

9-2018

The Pursuit of Education by Women in Rural Honduras

Charles Seeley

Grand Canyon University; The Leadership Center (Honduras)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/jri>

 Part of the [Adult and Continuing Education Commons](#), [Educational Psychology Commons](#), and the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Seeley, Charles (2018) "The Pursuit of Education by Women in Rural Honduras," *Journal of Research Initiatives*: Vol. 4 : No. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/jri/vol4/iss1/2>

This Research Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journal of Research Initiatives at DigitalCommons@Fayetteville State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Research Initiatives by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Fayetteville State University. For more information, please contact xpeng@uncfsu.edu.

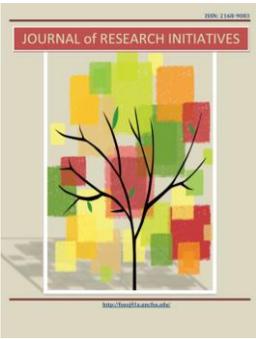
The Pursuit of Education by Women in Rural Honduras

About the Author(s)

Charles P. Seeley is an adjunct professor in leadership at Grand Canyon University and an instructor at The Leadership Center in Honduras. His research interests are in vocation and calling, motivational psychology, theology of work, poverty mitigation, leadership development, qualitative research, and leading organizational change. He holds a PhD in Leadership from Lancaster Bible College | Capital Seminary & Graduate School. Dr. Seeley retired as a senior manager and program manager from Intel Corporation.

Keywords

Education, Rural Honduras, Women, Motivation



THE PURSUIT OF EDUCATION BY WOMEN IN RURAL HONDURAS

Charles Seeley, Grand Canyon University, Honduras

Abstract

This qualitative, ethnographic study was conducted to discover and describe the motivational influences in the lives of students and graduates of The Leadership Center, located in rural Honduras, as they traveled a journey through high school and on to The Leadership Center in pursuit of education and a vocation. The sample of study participants consisted of thirty young women, thirteen graduates, and seventeen students; 55.6% of the population of students and graduates participated at some level in this study. The lack of education emerged as an element of the culture of rural Honduras while the importance of education emerged as a counter-theme to the cultural impediments to education. The importance of education consisted of five subthemes: (1) key to improvement, (2) love of learning, (3) growth mindset, (4) increase job opportunities, and (5) learning English. The findings from this study contribute to the fields of education and international development by helping educators and those serving in community development roles in developing nations and under-resourced communities and populations understand the motivational influences that kept these young women on the path of continuing their education. Future research studies might examine a trend identified in this study of family members continuing their education later in life by taking advantage of degree completion programs offered by the Honduran government to enable adults to complete primary school or high school, explore why the majority of young women in rural Honduras are not pursuing education beyond the primary level, and investigate why available alternative educational delivery systems are not being adopted by more rural communities which currently lack secondary schools.

Introduction

While poverty is a pervasive global problem, it takes on a local face in villages, communities, and cities around the world. Honduras, the second poorest country in Central America (CIA, 2016), is one of those countries in which poverty is rampant, especially in rural areas. Unemployment and underemployment contribute to the problem of poverty in rural Honduras. For women who live in rural Honduras, “the job market is almost non-existent” (Lomot, 2013, p. 21). Lack of education, lack of educational opportunity, and illiteracy are major contributing factors to this cycle of poverty, especially for females.

This is a circular problem. Many communities in rural Honduras do not have schools. Those that have schools have a shortage of qualified teachers. Even when schools are available, girls and young women in the rural areas are discouraged from continuing their education into high school and beyond. They are frequently told that there is no value in them getting an education since they will only get pregnant and have babies anyway. Many parents remove girls and young women from school. Instead of completing their education, they are assigned the task of caring for younger siblings or are sent to work in the fields to help the family economically. While there is no cost for tuition, the cost of books and uniforms is prohibitive for poor rural families. High levels of illiteracy are the norm in rural Honduras. As a result, there are few if any role models of educational attainment, male or female, for young people in rural Honduras. Low levels of education result in few occupational choices and a very low per capita income. Limited financial resources limit the pursuit of education, and the cycle of poverty continues.

Education is a powerful weapon in the war against poverty. Studies conducted by The World Bank (2017) emphasize the importance of quality education and a more diversified economic base as critical elements in the fight against poverty in rural areas. Cardoza (1991) asserts that “educational attainment is one of the most important means by which to gain socioeconomic mobility and independence for women” (p. 133), especially for minority women. Chaaban and Cunningham (2011) report on an empirical multinational study that sought to quantify the opportunity costs related to lost productivity when girls and young women do not develop their potential due to early school dropout, joblessness, and pregnancy (p. 4). Their research findings show that keeping girls and young women in school have a significant positive benefit for the individual, for her family and community, and for the national economy.

The need for educating girls and young women in Honduras is great. According to the World Education Blog (Rose, 2012), 10% of the poorest females aged 7 to 16 in Honduras have never been to school while the average years of education for the poorest 17 to 22-year-old females are 4.1 years. This statistic appears to have held fairly constant over the past five years. According to Orozco and Valdivia (2017), the countrywide average is 4 years of education in Honduras compared to a global average of 12 years (p. 1). Rowlands (1997) reports that more than half of all Honduran women and over two-thirds of the women living in rural areas had completed three or fewer years of formal education (p. 35) based on data from 1988. Data from 2011 indicates that 11% of all Honduran females age 20 to 24 have completed fewer than 4 years of schooling, while 5% of all females age 9 to 12 have never been to school (GEM, 2017). It is worth noting that it is challenging to obtain current, consistent, reliable, and accurate statistics about education in Honduras.

Recent data indicate that only 25% of Honduran youth aged 16 to 18 are enrolled in upper secondary school (Orozco & Valdivia, 2017, p. 7). Nationwide, 31% of Hondurans age 20 to 29 have completed an upper secondary school education, while in the rural areas only 14% of that age group have completed upper secondary school, and only 6% of the poorest females age 20 to 29 have completed their secondary school education (GEM, 2017). This fact does not tell the whole story, however, given that the majority of young people of secondary school age live in the rural areas of Honduras (Gomez, 2014). The World Economic Forum ranks Honduras very low for secondary education attainment of young people age 15 to 24, 103 out of 130 countries in its Human Capital Index 2016 (WEF, 2018). Orozco and Valdivia report that 53% of Hondurans are “unskilled workers earning less than the minimum wage” (p. 12). The lack of education appears to be a significant contributing factor to poverty in the rural areas.

Primary education is compulsory in Honduras. Primary education consists of grades 1 through 6 offered for students aged 6 through 12 (J. Marshall et al., 2014, p. 54). Wood (1993) points out that in the primary grades, Honduras has the lowest literacy rate and the highest student/teacher ratio in Central America (p. 5). As a nation, “Honduras has the third-highest illiteracy rate in Central America” (Orozco & Valdivia, 2017, p. 2). However, some experts assert that the illiteracy rate is much higher than the official statistics indicate (p. 2). Multi-grade classrooms, where teachers have to handle more than one grade level simultaneously, are prevalent, especially in the rural areas (Wood, p. 14). Honduras has a significantly higher dropout rate in the primary grades than other countries in the Latin American region, with 25% of students dropping out in 2013 compared to 16% for the region (Orozco & Valdivia, p. 4). Consequently, the average level of educational attainment in the rural area is “less than the equivalent of a second-grade education in the U. S” (Wood, p. 13). Overall, 63% of the workforce in Honduras has attained only a primary education (Orozco & Valdivia, p. 1).

The purpose of this study was to understand the motivational influences driving some young Honduran women forward when many simply follow the traditional path dictated by culture. It sought to answer a fundamental question: Why do some young Honduran women defy tradition, convention, and culture to pursue education and a vocation rather than following the cultural norm of bearing and raising children at a young age? This study was limited to purposefully selected students and graduates of The Leadership Center (TLC), a tertiary-level academic institution located in rural Honduras. The research question that guided the study reported in this paper was: What are the influences that motivated these young women to pursue continuing education in high school and on to The Leadership Center? The results reported for students and graduates of The Leadership Center represent only a limited segment of the Honduran female student population at institutions of higher education in Honduras and should not be generalized to all female students attending colleges and universities across Honduras. The participants in this study fall into the demographic and age profile noted by Rose (2012). However, given that secondary school graduation is a requirement to attend The Leadership Center these students have far exceeded the average of 4.1 years of education. The socioeconomic and cultural odds are all stacked against the young women who attend The Leadership Center. Yet they overcome these odds to pursue higher education and a vocation. Why? What motivates these young women to pursue something that family and friends rarely, if ever, achieve? This research study was designed to answer that question.

Motivational Factors Supporting the Pursuit of Education

Little is known about the factors driving the pursuit of education for girls and young women in Honduras. However, there are studies that explored the motivational factors supporting the pursuit of education among first-generation students, minorities, and specifically Hispanic women, in the United States. Knutsen (2011) conducted a quantitative, survey-based study of workers in US companies who were non-traditional students attending Robert Morris University to understand what motivated them to return to school. He defined non-traditional students as those who were older than the traditional 18 to the 24-year-old student and who had delayed beginning college or returned to college after having previously dropped out. The research population was made up of African Americans, Asians, Caucasians, and Hispanics, with the majority of the students being first-generation college students. The most important extrinsic factor for these non-traditional students was “to increase my job opportunities” (p. 83). The most important intrinsic factor was “to advance my personal growth” (p. 82).

Hispanic women are underrepresented within the population of students pursuing higher education in the United States (Cardoza, 1991, p. 134). Cardoza analyzed data from the High School and Beyond longitudinal survey for a sample of 1252 students who identified themselves as female and Hispanic (pp. 136-137). She found that the most important factor driving college attendance and persistence for Hispanic women was educational aspiration (p. 143). Another extremely important factor was having an educational role model. Hispanic women were more likely to pursue and persist in higher education when their mother had completed four or more years of college. The sex role variable was also found to be of importance for this population. Hispanic women have a higher probability of enrolling and continuing in college when they delay marriage and childbearing until after completing college. Cardoza went on to make a statement that is incredibly relevant to the study reported in this paper: “These findings are important if one considers the social pressures placed on women in general, and especially Hispanic women, to get married and have children” (p. 143).

The pursuit of higher education is often extremely challenging for minorities and those coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds and under-resourced communities and families.

Using a qualitative research design, Blackwell and Pinder (2014) explored the motivational factors influencing the pursuit of higher education by first-generation college students who fit the minority and socioeconomic profile. Their central research question was “What are the motivational factors of first-generation minority college students who overcome their family histories to pursue higher education when their siblings do not?” (p. 46). The authors reported three causal conditions as the motivational influences that drove these students in pursuit of higher education: loving reading at an early age, feeling different from their siblings from an early age and wanting a better life for themselves (p. 50). The third causal condition, a desire to have a better life, rings loudly as a motivational influence for the pursuit of higher education. The authors point out that participants had an “overwhelming sense of determination to have a better life than the one they experienced as children” (p. 51). Each of the participants saw college as the path to escape the life they had known as a child growing up in poverty. This finding is less specific than, but consistent with, the findings in the Knutsen (2011) study of the factors motivating non-traditional students to pursue higher education. The top extrinsic motivational factors (“increase my job opportunities”, “increase my income”) and intrinsic motivational factors (“advance my personal growth”, “enrich my life”) reported by Knutsen (pp. 82-83, 101) are all more specific descriptors of a better life as articulated by the participants in the Knutsen study.

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), which was launched in 1966, is the longest-running study of the US higher educational system (Saenz, 2007, p. 5). The CIRP, a research program of the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA, conducts an annual survey of freshman at 4-year institutions of higher education known as the Cooperative Institutional Research Program’s Freshman Survey (p. vi). In celebration of CIRP’s 40th anniversary, the Higher Education Research Institute commissioned a report on first-generation college students (p. vi). This report, *First In My Family*, explores 35 years of data about first-generation and non-first-generation college students collected through CIRP’s Freshman Survey from 1971 to 2005 (p. vi).

A disproportionate percentage of first-generation students come out of a lower socioeconomic background, are Hispanic, were born outside of the US, and grew up in households where English was not the primary language spoken (Saenz, 2007, p. 3). These students are more likely to have attended secondary school in small towns and rural communities than their non-first-generation classmates (pp. 3-4). In addition, first-generation students report having lower educational aspirations than those of their non-first generation peers (p. 36). The reasons rated by first-generation students as very important in deciding to go to college are listed in rank order from the 2005 survey: to be able to get a better job, to be able to make more money, to learn more about things that interest me, to gain a general education and appreciation of ideas, to prepare for graduate or professional school, my parents wanted me to go, to make me a more cultured person, a mentor/role model encouraged me to go, wanted to get away from home, I could not find a job, and there was nothing better to do (Saenz, 2007, p. 57). The items ranked first and second (to be able to get a better job, to be able to make more money) are consistent with the findings of other studies investigating the motivational influences for college attendance on the part of minority, non-traditional, or first-generation students (Blackwell & Pinder, 2014; George, 2008; Knutsen, 2011; Mashriqi, 2016). The Cardoza (1991) investigation of the participation of Hispanic women in higher education also revealed the importance of a role model, item number 8 on the CIRP survey list.

Mashriqi (2013, 2016) conducted a qualitative study to gain an understanding of the factors that led some Afghan women to pursue higher education as well as those factors that

inhibited women from continuing into higher education (2016, p. 1). The scope of the study was to understand the lived experience of pursuing higher education for 12 Afghan women who were enrolled in universities in Kabul, Afghanistan (p. 2). Many Afghan women face financial constraints in their efforts to engage in higher education, even if they have middle-class status (Mashriqi, 2016, pp. 3-4). Kabul University is the only public university in the city; the other universities are private and carry even higher costs for attendance (p. 4). As Mashriqi stated so clearly, "Being poor is a significant obstacle to obtaining a higher education" (p. 8). Poverty and illiteracy go hand-in-hand in rural Honduras as well (Rose, 2012; Rowlands, 1997), limiting not only access to higher education but also access to primary and secondary education.

The culture and society in Afghanistan present a significant barrier to the pursuit of higher education by Afghan women (Mashriqi, 2016, pp. 5-6). Many Afghan men believe women should stop their education after grade 12 and take up their gender-oriented duty to get married, have children, and stay at home to care for children and the home (pp. 5-6). Afghanistan is a male-dominated culture; men are the decision makers, and women are considered to have less value than men (p. 6). The situation is similar in Honduras, a male-dominated society in which men make all the decisions for the females in the household and where the gender assigned role for females is to have children and to stay home to take care of the children and the home (Giordano, Thumme, & Sierra, 2009; Lomot, 2013; Rowlands, 1997).

The Mashriqi (2016) study revealed several other findings that are relevant to the study in Honduras reported in this paper. Participants in the study held the perception that they may be able to make a greater contribution to their communities, their society, and the Afghan economy as a result of pursuing higher education (p. 6). A supportive family environment was an important element in the decision of Afghan women to pursue higher education (p. 8). In addition, "when Afghan men support gender equality, they encourage female members of the family to be educated, which establishes a tradition in the family for women to obtain an education" (p. 8). The support of Afghan males for gender equality may create a virtuous circle leading to an increase in education for Afghan females.

Self-motivation is an important characteristic of Afghan women who pursue higher education (Mashriqi, 2016, p. 8). The motivation of study participants was increased by their perceptions of the benefits of obtaining higher education and their hope that they could make a greater contribution to the improvement of Afghan society as a result of higher education (p. 8). According to the author, "When women are self-motivated, they are better able to overcome the barriers to higher education" (pp. 8-9). Overcoming the barriers and achieving the goal of higher education opens the very real possibility of increased employment opportunities for Afghan women (p. 11). Overcoming the barriers to higher education will also likely result in increased self-efficacy for Afghan women; they will likely have more confidence in their ability to improve their lives and the lives of family members, and they may feel more empowered to contribute to rebuilding their country (p. 1).

Afghan women who achieve the goal of higher education in spite of the barriers holding them back become role models for other women by demonstrating that the barriers holding women back from higher education can be overcome and that higher education then becomes the mechanism to overcome other barriers faced by women in a male-dominated society (Mashriqi, 2016, p. 11). This finding is relevant to the young women in rural Honduras who pursue education and vocation in spite of the barriers they face in that male-dominated society. They too become role models for younger siblings, relatives, and neighbors.

Methodology

This qualitative study was designed to investigate the motivational influences in the lives of female students and graduates of The Leadership Center as they traveled a journey through high school to The Leadership Center in pursuit of a vocation. Specifically, this study sought to discover and describe the lived experiences of these young women as they made decisions to continue their education way beyond 4.1 years, the average years of education for the poorest 17 to 22-year-old females in Honduras (Rose, 2012), and to pursue a vocation in business, bilingual education, or serving with a non-governmental organization (NGO). The design for this study utilized ethnographic research methods, including participant observation, semi-structured individual interviewing, unstructured interviewing, group interviewing through focus groups, and self-reporting through a written essay, to accomplish its purpose. The use of multiple ethnographic research methods and a variety of sources (students, graduates, immersion in daily life on campus) enabled the researcher to implement the technique of triangulation (C. Marshall & Rossman, 2016, p. 229; Maxwell, 2005, pp. 93-94), which is “the act of bringing more than one source of data to bear on a single point” (C. Marshall & Rossman, p. 262). Triangulation reduces the risk that conclusions will reflect systematic biases and any limitations inherent in any specific source or method (Maxwell, p. 93).

The author was in residence at The Leadership Center living in a small casita on campus for an eleven week period during which he executed the data collection phase of this study. He lived daily life with students, frequently engaging in conversation, eating meals with them, teaching and coaching them, and participating in recreational and spiritual activities with them. Daily life on campus afforded the researcher many opportunities for observation, informal discussions, casual conversations, and unstructured interviewing. This was an ideal situation for participant observation as the researcher was immersed in the environment and culture of TLC and of rural Honduras. This life situation also enabled informal conversation and the possibility of conducting unstructured interviews as part of these informal conversations (Fife, 2005, pp. 101-106).

Selection Criteria

Purposeful sampling techniques were utilized to select the sample for this research study (Creswell, 2007, p. 125; Maxwell, 2005, pp. 88-91; Patton, 1990, pp. 169-186). The selection of a setting and participants who can provide the researcher with the information needed to answer the research questions is a critically important decision in qualitative studies (Maxwell, p. 88). A stratified purposeful sampling strategy was utilized to investigate the characteristics of particular subgroups of interest and facilitate comparisons between the different groups; for this study, the two subgroups were made up of students and graduates of The Leadership Center. Within the two subgroups, current students and graduates, intensity sampling (Patton, pp. 171-172) were used to select individuals to participate in the interviews. During the participant observer phase of this study, the researcher was explicitly looking and listening for students and graduates who displayed an intense, but not extreme, passion for education and vocation. This approach follows Creswell's counsel that study participants be "carefully chosen to be individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon in question, so that the researcher, in the end, can forge a common understanding" (p. 62). Given that all TLC students and graduates have experienced the phenomenon of pursuing education, students not selected for individual interviews were invited to participate in a group interview or focus group discussion. Graduates were not invited to participate in group interviews or focus group discussions due to challenging travel logistics.

The design for this study utilized the above sampling techniques to select a sample for individual interviews consisting of 11 current students (mix of first and second-year students) and 12 graduates. In addition, 11 first-year students were invited to participate in a group

interview; four chose to participate. All students and many graduates were invited to complete the reflective essay. Reflective essays were received from a total of 20 students and graduates. All study participants were unmarried females, came from under-resourced communities, were the first in their family to pursue tertiary education, and many were the first in their family to graduate from secondary school. English is a second language for all study participants. The names of all study participants discussed in this paper are aliases to protect participant confidentiality.

Data Collection and Analysis

The author developed three protocols to guide data collection and analysis: (1) individual interview protocol, (2) focus group interview protocol, and (3) reflective essay protocol. Prior to participating in any interviews or focus groups, TLC students and graduates were invited to write a reflective essay describing the path their lives had taken to the point they were at during the time of the study, as a student or a graduate of The Leadership Center. This reflective essay served the dual purpose of initiating self-reflection on the part of study participants so they were better prepared to participate in individual or group interviews and enabled the researcher to better understand the lived experience of study participants as they made decisions and took action to pursue education and vocation (C. Marshall & Rossman, 2016, pp. 156-157). The reflective essay protocol was given to students and graduates to guide their preparation of this essay.

Individual interviews were conducted on the campus of The Leadership Center as well as at several sites in northern Honduras. Sixteen interviews were conducted on campus; two more were conducted with graduates in a classroom at a private school in northern Honduras. The remaining five interviews were conducted with graduates in the dining area of a small resort hotel in northern Honduras. A group interview and a focus group session were both conducted in classrooms on the TLC campus. Individual interviews and group sessions were recorded using a digital voice recorder. Typed transcripts were prepared from these recordings. The design for this qualitative study incorporated content analysis as the primary data analysis technique. Content analysis is “a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material ... for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes, or biases within that material” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013, p. 100). Effective content analysis requires the researcher to immerse himself in the data, reading, rereading, and then reading through the data yet another time. C. Marshall and Rossman (2016) pointed out the importance of immersion in the data, asserting that “there is no substitute for intimate engagement with your data” (pp. 217-218). Therefore, the first step in the analysis of the data collected in this study was to read the interview transcripts, observational notes, and reflective essays written by students and graduates (Maxwell, 2005, p. 96), applying content analysis in each pass through the content. Reading involved a “detailed and systematic examination of the content” (Leedy & Ormrod, p. 100), taking notes and writing brief analytic memos (Maxwell, p. 96) on what was discovered in the content.

The author looked for themes, key concepts, and patterns in the content as he read the data artifacts created or collected in the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) declare that “coding is analysis” (p. 56). According to these authors, “codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (p. 56). Codes are assigned to chunks of content of varying size and are used to organize and retrieve these chunks of content across the various textual artifacts (pp. 56-57). The design for this research study applied a two-level coding scheme: etic and emic. Etic categories are derived from theory or from concepts developed by the researcher (Maxwell, 2005, pp. 97-98; Miles & Huberman, p.

61); C. Marshall and Rossman (2016) refer to these as theory-generated codes (pp. 218-221). Emic categories are taken from the words and concepts articulated by participants (Maxwell, p. 97; Miles & Huberman, p. 61); C. Marshall and Rossman refer to these as "in vivo codes" (p. 218).

Research Findings

During the interview and focus group sessions, study participants were asked why they decided to continue their education into high school and on to The Leadership Center after high school. The reflective essay asked them to reflect back on their early education experience as well as why they decided to continue into high school and on to The Leadership Center. Several themes emerged from the analysis of study data. The lack of education emerged as an element of the culture of rural Honduras. The importance of education emerged as a counter-theme to the cultural impediments to education.

Lack of Education

This theme encompasses the lack of opportunity for education as well as lack of educational role models. Many rural communities do not have schools. Children and young people must find some way to get to their school if they are going to attend. And there are no school buses in the rural communities. Typically they walk, often over long distances. Some move to another community to attend a school, living with relatives or with strangers. This puts an additional hardship on families that are already stretched financially and emotionally.

The lack of high schools in many communities is a barrier that holds many back from continuing their education. Yet, study participants overcame this barrier. With the help of extended family members and others, they found a way to continue their education. Yissel and her family relocated to another community so they could be closer to a community where there was a high school. Even so, Yissel and her sister had to walk two hours a day, back and forth to school. Melani commented on the difficulty of living away from family to attend school, stating that "one barrier that was really hard for me since high school was to get away from my family. I have not been living with them since I was twelve years old and now I am twenty-two." Gabriela moved away from her home community to attend high school. She explained this aspect of life in rural Honduras: "Normally all the teenagers leave our hometown so we can attend to a better school, plus we didn't really have any school where they would offer us high school or a career, like in the cities." Gabriela lived with a community of Catholic nuns for two years and then completed high school while living with an aunt.

Study participants did not grow up in homes characterized by educational attainment. Yet, when asked during the individual interviews about the importance of education in their families, most study participants (61%) responded that it was important in their family. During the individual interviews, study participants were asked about the educational attainment of family members. Most family members of study participants completed six or fewer years of education. Study participants have few, if any, educational role models in their families even given the high response rate to the question on the importance of education to their families. These results of the positive responses to the question about the importance of education in their families and the relatively low level of educational attainment are interesting. It is possible that education is an espoused or emergent value in the culture of rural Honduras. While a cultural norm establishes the way someone within the culture should behave, a value points in the direction of how someone "should aspire or desire to behave" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998, p. 22). Based on study results, education appears to be a value in the culture of rural Honduras but has not yet become a norm. However, this may be evolving since some study

participants also mentioned that family members were now continuing their education later in life.

Importance of Education

Education is a powerful weapon in the war against poverty. Study participants understand and articulate the importance of education in spite of the cultural acceptance of a lack of education for girls and young women in rural Honduras. Responses from study participants consistently communicated their recognition of the importance of education for changing their families, their communities, their country, and the trajectory of their own lives. The importance of education consisted of five subthemes: (1) key to improvement, (2) love of learning, (3) growth mindset, (4) increase job opportunities, and (5) learning English.

Study participants desired a better life for themselves, their families, their children when they have them, their communities, and their country. Education is a powerful vehicle to enable them to achieve that desire and is a key to their improvement.

Key to Improvement

Several study participants discussed the influence that one or both parents had on their perception of the role education plays on the path to improvement. Mitchel's parents encouraged her to pursue education. Based on that influence, Mitchel came to believe that "education is the best way to improve, to change in our country and our communities." The encouragement of her parents, the example set by her older siblings, and her belief that education is the best way for her to have a positive impact on her community and her country motivated Mitchel to continue her education in high school and on to TLC. In Norda's case, it was her mother who encouraged her to pursue education. Norda reported that her mother realized that people who have an education can have a better life. Mileydis declared that education "is the most important thing in life. My mom encouraged all of us to continue our education." For Yissel, it was her father who instilled in her the importance of education as a key to improvement. She recalled, "I heard my dad saying that education opened doors to have and to offer the ones he loved a better life than the life we had and that ignorance stole from people their dreams." The influence of parents can shape the perception of education held by young people.

For one study participant, it was her grandparents who encouraged her to pursue education as the key to improvement. Yadira reported that her grandfather always encouraged his grandchildren, both the girls and the boys, to study. She also stated that her grandmother is happy that her grandchildren study and that they look for a better life. Through the influence of her grandparents, Yadira has come to the conclusion that "through the education, we can make more than we think we can."

Other study participants came to the realization that education plays a key role on their path to improvement without the direct influence of parents or grandparents. Yolibeth wanted to make a change in her community. She wanted things to be different, to be better, and she believed that studying was a good way to improve herself and to help her community make changes. Angelica, who now works as a private school administrator, commented that "I have always believed that education is so very important." Yoseli observed that "education is the best way to change your life, to change your family." Marisol took Yoseli's thought further, stating that "education helps women know what their rights are. In that way, we can change. In that way, we are going to change the system."

Yessica believes strongly that education is the key element on the path to improvement. She commented that "education is the key to improve on everything else." She would like to start a NGO "to improve the school of the community. That is what I wanted to do since I started writing an essay about education [in her classes]. That is what I have been interested in since I

started writing essays about education." Yessica is passionate about improving education in rural Honduras so that it becomes the path to improvement for many others.

Moving from an isolated and rural part of Honduras to the capital city to attend high school had a profound impact on Tatiana. She tells this part of her story: When I studied in the city I understood the importance of the education in my life. I understood that the education could change my life and my family's life to leave from poverty....I have seen how the education can help us to stop being ignorant and get great opportunities in our life. Tatiana, like many other study participants, understands that education plays a key role on her path to improvement.

Some study participants pursued education not only because it plays a key role on the path to improvement but also articulated their love of learning as one of the motivational influences driving their pursuit of education.

Love of Learning

Books are not common in rural Honduras. Many study participants stated that they did not have books in the home when they were growing up. There was no money for books. Rural communities do not have libraries where children and young people can borrow books. Education is not considered important for girls and young women in rural Honduras. Few study participants had educational role models. Yet some study participants declared their love of learning in spite of the barriers inherent in the culture of rural Honduras. Comments from study participants reinforced their love of learning. Karla declared, "I really like to study....When I have a family, I will support and I will encourage my children to continue studying." Blanca commented that she always loved learning. "I think it is really, really interesting to learn new things every day." Nataly observed, "I always wanted to study. I really wanted to study....It is amazing for me to think I am studying." Eda Marixi stated emphatically that education was something she wanted. Marisol stated, "I knew I wanted to study more. I didn't want to stop. I think that I like to study." Yessica reflected on her love of learning, "I always liked studying. I loved going to school. I love learning. I enjoy studying and enjoy learning." Yolibeth pointed out, "I went to school because I wanted to and not because my mother pressured me... The school was so exciting and fun for me. I really liked it." Gabriela acknowledged her life-long love of learning, "I loved learning since I was very little." A love of learning and a growth mindset are characteristics common to many study participants.

Growth Mindset

A growth mindset is focused on "learning something over time: confronting a challenge and making progress" (Dweck, 2006, p. 24). Individuals with a growth mindset do not allow a stereotype to define them. Instead, they take control of their decisions and their situation with determination (pp. 38-39), confidence, persistence, and press forward toward goal achievement (p. 76). Study participants have all demonstrated a growth mindset. They have not allowed the gender stereotype or the barriers facing young women in the culture of rural Honduras prevent them from pursuing education and vocation.

Study participants absorbed what was offered to them by their teachers and by others. Speaking about her experience at TLC, Blanca reported that she "learned many new skills from the teachers, from other students, and from teams." She went on to declare that "learning is challenging at times, but it is not impossible. If we want, we can. Of course, with God's help." Mariela reported that she went to school to learn. She went beyond what the teacher taught and asked lots of questions. She commented that she likes history and is interested in people "who made something different." Gabriela demonstrated a growth mindset during her time at TLC: "In six months I was fluent in English, I was very energetic, always positive, and willing to learn

more and more about any knowledge that they would offer me.” In keeping with her growth mindset, Gabriela continued her studies at the college level, with a major in business, after graduating from TLC.

When someone told Esther that she would never be able to learn English, her response demonstrated a growth mindset. Esther told herself “I can do that.” Even though English was a challenge, she thought to herself, “I want that. It is something new. I feel wow! I like to take this challenge.” These examples of how some study participants demonstrated a growth mindset are representative of all study participants. None of the study participants allowed the gender stereotypes and expectations of the culture of rural Honduras to define them and prevent them from pursuing education and vocation. Instead, all study participants continued their education through high school and on to TLC. Some were also motivated to pursue education by the possibility that it would increase their job opportunities.

Increase Job Opportunities

The lack of education and educational opportunities in rural Honduras is a contributing factor to the lack of job opportunities, especially for young women. Study participants understand this barrier. Nataly articulated this understanding when she observed that “if you don’t have any degree you can’t work. It is very difficult to have a very good job that can give you the necessary things that you need.” Yadira echoed this same understanding, commenting that secondary school is not enough to get a good job:

When I graduated from secondary school I tried to find a job but I could not find one. I was so frustrated; I wanted to do something else. I just didn’t want to be in my house. I got so disappointed because I couldn’t find a job. I don’t want to have this life. But what can I do? I don’t have any money. Like Nataly and Yadira, Tatiana is realistic about the importance of education in Honduras: “Without an education, in Honduras, our job is planting food, making food, making babies. Not working in the office. Because of that, I believe education is very important in my life. The source of everything is education.”

Several study participants articulated their belief that if they obtained a good education they would be able to get a good job. Eda Marixi’s parents wanted their children to have a good education so they could get a job. She adopted that perspective, stating, “If I get an education, I gain knowledge that I can share with people. I can also get a good job.” Her hope is that if she can share her knowledge with others then they too might be able to get a good job. The possibility of a good job also motivated Esther to continue her education through high school and on to TLC. Her thought at the time was “if I study I will get a good job.” Obtaining a good job as a motivational influence driving Yoseli to pursue education as well: “I have seen how my grandfather and other members of my family work hard, but they do so just to survive. Being a farmer here in Honduras doesn’t give you much.” She observed that she had seen how people who get a good education are able to get better jobs and have a better life.

The possibility that they would increase their job opportunities motivated some study participants to pursue education. One aspect of continuing education, learning English, was a motivational influence driving some study participants to pursue education.

Learning English

Being fluent in English is an important skill in rural Honduras. Job opportunities increase for someone who can speak English. Jobs such as translator and bilingual teacher become possibilities. Study participants have more job opportunities when they leave TLC as a result of studying English. Mariela observed that “in Honduras, if you know and speak English you can get a better job than other people.”

Several study participants indicated they were initially motivated to attend TLC by the possibility of learning English. Mitchel was excited about learning English but even more excited about learning leadership and community development. Dayani reported that she ultimately decided to attend TLC because of learning English. As she put it, "I was really motivated to learn English." A leader in her community told Norda about TLC because he knew of her desire to learn English. And, Mariela, Gabriela, and Yoseli were all initially attracted to TLC by the opportunity to learn English.

Pursuing education and being able to converse in English are important steps on the path to improvement and better job opportunities for study participants. Study participants continued their education in high school and on to The Leadership Center to prepare themselves for something beyond education. Education is the bridge from lack of opportunity and low socioeconomic status to better opportunities, better jobs, and vocation.

Discussion

Study participants recognize the importance of education for changing their families, their communities, their country, and the trajectory of their own lives. They recognize that education will enable them to achieve their other dreams and to create the better life that they desire for themselves and others.

Study participants want others (family, peers, community, and others) to know that as women they are fully capable of accomplishing their dreams and goals in spite of what the machismo culture believes about women. Study participants all had a goal of completing high school, and all desired to continue their education beyond high school. All demonstrated that they were fully capable of achieving those goals.

Study participants expressed a desire for something better for their lives, their families, their communities, and their country. Education is the vehicle that study participants are using to fulfill this desire in their lives, in the lives of family members, and in their communities and country. A comparison of the results of the present study with studies of the motivational factors supporting the pursuit of education leads to a number of observations. This study and the Knutsen (2011) and Saenz (2007) studies found that a desire to increase job opportunities was a motivational influence driving the pursuit of education. Blackwell and Pinder (2014) reported love of reading at an early age to be a motivational driver for continuing education while the love of learning emerged as a subtheme in this study. Blackwell and Pinder also reported that a desire for a better life was a motivational driver for continuing education while this study found that a desire for a better life for study participants and others was a motivational driver for continuing education. The culture was an important element in both the Mashriqi (2016) study and this study. The culture of Afghanistan and the culture of Honduras are both male-dominated cultures that erect many barriers that hinder the growth and development of women. While this study reported more of an explicit emphasis on the desire to show that women can achieve their goals and objectives, the Mashriqi study pointed out that overcoming the barriers to higher education would likely result in increased self-efficacy for women. Given the cultural similarities in Afghanistan and Honduras, women in both countries want to show that they can accomplish their goals and contribute to the greater good of their respective countries.

Cardoza (1991) identified three predictors of college attendance and persistence for Hispanic women based on analysis of longitudinal survey data: educational aspiration, the presence of a mother who had completed four or more years of college and delaying marriage and childbearing. The findings of the current study align to two of Cardoza's findings. Participants in the study discussed in this paper all had educational aspirations when growing up and all delayed marriage and childbearing so they could continue their education. However, few

study participants had educational role models, and none had mothers who continued their education beyond high school. One mother completed high school while the mothers of other study participants completed six or fewer years of school. Most participants in this study pursued an education without the benefit of an educational role model.

There are two major differences between the findings of this study and the findings of the other studies. First, this study found less emphasis on making money as a motivational driver for pursuing an education than some of the other studies. Money and the prospect of earning money do not appear to be a motivational influence driving participants in this study to pursue education and vocation. Second, this study appears to have more of an other-oriented emphasis than other studies. The topic of serving others was mentioned by study participants more frequently than any other topic that could be considered a motivational influence.

There are a number of possible explanations for the strong other-orientation revealed by this study. One possible explanation can be found in the culturally defined role for women in rural Honduras as “wife-mother-maintainer of the home” (Rowlands, 1997, p. 34). It is possible that, at this point in their lives, study participants are transferring this culturally defined gender responsibility of caring for their own children to serving others instead. Another possible explanation is that the participants are so grateful to God and others for helping them that they, in turn, want to help others who are less fortunate than themselves. An attitude of gratitude was expressed by numerous study participants. A third possible explanation is that the hand of God is directing and preparing these young women to have an impact on their families, their communities, and their country. Several study participants acknowledged the direction and guidance of God as important in their lives. Finally, another possible explanation is that it is some combination of the other three options that best explains the other-oriented perspective that was revealed in this study.

A Multi-faceted Approach to Expand Education for Women

This study found two major cultural barriers to the pursuit of education for women in rural Honduras. The first of these barriers is the lack of access to schools. Many rural communities do not have schools, with this lack of schools being most pronounced at the secondary level, those grades beyond sixth grade. The second barrier is a lack of educational role models. These cultural barriers to education can be addressed through a multi-faceted approach to expanding and encouraging education for women in the rural areas.

Many rural communities in Honduras are isolated, located in mountainous regions, and relatively small. As a result, it is economically infeasible for the government to build schools and pay the salaries of teachers. “Poverty challenges” (Gulati, 2008, p. 6) persist in these rural areas despite the increasing availability of computers and communication technologies, including the internet. Internet-based learning options are not available to these rural communities; these communities have few if any, computers and lack internet access. Gulati found that “thus far, the introduction of computers into education in developing countries seems to have done little to widen educational access to the rural poor” (p. 9). This is still the case in rural Honduras. Technology-enhanced approaches to education are not yet an option for rural Honduran communities.

However, there are several viable approaches already being practiced in rural Honduran communities that the leaders of communities without schools should investigate and consider. One such approach is the Instituto Hondureño de Educación por Radio (IHER), a government accredited alternative model to schooling specifically designed to meet the needs of children who are unable to attend school due to having to work in agriculture or in some other way help their families economically (Costa, 2013). Under the IHER model, children make use of workbooks

during the week and attend the IHER education center under the guidance of teachers on weekends.

Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial (Tutorial Learning System, or SAT) is another option available to leaders of rural communities. This is an alternative approach to both lower- and upper-secondary education targeted at rural youth which “integrates relevant theory and practice so that they can continue to work on their agricultural pursuits and livelihoods” (Kwauk & Robinson, 2016, p. 5). SAT was developed in the late 1970s by a Columbian NGO to align to the conditions and culture of rural communities and to meet the specific needs of rural youth. “SAT aims to develop a generation of socially minded and relevantly trained young people who can serve as engines of sustainable development in their communities” (p. 6). SAT should be carefully considered by rural community leaders seeking a way to provide secondary education in their community.

A third alternative approach is Honduras Educatodos, a method for delivering education to non-traditional learners in rural communities (USAID, n.d.). Educatodos is an education delivery system designed by the Honduran Ministry of Education and USAID to enable out-of-school youth and adults to complete primary and lower secondary (grades 7-9) education. It is designed around an “integrated curriculum utilizing audio and printed materials to effectively meet students’ needs” (Moore, 2006, p. 1). Instruction is facilitated by volunteers and delivered in non-traditional classrooms in settings such as factories, businesses, schools, and community centers (p. 1). Educatodos is a cost-effective method to meet the needs for basic education on the part of learners who would otherwise not have an opportunity to complete their education.

Rural communities without traditional government schools do have options. Community leaders should take the initiative to clearly define the educational needs, the target student populations, and their local resources. Communities do not have to have access to the internet or modern computing and communication capabilities in order to meet the educational needs of youth or those who want to complete their primary or secondary education. Gulati (2008) reported that “traditional, paper-based means of distance learning continues to be more reliable, sustainable, and widely used than online and Web-based methods of learning” (p. 9). This article briefly describes three such proven educational delivery systems available to communities in rural Honduras.

Study participants had few educational role models in their families. Most family members of study participants completed six or fewer years of education. However, the literature has identified the importance of educational role models (Cardoza, 1991; Saenz, 2007) in the pursuit and completion of education. It is therefore incredibly important that the young women who participated in this study as well as other young women who have continued their education beyond the primary level take up the mantle of educational role model. These young women have tremendous influence with others in their community. Their testimonies about the importance and value of education can make a big difference to both youth and parents in rural communities.

Many medical and other types of mission teams travel to Honduras to serve the residents of rural communities. Team members can have a powerful role as education ambassadors. As they serve in their various roles and capacities, they can encourage children to continue their education. They can talk with children, youth, and parents about the powerful impact that education has had on their lives. They can ask questions about aspirations and goals and point out how education can be the path to realizing those aspirations. Team members can fill the gap as educational role models in the lives of children and youth in rural communities. All that is required is a little time for conversation and a heart willing to encourage others.

Suggestions for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to discover and describe the motivational influences in the lives of students and graduates of The Leadership Center as they traveled a journey through high school to The Leadership Center in pursuit of a vocation in business, bilingual teaching, or serving with a NGO. This purpose implies several corollary questions: Why do some young Honduran women defy tradition, convention, and culture to pursue education and a vocation rather than following the cultural norm of bearing and raising children at a young age? What drives these young women forward when many simply follow the traditional path dictated by culture and gender? The study reported in this article seeks to answer these questions. However, many young women are stymied by the cultural barriers. They are not able to overcome the barriers, and they give up their pursuit of education and vocation. What about those young women who make the choice to follow tradition, convention, and cultural norms, who choose to forgo education, and who remain in their communities and begin having children at a young age? What motivates them to take that path? The design of this study did not include that line of research. This is an important issue not only for rural Honduras but for other under-resourced regions of the world as well. One suggestion for further research is to modify the design of this study to investigate why many young women in rural Honduras choose not to continue their studies or pursue their dreams. What motivates those young women to remain in the traditional cultural role for women – begin having children at a young age, stay at home, take care of the children and the house, or work in low paying jobs in agriculture, cleaning houses, or in a factory, if jobs are available? The results of such a study would be of use to many who serve in international relief and development roles.

Based on study results, education appears to be a value in the culture of rural Honduras but has not yet become a norm. However, this may be evolving since some study participants also mentioned that family members were continuing their education later in life. Twelve study participants mentioned relatives (one or more parents, siblings, aunts, or others) who participated or are currently participating in degree completion programs offered by the Honduran government to enable adults to complete primary school or high school. The second topic for future research is to design a study to understand this trend. What is motivating these relatives to pursue degree completion as adults? How has the fact that a young woman from their family defied culture and tradition to pursue education and vocation influenced their desire and decision to continue their own education? The results of such a study would also be of use to many who serve in international relief and development roles as well as to those serving in NGOs in under-resourced communities.

There are a number of viable, cost-effective, and proven alternative educational delivery systems available to communities in rural Honduras. Yet many communities do not have secondary schools. Why not? What are the barriers to adopting an alternative approach to secondary education that prevent many communities from doing so? The third topic for future research is to design a study to understand this situation. The scope of this study would be rural communities with youth of secondary school age but without access to a secondary school. The design of this study would also incorporate a comparative analysis of the alternative educational delivery methods.

Conclusion

This study fills a gap in the literature about the pursuit of education in rural Honduras. It is important to understand the motivational influences that kept study participants on the path of continuing their education. Other under-resourced communities and populations may be able to benefit from an understanding of these motivational influences, transferring the learnings from

this study to their specific situation. Psychologist Angela Duckworth (2016) notes that the effects of even small environmental differences, or changes, “are multiplied socially, through culture,” which can then “trigger a virtuous cycle” (p. 84). Therefore, learning from the experience of the young women of The Leadership Center and applying those learnings through small experiments in other settings may result in noticeable changes in these other settings. Those who work in mission organizations and other NGOs, as well as volunteer members of medical and other mission teams, can serve a vital role as educational ambassadors to rural communities, bringing hope and encouragement to the children, youth, and parents in those communities.

References

- Blackwell, E., & Pinder, P. J. (2014). What are the motivational factors of first-generation minority college students who overcome their family histories to pursue higher education? *College Student Journal*, 48(1), 45-56. Retrieved from <https://lbc.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=s3h&AN=96336710&site=eds-live&scope=site>
- Cardoza, D. (1991). College attendance and persistence among Hispanic women: An examination of some contributing factors. *Sex Roles*, 24(3/4), 133-147.
- Chaaban, J., & Cunningham, W. (2011). Measuring the economic gain of investing in girls: The girl effect dividend. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series, Policy Research Working Paper 5753*.
- CIA. (2016, November 10, 2016). The World Factbook. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ho.html>
- Costa. (2013). IHER Education Centre. Retrieved from <https://www.costafoundation.com/iher-education-centre/>
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (Second ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: The power of passion and perseverance*. New York, NY: Scribner.
- Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.
- Fife, W. (2005). *Doing fieldwork: Ethnographic methods for research in developing countries and beyond*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- GEM. (2017). World Inequality Database on Education. Retrieved August 10, 2018, from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; Global Education Monitoring Report Team <https://www.inequalities.org/countries/honduras#?dimension=all&group=all&year=latest>
- George, J. C. (2008). *The effect of career goals and socioeconomic mobility on nontraditional students' intrinsic motivation for college attendance*. (Ph.D. Dissertation), Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA. Retrieved from <https://lbc.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsbas&AN=edsbas.ftgeorgiastauniv.oai.scholarworks.gsu.edu.eps.diss.1014&site=eds-live&scope=site> Available from EBSCOhost edsbas database.
- Giordano, F. G., Thumme, B., & Sierra, G. P. (2009). The hopes and dreams of Honduran women regarding their daughters' sexuality. *Qualitative Health Research*, 19(7), 996-1009. doi:10.1177/1049732309336947
- Gomez, K. (2014). Celebrate solutions: Education opportunities for girls in rural Honduras. Retrieved from <http://www.womendeliver.org/updates/entry/celebrate-solutions-education-opportunities-for-girls-in-rural-honduras>

- Gulati, S. (2008). Technology-enhanced learning in developing nations: A review. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, Volume 9(1), 16.
- Knutsen, D. W. (2011). *Motivation to pursue higher education*. (Ed.D. Dissertation), Olivet Nazarene University, Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.olivet.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1024&context=edd_diss (26)
- Kwauk, C., & Robinson, J. P. (2016). *Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial: Redefining rural secondary education in Latin America*. Retrieved from Washington, D.C.: <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/FINAL-SAT-Case-Study.pdf>
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2013). *Practical research: Planning and design* (Tenth ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Lomot, R. (2013). Gender discrimination: A problem stunting Honduras' entire economy. *Global Majority E-Journal*, 4(1), 15-26. Retrieved from https://american.edu/cas/economics/ejournal/upload/Global_Majority_e_Journal_4_1.pdf#page=15
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2016). *Designing qualitative research* (Sixth ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Marshall, J., Aguilar, C., Alas, M., Castellanos, R., Castro, L., Enamorado, R., & Fonseca, E. (2014). Alternative education programmes and middle school dropout in Honduras. *International Review of Education / Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*, 60(1), 51-77. doi:10.1007/s11159-014-9409-1
- Mashriqi, K. (2013). *Women's access to higher education in Afghanistan: A qualitative phenomenological study*. ProQuest LLC, Retrieved from <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.lbc.idm.oclc.org/eds/detail/detail?vid=1&sid=d2050f07-2a70-4563-84b8-1c229c6e2788%40sessionmgr120&hid=114&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=ED554853&db=eric> Available from EBSCOhost eric database
- Mashriqi, K. (2016). Afghanistan women perceptions of access to higher education. *Journal of Research Initiatives*, 2(1). Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=jri>
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (Second ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (Second ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Moore, A. (2006). *Meeting EFA: Honduras Educados*. Washington, D. C.: USAID. Retrieved from <https://www.epdc.org/sites/default/files/documents/Honduras%20Educados.pdf>.
- Orozco, M., & Valdivia, M. (2017). *Educational challenges in Honduras and consequences for human capital and development* Retrieved from <https://www.thedialogue.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Educational-Challenges-in-Honduras-FINAL.pdf>
- Patton, M. (1990). Purposeful sampling. In *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (pp. 169-186). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Rose, P. (2012). The bottom ten countries for female education. Retrieved from <https://gemreportunesco.wordpress.com/2012/11/09/the-bottom-ten-countries-for-female-education/>
- Rowlands, J. (1997). *Questioning empowerment: Working with women in Honduras*. Oxford, UK: Oxfam.

- Saenz, V. B. (2007). *First in my family: A profile of first-generation college students at four-year institutions since 1971*. Higher Education Research Institute.
- Trompenaars, F., & Hampden-Turner, C. (1998). *Riding the waves of culture: Understanding cultural diversity in global business* (Second ed.): McGraw-Hill.
- USAID. (n.d.). *EDUCATODOS (Honduras)*. Retrieved from <https://photos.state.gov/libraries/unesco/182433/pdfs/educatodos.pdf>.
- WEF. (2018). *Human Capital Report 2016*. Retrieved from <http://reports.weforum.org/human-capital-report-2016/>
- Wood, P. S. (1993). *Education in Honduras. A critical profile*. Retrieved from Fort Belvoir, VA: <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a278299.pdf>
- WorldBank. (2018, April 16, 2018). Honduras overview. Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/honduras/overview>