabitants for profit. They also save a lot of money by sharing their utility expenses and charging people extra for facilitating it. One respondent in particular also explained how a few years ago she decided to start a copper business. What she would do was go to the landfill which is situated behind her container home, and collect copper, fill large shipping containers with what she found and ship this out to the Dominican Republic for extra income.

Having undergone part of the relocation journey with the inhabitants, I also got to witness frustration and inquietude with their current issues. The relocations just added another layer of complexity to it all. For years there has been speculation about the relocations. Many promised change and improvement of their situations, yet nothing has happened to date. The respondents told me that they were tired and would prefer it if they were left in peace. Next to the fact that they cannot afford to go anywhere, the dump is their home. This last story shows this frustration.



“I’m too old for this”

I was invited to join a respondent at their first meeting with the NRPB concerning the possible compensation schemes that could have been expected. We were there on time and we waited for over 30minutes for someone to appear. But no one ever showed up. After calling with no response, we decided to leave. Shortly after we left, someone called back and stated that the meeting had been canceled. Yes, they sent out a WhatsApp text message inviting my respondent over, but unfortunately, they were not ready for her as yet, the man on the phone stated. We were going to call you, he said, but he did not do it up until now. A ray of disappointment and frustration reigned in the air. My respondent was tired. Her patience had run out at that moment. A 68-year-old senior citizen who had no car and who had traveled a very long way to attend this meeting, but no one showed. They did not even have the decency to let her know that it had been canceled in advance. She was very upset. “I’m too old for this” she stated.

[Participatory observation, May 13, 2021]



Vignette 8: “I’m too old for this.”

Analysis

Understanding the formation of the dump's slum helps to prevent the formation of another one. Through this ethnography, it became clear that the inhabitants were deprived of basic things that are accessible to others in Sint-Maarten, e.g. clean water and access to electricity. Other examples of deprivation include lack of adequate housing, employment, health insurance, the right to form a proper identity, etc. These factors, however, do not operate on their own, nor do they work simultaneously alongside each other. It is their interconnectedness that characterizes the dump, that community, the way we see them, the way they are treated, and the degree of access to basic services and goods within the Sint-Maarten community that the inhabitants have.

The heuristic nature of the intersectionality theory as explained by Collins (2019), was brought forth once the inhabitants were able to tell me their own stories and experiences. Having left the floor open to any ideas and personal thoughts that they wanted to share, allowed them to identify what according to them, has contributed to, and prolonged their positionality in the Sint-Maarten community. Who they are as “the dump inhabitants”, has been explored without having to manipulate or guiding them into a particular thought process.

All of my findings pointed to the intersectionality of deprivations. The data that I have gathered showed that most of these people do not experience just one kind of deprivation, but a mixture of many. Some experience it more severely than others, some experience all, and some only experience a few. As Vincze (2013) makes clear, these deprivations have negative implications on many aspects of their lives. However, their marginalized positionality combined with structural oppressional forces embedded in society perpetuates their positionalities.

The issues that these inhabitants have with finding employment are amongst one of those factors that enabled such marginalization and are interconnected with other factors such as health, living environment, and social acceptance. The capitalist forces that reign around the island deems the older and less healthy inhabitants, inadequate for an efficient business. This particular trend is similar to the *logic theory of marginalization* described by Wacquant (1999). The macrosocial dynamic is a direct effect of the capitalist era, where efficiency and profit are the number one concern, while it ignores the human aspect. The rich only get richer as the poor get poorer. Because of the capitalist-controlled labor market, many of the inhabitants were left unemployed or worked for low wages. This points to the economic dynamic of Wacquant (1999). The employment schemes allow for inadequate social protection and low wages under degrading working conditions.

The unemployment and/or degrading labor contracts are also connected to the inhabitants' inability to access the health care that they need to be healthy enough to work and make a living for

themselves. Private insurance schemes are unaffordable, especially for those who are unemployed. This healthcare discrepancy is an important systematically oppressive force in the Sint-Maarten community at large. Healthcare insurance is connected to employment, which makes it difficult and expensive to access once someone is unemployed. Such cycles of health and unemployment are worsened by inadequate living conditions and poor housing structures with no access to water and electricity. However, not having the financial means to assure this adequate housing then ties itself in with the consequences of worsening health issues. As the illnesses worsen, their chances of ever entering the labor market for a decent living decreases. Insufficient income exacerbates the inadequacy of their living environment as well.

This informal settlement which has been growing tremendously throughout the years, however, is arguable, a form of “governmental aid”. I found that most of these settlers have settled there because former government officials pointed them to that land. Some have also facilitated living containers for them on that piece of land when they were in dire need of housing. Some inhabitants still rent homes from these same former government officials. On the other hand, regarding the quality of the “aid”, the focus falls on understanding the reasoning for allowing and pointing people to inhabit the dump, practically a landfill. This complex relationship is what the political dynamic argues. It is especially corruption and failure to tackle the singular deprivations, which allow for the situations of the inhabitants to worsen and their marginalized positionality to be perpetuated (Wacquant, 1999). It was not made clear whether this act of “aid” was driven by political corruption or greed, however, it became evident that the indifference to the long-term effects has led to a more complex problem for these inhabitants.

As a result of their experienced deprivations, the inhabitants reported feeling forced to interact amongst themselves. This not only contains their social exclusion from the rest of the island’s population, but it also helps to stigmatize the dump community. Like the spatial dynamic of Wacquant (1999) suggests, there is spatial marginalization e.g the characterization of the dump inhabitants as “the people living on the dump”.

Noting that many Sint-Maarten residents are unaware of the dump’s existence, those who are aware, stigmatize it as a place only the outcasts would want to live. For many, it does not make sense that someone would want to live near a landfill; it is a place that only the poor and illiterate migrants live. However, my findings show that the choice to live there was restricted, and for the inhabitants, it was almost a matter of having no other choice but to live there; a place with accessible land, and near whatever they needed to survive.

Stigmatization goes a step further for the Spanish-speaking community on the dump. The social tension between the Spanish-speaking and the English-speaking population on the island, is strengthened by the address of the inhabitants. They are seen as “the Spanish people living on the

dump”, because of the stereotypes and the social acceptance that they believe they are being denied access to. Most Dominicano respondents stated wanting to be acknowledged as Sint-Maarteners but the dominant culture not allowing this. Those of Hispanic descent do not get a chance to take part in this label, whereas migrants from Curacao, Aruba, and other Dutch- and English-speaking Caribbean islands are accepted easier. This suggests that defining a “Sint-Maartener” is quite complex and following the experiences of the inhabitants points to aspects of racial inequalities within the not yet concrete definition of a Sint-Maartener. This claim however lacks a deeper understanding. This spatial dynamic is thus tied to several stereotypes and stigmas of the people who choose to reside there.

Interestingly enough, I found that the majority of the discrimination that the inhabitants experience came from government institutions. My findings point to these widely held beliefs about the dump inhabitants being associated with the access and quality of services that they get. The relocation plan is an example of this finding; those who are on the outside looking into the community, do not think that the inhabitants deserve a home of better condition than what they already have because they were living in a slum and it is not someone else’s responsibility to give them a free pass out. Having a Dutch passport, however, made many of these inhabitants eligible for several services such as financial aid and compensations despite their informal settlement. This finding stresses the importance of nationality and the power that lies within a passport as this also has implications on the degree of access to services. As the intersectional theory argues, such factors also hold particular powers which in combination with many other factors, enables oppression (Brisola & Cury, 2016)

Discussion & Conclusion

This thesis aimed to uncover how individual factors are interconnected and together shape and perpetuate the perceived level of deprivation experienced by the individuals living on the dump. It also explored the understanding of the dump inhabitant's own positionality within the Sint-Maarten community. I sought to answer the following question: *What are the perceptions of the dump's inhabitants of forces that shape and prolong deprivation amongst them in Sint-Maarten?*

It became clear through this ethnographic research that the dump inhabitants experience deprivation through numerous forces such as the labor market, social acceptance, healthcare, government policies housing market, etc. No inhabitant experienced these forces on their own; their understanding of perceived positionality within the Sint-Maarten community came as an intersection of these forces and the effect that they have had on each other. This became clear from what I observed, experienced with them, as well as the stories that they shared with me. Their homes being the number one visual aspect of this deprivation. Nonetheless, I found that the inhabitants developed coping mechanisms to deal with their perceived marginality and discrimination, as they got creative and gradually built their livelihoods with their belongings and their skills.

Having conducted this ethnography has brought me into their homes, as I got the opportunity to observe and experience a part of their reality. This process, however, has also given me a lot of room for interpretations and processing of my own understanding of the inhabitants, of myself as a researcher and as a part of the Sint-Maarten community. My positionality as a researcher from Sint-Maarten played an important role in my understanding and ability to interpret the information that I have gathered. This particular process, however, came with its risks.

The subjectivity of the stories told was subject to a form of victimization from the inhabitants. I could partly validate the stories with my previous contextual knowledge of Sint-Maarten and its community, but I must acknowledge the bias that came along with my own positionality. To assure a degree of validity amongst the respondents themselves I used the stories of the English-speaking community and the Spanish-speaking community to counteract each other and find a common trend. The built-up tension between the two populations on the dump has allowed for additional information on each group, from different perspectives. This allowed for a clearer and more objective analysis of which I was able to identify actual perceived influencing factors and not just empathize with made-up, one-sided stories.

In this thesis, I was also unable to further delve into the dominant culture's perspective about the dump inhabitants and the Dominicanos in particular. What I have described above, especially concerning cultural tensions, was analyzed with the use of the inhabitant's perspectives and my own understanding and experiences of when I lived on the island. It is thus incomplete and I cannot make

any concrete claims as to why and how these perceptions about the dump community were formulated. The positionality of the Spanish-speaking inhabitants in comparison with the rest of the Latin community on the island and other cultures found, also lacks, which hinders a complete analysis of the cultural tensions and discriminations that the Dominicans may have experienced. I also lack the understanding of the factors and/or characteristics that would make someone a “Sint-Maartener”, and most importantly, who gets to decide this. Future research could take a better look at these social dynamics and the issue of national identity on Sint-Maarten, to contribute to this ongoing discussion.

Nonetheless, the development of the landfill poses an opportunity to break the oppressive cycle that the inhabitants experience. My research findings were similar to those of Wacquant (1999), despite the difference in the regional context. Our findings both emphasized the ongoing oppressive cycles and marginalization found in modern societies. I thus recommend those in charge of the relocations to take a better look at the inhabitant’s right to adequate and affordable housing, for this is the main reason they moved to the dump; tackling this form of deprivation may be the first step in enhancing their livelihoods. I believe that the number one challenge will be not to get their rights mixed up and degraded with any social stigmas or political greed.

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Appendix I

Figure 1

Map of the landfill, the dump and the surrounding areas



Note. Bird-eye view of the dump and the surrounding areas. ©NRPB (2020). Resettlement. Accessed via: <https://nrpbxm.org/resettlement/>

Figure 2

Section of one of the dump's roads.



Note: Image shows section of road with debris and old recycled materials and appliances. As well as cars and small parts of resident's homes. © Chantelle Jessurun (3-06-2021)

Figure 3

The end of one of the dump's roads, bordering the island's landfill.



Note. Image shows the end of one of the road's with the landfill (hill of waste) in the background. It also shows some container homes and abandoned and used cars, parked on in front of the homes and on the side of the dirt road. © Chantelle Jessurun (03-06-2021).

Figure 5

The conjoining road in between the dumps's two main roads.



Note. Image shows the contrast between container homes and homes built from concrete. The orange concrete house also serves as a bar, where people hang out and have drinks and food. © Chantelle Jessurun (03-06-2021).

Figure 6.

The yard of an inhabitant and his neighbors.



Note. Image shows my gatekeeper and an inhabitant as we walked along with him in the barricaded yard where he lives. There are container, wooden and concrete homes to be found in this yard. Approximately four different homes of which are rented by a landlord who also resides in this yard. At the end of the yard the landlord has his mechanical work shop where he fixes cars for a living. © Chantelle Jessurun (03-06-2021).

Figure 7.

One respondent's yard.



Note. Image shows the yard of an inhabitant along with a few other homes and the conditions in which they currently are. The image also shows the gate that the landlord of these houses has built to barricade the homes. © Chantelle Jessurun (03-06-2021).

Figure 8.

Debris and recycled items in front of a home.



Note. This image shows an inhabitant's home which is barricaded by a wooden fence. In the front of this house lies debris and a number of other old appliances and recycled items © Chantelle Jessurun (03-06-2021).

Figure 9.

Fruit and vegetable trees in a respondent's yard.



Note. Image shows a few fruit and vegetable trees and plants (e.g banana tree, coconut tree, yucca tree, basil plant, lemongrass, etc.) that a respondent has in his yard and which he uses for consumption. His yard is barricaded by a zinc fence and is bordering the landfill. © Chantelle Jessurun (14-04-2021).

Appendix II



CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Deprivation amongst marginalized groups: A Sint-Maarten Case-Study.
Name, email of student: Chantelle Jessurun, 470061cj@eur.nl
Name, email of supervisor: Bonnie French, French@essb.eur.nl
Start date and duration: 1 february 2021 – 20 june 2021

Is the research study conducted within DPAS

YES- NO

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted? (e.g. internship organization)

I am doing a research internship at the Social Economic Council in Sint Maarten

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants.

YES NO

If 'NO': skip to part V.

2. If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research?

YES NO

Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).

3. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants.

YES NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

4. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else).

YES NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

5. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? YES NO

6. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? YES NO

7. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? YES NO

8. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? YES NO

Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).

9. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? YES NO

10. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES NO

11. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? YES NO

12. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? YES NO

13. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? YES NO

14. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? YES NO

15. If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

The area that I am researching mostly consists of migrants. This demographic factor is of great importance for the understanding of the socio-cultural dynamics within myResearch.

16. What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

The data will be collected anonymously and will not be shared publicly or outside of the University and my partner organisation.

17. Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

At the Sint Maarten landfill, known as “the dump”

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

15 respondents

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

Estimated 200 people including minors

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

In a secure folder on my personal laptop

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

Me.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Anytime there has been an edit made.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

I will not include name or telephone numbers in any of my files.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

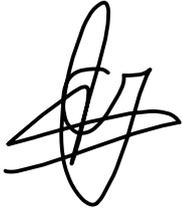
PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Chantelle Jessurun

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Jessurun', with a large loop at the top and a horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Date: 21-3-2021

Name (EUR) supervisor: Bonnie French

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. French', with a large 'B' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Date: 21-3-2021

Appendix III

Informed Consent Form

Dear respondent,

This research is about the intersecting forces that shape and prolong the deprivation of the people living on the dump. The aim is to analyze and understand the perceptions and experiences of these individuals when it comes to the causes of deprivation that they may or may not experience as a marginalized group living in a Sint Maarten slum.

Below I will explain your rights and privacy as a respondent and how I will be monitoring your anonymity.

We will read this document carefully together. By signing below, you will indicate your agreement and understanding of this research.

- This research will be conducted by Chantelle Jessurun, an MSc Social Inequalities student at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam. In the case of questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact her via her email address 470061cj@eur.nl
- For additional questions and/or concerns regarding privacy issues, please contact the EUR protection officer via privacy@eur.nl
- This research will be conducted in collaboration with the Social Economic Council Sint Maarten. For further questions about this collaboration, the Social economic Council can be reached at [+1 721-542-4060](tel:+17215424060) or info@sersxm.org
- The interviews will not be recorded, however, there will be notes taken during and after the interviewing process.
- The researcher will exclude your name and any other characteristics that may help to identify you -such as your exact address- from the notes.
- Only the researcher will be able to connect the data back to you.
- Only the researcher will have access to the notes taken during and after the interviews.

- The data (field notes and observations) will be stored in a secure environment for up to 10 years after this master thesis is approved. These notes can only be shared for research purposes when anonymized.
- The anonymized research findings may be published publicly.
- You have the right to discontinue your participation in this research at any time.
- You have the right to change the information that you have provided after the interview as well.
- You have the right to view the notes taken by the researcher during and after the interview.
- You have the right to file a complaint or contact a supervisory authority or a privacy officer at any time.

By signing this document you agree to the above-mentioned points as well to the researcher asking questions about your experiences and perceptions of the dump community and its social environment. You also agree to the researcher asking questions about your personal living situation and your ethnic and racial origin.

Name respondent:

Signature respondent:

Date:

Formulario de consentimiento informado

Estimado encuestado,

Esta investigación trata sobre las fuerzas entrecruzadas que dan forma y prolongan las privaciones de las personas que viven en el «dump» en San Martín. El objetivo es analizar y entender las percepciones y experiencias de estas personas al respecto de las causas de la privación que pueden experimentar o no como un grupo marginado que vive en un barrio pobre de Sint Maarten.

A continuación, explicaré sus derechos y privacidad como encuestado y cómo controlaré su anonimidad.

Repasamos cuidadosamente este documento. Al firmar al final Usted indicará su acuerdo con su colaboración a esta investigación.

- Esta investigación será realizada por Chantelle Jessurun, estudiante de maestría en Desigualdades Sociales en la Universidad Erasmus de Rotterdam. En caso de dudas o inquietudes, no dude en ponerse en contacto con ella a través de su dirección de correo electrónico 470061cj@eur.nl
- Si Usted tiene preguntas o inquietudes adicionales sobre cuestiones de privacidad, comuníquese con el oficial de protección de la Universidad Erasmo en Rotterdam a través de privacy@eur.nl
- Esta investigación se realizará en colaboración con el Consejo Económico y Social de Sint Maarten. Si tiene más preguntas sobre esta colaboración, puede comunicarse con el Consejo Económico y Social al + 1721-542-4060 o info@sersxm.org
- Las entrevistas no serán grabadas, sin embargo, se tomarán notas durante y después de las entrevistas.
- La investigadora excluirá su nombre y cualquier otra característica de las notas que pueda ayudar a identificar Usted -por ejemplo su dirección exacta.
- Solo la investigadora podrá conectarle los datos.
- Solo la investigadora tendrá acceso a las notas tomadas durante y después de las entrevistas.

- Los datos (notas y observaciones) se almacenarán en un entorno seguro hasta 10 años después de que se apruebe esta tesis. Estas notas solo se pueden compartir con fines de investigación cuando están anonimizadas.
- Los resultados de la investigación anonimizados se pueden publicar.
- Usted tiene el derecho a interrumpir su participación en esta investigación en cualquier momento.
- También Usted tiene derecho a cambiar la información que ha facilitado después de la entrevista.
- Usted tiene derecho a ver las notas tomadas por la investigadora durante y después de la entrevista.
- Usted tiene derecho a presentar una queja o comunicarse con una autoridad supervisora o un oficial de privacidad en cualquier momento.

Al firmar este documento, usted acepta los puntos mencionados anteriormente y también que la investigadora le haga preguntas sobre sus experiencias y percepciones de la comunidad del « dump » y su entorno social. También acepta que la investigadora le haga preguntas sobre su situación personal de vida y su origen étnico y racial.

Nombre del encuestado:

Firma del encuestado:

Fecha :

