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Empowerment Through Awareness: Evaluating Nonprofit Intervention Methods Towards Girls' Education in Israel, Thailand, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka

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Empowerment Through Awareness: Evaluating Nonprofit
Intervention Methods Towards Girls' Education in Israel, Thailand,
Cambodia, and Sri Lanka

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the University of North
Georgia In Partial Fulfillment Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Bachelors of Science in Sociology With Honors

Kiera Chan

Spring 2019

INTRODUCTION

It comes to no surprise that girls all around the world face problems with gender equality in the social, political and educational realms of society. Most of these inequalities begin at a very young age, when children are expected to go to primary school and work their way through college. Boys and girls do not have equal opportunities when it comes to education, especially in less developed countries. Part of this should be due to cultural norms such as believing that women should not receive education, practices like child marriage, or even menstruation, as discussed in detail in our literature review, which hinders girls' abilities to attend school. Girls' education is important to ensure that they have the skills to work and earn wages after they graduate. According to UNESCO, "there are still 33 million girls of primary school age out of school" (UNESCO, 2009). Compared to boys, there are about 4 million more girls out of school worldwide. Investing in education for girls has shown to have positive effects in the economy. One example of this is increasing the amount of girls who completed secondary education by only 1 percent was proven to increase the overall economy by 0.3 percent (UNESCO, 2009). For every year of schooling that a woman completes, her working wages increase by 12%. Girls' education is an increasingly important issue in the agenda of Non Profit management. There are Non Profits all over the world using vastly different methods and programs to target gender inequality and education. When girls are not educated, they continue the cycle of poverty and inequality through the institution of the family. In summary, increasing girls' education globally has become an increasingly important issue for every human rights campaign. Therefore, our research focused on the intervention methods that would help increase education for girls worldwide. The main objective of this qualitative study was to discover the most effective style of program or intervention method which targeted the barriers to girls' education. The most effective intervention methods were determined by evaluating the main barriers to girls' education that

presented themselves in all four countries. This evaluation of common intervention methods used in countries with low incomes or high gender disparities will give insight into the way social problems are viewed and addressed. This sociological analysis can create a new way for future humanitarian projects, as well as empower the future generation to change the system of inequality through girls' education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In economic literature, education is considered as an important instrument to reduce poverty, generate employment and speed up the process of economic growth and development of a country. There are many factors, such as social and economic, that underlie and reflect the overall devaluation of girls worldwide in lower or middle socioeconomic income countries (Haberland et. al., 2017). According to the United Nations Website, most of the world's adolescents (ages 10-24) live in low and middle income countries (UN, 2015). Around the world, 11% of births occur among adolescents ages 15–19, and nearly all (95%) of these occur in low and middle income countries (United Nations, 2015). Health complications during pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death among girls ages 15–24 (Haberland et. al., 2017). These complications reflect a general devaluation of girls and harmful gender norms. Furthermore, roughly 85% of girls in low-income countries never complete secondary school, and intimate partner violence affects an estimated 29.4% of ever-partnered girls ages 15–19 worldwide (Haberland et. al., 2017). Not only do these practices undermine girls' rights, agency, and current sexual and reproductive health, but such practices also limit their economic opportunities and affect their health and well-being into adulthood (Haberland et. al., 2017). These shocking numbers have therefore lead to intervention programs to help create opportunities for girls' education throughout the world.

The United Nations has created a Girl's Education Initiative that is aimed at "achieving change in girls' education and gender equality" (UNGEI). In 2002, the United

Nations created the Millennium Campaign which focuses on the Millennium Development Goals, one of which is achieving universal education and empowering women (United Nations). All 191 UN states signed this initiative and pledged to achieve these goals. Increasing girls' education globally has become an increasingly important issue for every human rights campaign. The child rights movement and women's movement have intersected to create the rise of the Education For All movement. Due to the ever increasing amount of research done on girls' education and its importance, there have been many political actors and Nonprofits who have been part of the campaign to fight for girls' education. There has been progress in increasing girls' education, but the gender gap in the world's educated population is still ever increasing. Most low income countries require school fees for the children to attend school. Due to the patriarchy within these countries, families choose to send their sons to school and keep their daughters at home. To educate a girl however, is to educate an entire generation of families. If a mother is educated, she will be more likely to educate her children and put them in school. Girls' education inevitably increases the whole country's likelihood for universal education (Fund 2015). Providing school for girls means providing a safe environment for them. School is a way for girls to get out of the sex trafficking industry, early child marriage, and violence against girls.

Low income countries have higher prevalences of low female school attendance. Cultural norms such as believing that women should not receive education or practices such as child marriage hinder girls' abilities to attend school. Girls' education is important to ensure that they have skills to work and can earn wages after they graduate. If the population of uneducated girls were compared to boys, there are 4 million more girls out of school worldwide. Out of the entire illiterate population of 774 million in the world, over two thirds are female. According to UNICEF, there are 121 million children out of school, and 65 million of those are girls. There are more negative effects on girls who miss out on school .

When girls miss school, they are more susceptible to contracting HIV and AIDS. They are also more likely to marry at a young age or be child trafficked. Girls will live in poverty and their children will also grow up in poverty (Bellamy 2004). Thus, the consequences for having less educated girls than boys is extremely detrimental for an entire country's economy and wellbeing. Because of gender discrimination, girls are always the first to go when the government is shutting down schools due to conflict or disease. Girls are also the last to be enrolled in school. In most low income countries, education is seen as a luxury. Because of this, marginalized groups, such as women, are often excluded from this luxury.

Places in South Asia commonly have gender equality issues present, where women do not have equal access to resources that men do. For example, WASEEM, MOHD., et. al. (2012), researched the gender barriers throughout education in India. The problem of gender inequality and discrimination begins with access to schooling and summarizes the main problems: the patriarchal mindset, economic backwardness of rural community, the undervaluation of female labour, sexual harassment and violence, and the reinforcement of gender roles. Inequality becomes worse as education becomes higher. The "Patriarchal Mindset" results in male dominance or patriarchal mindset results in violation of basic rights of women including the rights to education. The "Economic Backwardness of Rural Community" results in over 70% of the world's very poor living in rural areas, and the population of the developing world being still more rural than urban, according to the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development. The rural disadvantage is particularly strong in some communities. The "undervaluation of female labour" reflects the work women are deemed responsible for, identified primarily with the reproductive or household sphere, and underlies the belief in many communities that educating females brings low returns, as skills required in the reproductive sphere require domestic socialization and not many years of schooling. "Sexual harassment and violence" is defined as one of the major factors which

prevents parents from sending their daughters to school (WASEEM, MOHD., et. al. 2012). More problems arise when the schools and universities are far away from home. The “reinforcement of gender roles” is the ideologies that shape female and male identities in Indian society that mutually reinforce across institutions, such as the family, workplace, schools and community (Kabeer and Subrahmanian, 1999).

Intervention methods of the past have been used to include girls worldwide in the education system. One article researched the effects of giving out individual scholarships, grants, or both scholarship and grants for girls attending a rural Liberian school (Chatterjee et. al., 2017) . The findings supported that all three interventions increase girls' enrollment, completion, and grade promotion. The estimated effects were larger for scholarships than for grants (Chatterjee et. al., 2017). Also, the effects on completion and promotion were almost twice as large as comparable effects on enrollment. This suggests that the interventions both increased girls' enrollment and the persistence of girls once they were enrolled (Chatterjee et. al., 2017). Some other researched methods include the creation of alternative schools, the enhancement of existing public schools or the creation of extracurricular programs for female students (Murphy-Graham, 2015). One program in particular has made it across developing countries and has been a success. The Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial program, or the SAT program, provides an alternative secondary education, including interactive learning, gender-responsive teaching and specific curricular elements designed to impart relevant knowledge and skills for the pursuit of productive livelihoods in rural settings, thus addressing critical thinking, personal, social, and productive competencies (Murphy-Graham, 2015). A number of published studies link SAT to positive cognitive, personal, social, and productive outcomes (Honeyman, 2010; McEwan et al., 2014; Murphy-Graham, 2008, 2010, 2012).

Another intervention method to include girls in education is the Prerna program that provides an example of what can be done to contribute a quality education to disadvantaged

girls. Community and parental engagement are important parts of the model. Even the parents sign an agreement in the beginning to protect their girls from child marriage. The curriculum is engaging, encouraging, and interactive. The research has shown promising results in terms of retention and graduation, academic performance, and job transitions (Sahni, 2012). Rooms to Read, another program aimed to developing the education of girls in developing countries, uses educational enhancements for girls. This includes gender responsive teacher training, mentoring, academic support, infrastructure support to provide safety and security, life skills education. Gender responsive intervention methods have been implemented in African Women Educationalists (FAWE), in which ordinary schools are transformed into responsive schools that offer quality education that pay attention to the physical, academic, and social dimensions of both girls' and boys' education (Murphy-Graham, 2015). Even one study found that having college girl students teach their peers help girls feel empowered and comfortable to stay in school in a rural Indian Punjab city (Tiwana, Balwinder Singh, et al., 2017). The college in its own humble, but significant, way made a revolutionary contribution to the education of poor rural girls who, otherwise, would not have dreamt of college education. Apart from classroom teaching and academic knowledge, the students are taught social, ethical and management skills. The product of the college has proved to be implementing change and rural transformation in India (Tiwana, Balwinder Singh, et al., 2017).

There are many possible causes for why girls have less opportunities to go to school than boys do. Cultural practices such as child marriage are a leading factor why girls do not attend school. Having educated girls makes them less desirable for marriage, so parents choose to keep their daughters at home. In developing countries, the only thing girls can do is get married, and going to school reduces their chance at marriage, so they are more likely to not attend school. In some countries, the price of a bride increases with the amount of

education she has (Muyaka 2018). Child marriage and teen pregnancy is very common, and it restricts a girl's ability to attend school. Often the distance to school is long, and having young girls walk to school alone poses the threat of sexual assault. Women must be chaperoned by male relatives when outside, so sending a male to escort the girls to school is seen as a waste of money. In countries where society thinks girls should not attend school, there are few opportunities for educated women. Women are thought of as being housewives and, thus, no one will employ a woman. Families choose to send their sons to school where they can be employed and keep their daughters at home to do housework. Girls are given most of the chores and farmwork. Losing their help by sending them to attend school means that the family will be more likely to starve. With areas dying from HIV/ AIDS, girls are having to take care of their siblings, fetch the water, and do all the chores because their mother is dying. There are millions of orphans in the world and of those orphans, boys are more likely to attend school than girls (Fund 2015). Girls are given all the child rearing and housework due to not having parents to do this work. Another cause of lower school attendance is that the school environment is often not safe for girls. Violence against girls is common and it is safer to keep girls at home. School fees are also a cause for girls to not attend school. One study found that higher school fees caused girls to drop out, but had no effect on boys (King 2015). The same study also discovered that girls are more likely to work instead of go to school compared to boys. They are also more likely to engage in chores while boys engage in "leisure activities." Even though child labor is illegal in most countries, girls are forced to work while boys are sent to school. Thus, the boys' work is then given to the girls. One of the main responsibilities girls are given is not only the housework and child rearing, but also fetching the water (Muyaka 2018). In countries where water is scarce, this is a hard and time consuming task that does not allow girls time to attend school. If girls do

choose to attend school in places where girls education is seen as a social taboo, they are subject to harassment, bullying, and even domestic violence.

Investing in girls' education has shown to have effects on the economy. Women who are educated are more likely to have less children later on in life and will engage in healthier child rearing practices. Investing in girls' education also reduces maternal and child mortality rates. Educated mothers are likely to have educated children as well and will invest in their own children's education (Sperling 2016). Increasing girls education is one of the main goals of UN Women. Creating a low cost intervention method to increase girls school attendance could generate support from other humanitarian organizations. Girls who miss school are more likely to drop out which then could lead to child marriage, contracting AIDS, and continuing the cycle of poverty. Nothing should stand in a girl's path to education, especially not traditions or cultural norms that she has no control over.

METHODS

During the summer of 2018, I conducted ethnographic research in Israel, Thailand, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka for an eight week period. My research question aimed to discover the sociocultural barriers that cause girls to not participate fully in the educational setting. During my data collection phase, I interviewed Non Profit workers, shadowed them, and participated within the Non Profit programs (See Appendix B). I received IRB approval to interview the Non Profit workers and engage with participants in the programs (See Appendix A). I also went outside of the Non Profit setting to determine the role of cultural ideologies on the identities of women and girls. I define barriers as any social or physical factor that supports the system of patriarchy, and thus supports the system of oppression. Thus, girls not being able to attend school events due to transportation issues are physical barriers. However, this is supported by the idea that women should always be accompanied

by a male companion and that girls are vulnerable outside the home. This then is supported by the idea that women belong in the home, but not in the educational arena. Barriers support systems of oppression which then make it difficult for women to participate in the institution of education, because the institutions all have sexism embedded into them.

I used a qualitative inductive approach to analyze my field notes, that I took every day during the course of the study, and the interviews, that I conducted at each Nonprofit. I used NVivo qualitative data analysis computer software to code the notes and interview transcripts. I found the most coded barriers, ideologies, and the top methods used in each country and focused on these to analyze in depth. By coding the themes in each country, I found the most commonly used and mentioned intervention methods, Nonprofit goals, gender inequalities, and ideologies. The fieldwork I conducted over the summer involved observing workers and participants in the programs as well as actively participating and informally conversing with locals. Thus, I was able to gain first hand experience in the countries and view the effects of the intervention methods on the surrounding communities.

DATA

BARRIERS

Responsibilities

“We have trainings to empower women and teach them not to give into temptations from their boyfriends.” - Fathima, Director of the Global Network of Religions for Children

Women have many responsibilities in the community. The quote above illustrates the responsibility girls have to remain “pure.” In Sri Lanka (where the quote was taken), they have alarmingly high rates of sexual violence, sex trafficking, and child molestation. The sex education system in Sri Lanka is almost non-existent and the sexual education that the Nonprofit provides is only for the girls and teaches them that it is their responsibility to protect their bodies. Another phenomenon in Sri Lanka that I witnessed was the work that is

placed on the women in the community. Not only are women supposed to get married and have children, they must stay at home and take care of their families. Everytime I went to a community function, all the women in the village were digging the ditches and doing the manual labor while the men just stood around and watched. All of the work in the community and home is placed on the women. In Cambodia, cultural practices dictate that females must take care of the parents, while the boys can go off and be independent. Thus, the parents discourage their daughters from going to school or working and encourage them to stay at home. Girls in Israel are also discouraged from entering the prestigious educational programs, because most of them require them to dedicate most of their time to the program and often live in the dormitories there away from home. Living away from home is often considered dangerous due to the high rates of violence and sexual harassment against women. They are worried that they will not be able to find a partner, because this age of young teenagehood is the period when they are required to do so. Arranged marriages are common in Israel and Sri Lanka, and even child marriage is a significant social issue.

Underrepresentation

“So there’s less huge opportunity for women to be monks or nuns. So they have different forms of nuns who are less equal in terms of privilege. But they can also join the community and practice meditation and Buddhism. Although less honor and less privilege.” - Sanit, Director of the Nonviolent Communication Program

While I was in Israel, I toured different Arab and Jewish communities. I found that I did not see many women out in public spaces. When I was out in the streets, women were not to be seen. Even while visiting individuals inside their homes, there were few times when I saw women. The men would host us in their homes, but the women would be in the kitchen, and not out in the open with us. This has to do with the culture and belief that women belong in the home. On one of our tours in an Arab village, the tour guide told us that there are even

institutions that do not allow women. This social environment is harmful for women to act as full participants in society. It also stunts the growth for girls to grow up in. Wherever I went, I was shown and told stories of “the first Arab who graduated from (Jewish) University,” or “the first all- Arab soccer team,” but all of these stories and individuals were male. Being successful in Israel as a person who is Arab is a big step. However, there is not a lot of representation of women in these successful places in society. We did not see many female workers or any women in the local businesses we toured. When girls grow up only seeing women in lower roles or in traditional roles inside the house, they are limited in the future roles that they envision for themselves. Women feel distanced from higher positions of society and feel resigned to lower positions. The representation in the Buddhist religion is mostly male, because women are restricted from being represented in religious positions. Women cannot be as religious as men are, because they can never participate in the religion to the same degree that men can. They thus are always at a disadvantage, because the main way of getting power through the system and reaping the benefits is through the religion. Going to the temple is a ritual that everyone participates in. It is normal to see monks in orange robes walking around town. The Buddhist universities are the top schools in the country. Women can participate in these classes to some extent, but only as a layperson in a separate school of the university. They will never be able to participate as a monk, which this is the highest status one can obtain in their society. With men at the top and women at the bottom, it is apparent that Buddhism promotes patriarchy and holds women back from having all the opportunities available to them.

Lack of Autonomy

“Do you think girls face more educational barriers to boys? In these communities?”

The arab society in school, yes, if she for example violates.. Religious..or [doesn't wear] hair cover, for sure she will face more resistance in street or resistant behavior.” - Amin, Director of Givat Haviva’s Educational Department

Women not only have more rules they are expected to follow, but they are punished more harshly than men if they break the rules. When girls are constantly being told to cover up and only enter public spaces with a male companion, they become instilled with fear and shame. Women are significantly restricted in their social mobility and educational opportunities, because they do not feel safe and even if they do feel safe, they are told they should be afraid. Most of the fear is created by the racism and discrimination, which creates hostility between the two races. The fear is socially constructed, however it has very real consequences not just on the men and their safety but on the ability for Arab women to participate in society the same way others do. Wearing the headscarf means that one will always be judged based on your appearance and, thus, gender. This simple material cultural artifact has a lot of meaning within society and can place a lot of social pressure on women. Women are restricted from entering positions of leadership and power, such as entering monkhood. Women cannot talk to monks, touch them, or even look them in the eye. Women cannot enter certain religious institutions on the basis of their gender. Women cannot reach heaven without having a son allow them do so. Girls and women lack autonomy in society, which limits them in every aspect of their lives. They cannot do the same things that their boys do, and they are expected to uphold tradition as well as their family name. This pressure as well as restriction on independence stifles empowerment and confidence.

INTERVENTION METHODS

AWARENESS

“We are all creators and we are all victims of the structure”- Chati, Mindfulness trainer at Wongsanit Ashram

Self Awareness

“I have my own consulting and training business and I work with the non profits, education healthcare system non profits. So yeah and I have my own position training people to become self aware in terms of spiritual development aspects of life. So this kind of consciousness and tools is very much alive with civil movements, Non profits. And lots of people including corporate organizations who want to shift from a man control culture to a more human focused collaborative approach.”- Sanit, Director of the Nonviolent Communication Program

Instead of bringing the community to bring society together these programs use a more individualistic mindset by training the individual and their thoughts while also forcing them to face their fears. We learned team building and community building skills. This shows that the root of the problem in society always should start with the individual to help change the norm and ideology. This individual then becomes a group of people (our group on the study abroad) which then can turn into an entire social movement. Thus, social change can occur by starting with the individual and working one’s way up to the top. These programs teach participants that our problems stem from our thoughts. They focus on the process in which individual thoughts create the oppression we live in and how we each play a role in the structural inequality with our belief systems. Through critical self awareness and raising awareness through education, individuals learn to examine the flaws in society’s values that create barriers for certain individuals. Because we often demonize traits we don’t understand, they were taught how can we benefit from our characteristics. Through introspection, they learned to see our behaviors and traits and see how society has affected them. Through group activities such as walking around a room full of tacks blindfolded, the workers taught them how to use these personality traits and behaviors that have been shaped by our lives in a positive manner. Through this training we are also able to analyze the traits of others to use them for social change. The main goal of the program in Thailand was to achieve global

healing through a network of Buddhist communities by training people in these principles so that they will aim for social change and eventually global change. Thus, they first start with personal healing in the individual, then then the community, and eventually will end in “global healing.”

Spirituality

“She said Buddhism helped her to forgive and not get caught up in emotions. She followed the precepts and learned how to live in the present moment. She is such a strong woman and even though she suffered so much she was able to help so many and also find happiness. It shows that we can find happiness anywhere.” - Nonprofit worker and Spiritual Activist who survived the Khmer Rouge

The Non Profits in Thailand and Cambodia use Buddhism and nonviolence teachings as a platform for social change. They teach these principles to not only social activists but all community members in hopes of changing cultural perceptions and instilling empowerment in the community. This type of method focuses on training the participants in the programs on how to engage with their own empathy and compassion. They use exercises to help shift one’s perspective into someone else’s while also being aware of one’s own biases and judgements. They also teach forgiveness through different Buddhist principles as well as through different types of meditation (e.g. loving meditation in which you visualize your enemy in front of you and mentally forgive them). The entire program focuses on bringing forth everyone’s vulnerabilities and struggles in a safe place open for discussion. By seeing others’ vulnerabilities as well as opening up your own, you learn how to not only relate to others who may be different from us but respect others and yourself. Buddhism centers around nonviolence and compassion. As a social activist, the participants learn that our main weapon in Buddhism is empathy.

DIVERSITY

“Differences do not limit the ability to create value... differences are sources of value”-

Yonathan, Director of the Conflict Resolution Program

Women Role Models

“Are there female teachers in the circus school?”

Yes we have two now that are married and have 2 children and another who has a child in the program. The other one is not yet have children.

Do you think that helps the girls to see that the teachers are women, for them to become teachers themselves?

This is for the children when they are young. One they have a girl teacher they can see that they can be involved too” - Bora, Principal of the circus school

Many of the Nonprofits I studied often recruit, employ, and train women teachers and workers. These workers help girls become empowered and will have more opportunities available to them. They believe that presenting female role models will encourage girls in the programs to participate more. This also helps recruit more girls into programs that are considered outside of the norm, such as the circus school I went to in Cambodia. Their main challenge as a program was recruiting girls, because the parents were more restrictive and were worried that their daughters could not get married or have children if they entered the program. The circus school would show the parents (as in the interview excerpt above) that their women teachers were healthy and the physical requirements of the circus program did not hinder them from having children. However, this method of representation can be critiqued, because most of the representation the programs used were women teachers. Teaching is already a highly feminized discipline, especially within primary and secondary

schooling (Mullen 2012). When feminized professions are used to showcase educated and empowered women, it is not addressing the issue of patriarchy fully (Bielby and Baron 1984). For example, women were not often in leadership positions as there were not as many women managers of Nonprofit programs or women on the boards of the Nonprofits. Almost all Non Profit workers that were interviewed agreed that having female role models in their programs encouraged the girls to participate and engage more with the programs as well as their community.

Shared Encounters and The Dialogue

“A lady who worked with the community programs then talked to us. Then we went to the art program and met some artists and walked around the gallery. They use art to bring both communities together. The artist started the program when she started working on a painting with an Arab woman. This was her first time in contact with someone from the other group. At first they split the canvas in half and worked separately but then they eventually worked together on the painting and it became a great bonding experience. The art program hosts art classes for Arab and Jewish students. They say it is cool to see the 1st graders doing art murals together but they don't even speak the same language. They also do "through others eyes" film projects. The high school students take videos or photos of their perspective based on a theme. One featured them painting the colors of the flag on their bodies and filming interviews about their experiences.” - Researcher field notes from the Givat Haviva art program

The Nonprofit in Israel used programs like this art school to bring Jewish and Arab students and artists together and create “shared encounters.” In this example, they used art as a platform for raising awareness about the conflict and discrimination in the Arab community. By creating meaningful experiences through art, the program can change others’

perceptions about the “other.” Gender differences are also addressed by having an equal ratio of boys and girls in both programs. By being together and working together with the other gender and race this program aims to minimize differences and change underlying norms or preconceptions. The Nonprofit program uses shared experiences and diversity as their main method of addressing the disparities within Israeli society. Shared experiences can include incorporating diversity in classroom or simply bringing Arabs and Jews together in a program. The interviewees agreed that diversity helped to resolve some conflicts within their society regarding the gender debate. For example, they train teachers in conflict mediation and when issues come up in class, the Jewish teacher in an Arab classroom or vice versa can address these issues. One individual mentioned a woman in a headscarf being shot and killed just because of her appearance. The police told her to stop and shot her; they found no weapons on her. These ethnic, religious, and social differences divide the community and create discrimination and prejudices based on negative stereotypes.

These shared experiences are most effective when one person from one side and another individual from the other side address their differences in a healthy and peaceful way. One example of this is when a Jewish girl and an Arab girl had a conversation in the Nonprofit program. They asked each other about relationships (whether they can date or not, etc) and then learned something new about the “other side,” which creates open mindedness and increases empathy. Being able to understand that no one is inherently good/ bad or understanding the underlying cultural views underneath the traditions creates a better understanding of society and their community in general. Once they make a connection with someone from the “other side,” they realize that not everyone from that side is bad or scary and they start to loosen up on their ideologies. By bringing both the Arab and Jewish communities together in a safe space with a facilitator there to create effective conversations,

they can face their differences as well as realize that they are similar. The main goal of this program is “Cross community cooperation through joint activity.”

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

“We build the road and the road will build us.” - Motto of Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement

Community Programs

“With the circus here.. We put in more than just the circus. We put in the theater acting inside. We show with a story. You know we love each other and are happy with each other everyday. Its difficult each day to involve the community. We try to show them, invite them and show them on the inside of the circus. We show that the people [the parents in the community] that the more experienced people in the circus help them as well. Overall it has taken us many years to let them but for now they know all about it so its ok. Its mostly through the program and the community outreach to help the families bring their children (both boys and girls) to the training and be in the circus.” - Bora, Principal of the circus school

Cambodia’s circus organization uses community outreach strategies to recruit participants in the program and show what they are doing for the community. Another method is Shramadana. Shramadana is a unique intervention method that the Nonprofit in Sri Lanka adopted. Shramadana means “labor giving” which means that they engage in community projects by working together with local villages. They empower and educate local villages by creating programs based on labor and grassroots participation. For example, they will build a school as a village with the help and tools of the Nonprofit. Other Nonprofits engage the community through programs such as leadership or finance training for everyone, but especially targeted to women and children. In Cambodia, they engage the community through morality education, which includes traveling from school to school to teach morals

and Buddhist precepts. In Sri Lanka, they have group meditations for the prison populations, pregnant women, and for the whole community. They have had meditation programs for thousands of people, bringing everyone together. Some of the Non Profits use spiritual events or holidays to bring the community together, such as feeding thousands of individuals by making huge meals together.

Businesses

“The ladies talked to us about the Sarvodaya loan program and how they were able to start their businesses. So far 25 women in the village are participating in the program. You have to be 25 and older to join and you have to go through a training class before you get a loan of 8,000 rupees. After 6 months they can start paying it back. Widows get preference. Some women did farming, sewing, and art making. Their businesses were able to get them extra income and empowerment. Some ladies made bags, curtains, clothes, food, brooms, pillowcases, etc.” - Researcher field notes from the Sarvodaya loan program

The Non Profit in Sri Lanka had their own banks, which provided loans and financial support for individuals who would have otherwise not have gotten support. The interest rates go to fund community programs and disaster relief. Instead of only caring about making profit they want to help the community. One disabled older woman came to their bank because she was rejected for a loan so she got a loan there. She now is running her own business and is employing other disabled community members. They also have programs to finance women's businesses so that they can support their families. These programs are very successful in terms of participants and women who have their businesses. They also have programs to train women of the community how to create edible gardens. They teach the women how to farm food that's healthy and good for the environment. This gives women income and food for their families and teaches them to use environmentally friendly practices such as using natural pesticides and fertilizers. They use farming as a platform to empower

women to be change makers within their environment and community. In Israel, they fund and support local women's art businesses and community galleries in the Arab villages. By engaging the community through various programs like these, the Non Profit has empowered the powerless and has given opportunities for social change to the community, instead of physically changing the social environment themselves.

DISCUSSION

I will evaluate and highlight each effective aspect of the programs I studied to address the social barriers to girls education around the world. Program evaluation conventionally is evidence based programming (Hoefer 2003). However, I will be examining the intervention methods based on the social structures they are operating in. Most evaluatory methods look at the components of program implementation, individual engagement in services, aptitude, and other implementation assessments. By evaluating organizational functions and service delivery, evaluation only looks at a narrow range of the intervention methods. Instead of looking at intended outcomes in the sense of material external output, I will look at the surrounding environment of social life and assess the level of patriarchy operating in ways to inhibit girls education (Lipsey 2000).

Ideologies are internalized by all of us, even when the individual affected is the individual fighting against it. I believe that all of the Non Profit workers and participants were thinking in ideological and patriarchal thought, which hindered their ability to teach the community and participants about inequality. This also affected their ability to enact effective social change. The ideological thinking also affected the participants' ability to fully understand the Non Profit's programs and obtain true meaning from the exercises. Thus, no properly designed intervention method would ever suffice, due to the barrier of ideology hindering the effectiveness of each method. Through this type of process, I can see that no

method I examined was truly effective at challenging patriarchy and the gendered norms themselves.

Standpoint theory is a theory derived from feminist critiques that allows us to examine our own role and place in the system of oppression (Hennessy 1993). By using this as an intervention method in any type of Non Profit, not just the educational or gender programs, one can effectively acknowledge one's own biases and ideologies during the program. This method would allow participants to look at their role in the community and their role in perpetuating inequality, but it would also allow workers to minimize their biases in creating and implementing the program. It is impossible to entirely get rid of ideologies in order to address the inequalities being created by such ideologies, but it is possible to educate oneself and acknowledge them.

Empowerment is the process of becoming aware and passionate about the inequality in one's community and realizing that the individual has the power to change this inequality. Through several methods, one can become aware of these components. By educating the participants on power, oppression, and why certain inequalities exist, Nonprofits can increase empowerment. This can be done through historical comparison and analysis, modeling through action, providing examples of ideologies that contradict, and other conscious raising strategies. Through recognizing one's own standpoint, the participant will increase their reflexivity and will thus increase their awareness (Carr 2003). Reflexivity refers to intensively reflecting on one's own position to society. By increasing reflexivity, a person is changing their own consciousness and attempting to alter or remove the ideologies they have internalized. According to Carr (2003), "conscientization" is necessary before one is able to engage in meaningful social change. As a foreigner in these countries, I was able to recognize my own standpoint by having the ability to see the culture operating on patriarchal norms. However, my position as a researcher was affected by my own internalization of norms also.

In bell hook's *Feminism Is For Everybody*, she illustrates this concept of raising one's awareness by critiquing feminist theories. Through what she calls "conscious raising," feminists need to evaluate their own and others' beliefs about patriarchy and other ideologies. hooks argues that once women's studies became legitimized by educational institutions, women were able to research and discuss these issues in a safe place with academic support (Hooks 2000). This caused an awakening throughout the women who participated in these activities. She argues that in the late '80s, there was a shift in which women who were awakened in the classes realized and were more receptive to the fact that feminism was not accepting towards all women. Women started meeting in "Conscious Raising" groups in which they could discuss issues relating to patriarchy and train themselves to become more critical towards everything (Hooks 2000:8). False consciousness is when women internalize the norms of patriarchy and allow this patriarchy and racism to divide us. Conscious raising involves learning about the system of domination, how it has become institutionalized, and how it is maintained. She states that only through discussion and disagreement in the Conscious Raising groups can women truly challenge their ideologies. Because most of us do not take time to discover the roots of our ideologies and perceptions, we keep the patriarchal socialization we have been given from society.

In "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," Audre Lorde describes a similar strategy that bell hooks advocates for as "dismantling the house," which is her metaphor for patriarchy (Lorde 1984). She says that, "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." We must therefore use tools outside of the realm of patriarchy to deconstruct the system of oppression¹. Patriarchy has divided the women to "divide and conquer" which must then become "define and empower" through embracing our differences

¹ This argument was used in a previous paper titled, "Is Feminism for Everybody?" written by Kiera Chan about bell hooks' feminist theories.

(Lorde 1984: 2). A tool that oppressors use to keep the people at the bottom oppressed is forcing the oppressed to educate the oppressors about the social problem. Lorde also offers support for the type of conscious raising that hooks describes (Lorde 1984). She states that women should “reach down into that deep place of knowledge inside herself and touch that terror and loathing of any difference that lives there. See whose face it wears (Lorde 1984:3).” bell hooks states that “before women could change patriarchy we had to change ourselves; we had to raise our consciousness (Hooks 2000:7).”

Thus, according to my analysis of these various Nonprofit programs, the first successful component of an intervention method is critical conscious raising. Many of the programs I evaluated used this method in the spiritual setting. For example, because many of the programs were located in Buddhist-dominated countries, they used meditation or other self awareness exercises. By becoming aware of the institutions of oppression around us, we can recognize the internalization of norms we each individually possess. Many of the spiritual programs that utilized this method were focused on the power of the individual and the individual’s ability to change the system. Some programs used critical structural awareness to educate the participants on the structure they were living and creating and by showing alternative structures. For instance, they provided examples of flaws in modern day society in their particular country with instances of more equal or less flawed systems in other societies. By using the tool of historical and cultural comparison, one can challenge their current ideologies. By training the individual mind to recognize their own biases and being able to recognize social problems in their own social context, they can become fully aware of the system of inequality.

The next component of a successful program is that they focus on the shared responsibility of the community. By highlighting the relationship between the community and the individual, the participant will realize not only their role in the community but how

everything in society eventually affects them. Many of us are taught to ignore social problems that do not directly affect us, when in reality all social issues affect us. MLK Jr. described this phenomenon in his quote; “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly (King 1963).” By proving that all social problems stem from the individual and that the individual creates the problem, the program can instill social responsibility into the participant. This plays out in the community engagement programs I evaluated. The Nonprofits introduce the participants to different areas of the community to become socially engaged and connected through various projects. Community development programs that involve everyone in the community increase the level of awareness of social problems as well as creating a sense of shared responsibility in every individual. By feeling a higher level of dependency on the community as well as an increased level of dedication for their social surroundings.

Another component of effective intervention methods is through representation. This does not only imply representation through female role models in the programs but also representation through modeling social change through visible behaviors. Studies have shown that having female representation in the classroom increases female’s interest in previously male dominated fields and decreases biases against women in those fields (Bettinger and Long 2005). However, this also means that female representation in feminized professions such as teaching young children is not very effective in producing social change. Thus, the Nonprofit programs I evaluated that used representation through female teachers is not an example of a successful program that challenges dominant ideologies.

Modeling can be created as an example of behavior of social comparison to someone who has a perceived similarity as the observer (Schunk 1987). By observing the modeler, the participant will find similarities and be motivated to model the behaviors of peers or adults

with higher prestige. For example, the Youth Empowerment camp in Sri Lanka effectively used this strategy by using United Nations volunteers to host the programs at the camp. The UN volunteers not only facilitated the activities, discussions, and games, but they also talked about the UN itself and about their work as changemakers. They encouraged the youth to enact social change in their own communities and helped them discover ways in which to do this via a variety of different activities and discussions. The UN volunteers not only wore their UN t-shirts and acted as leaders within the program, but they also participated in the games with the youth and became friends with them. Thus, they were enacting modeled behavior as peers and as leaders.

Another important feature of creating empowered changemakers and thus, decreasing the barriers to girls education is by increasing empathy in the participants. Empathy training in human service workers has been shown to be effective in enhancing outcomes of community service based programs (Bayne 2012). I will also argue that empathy training for the participants in the programs as well will also increase the effectiveness that any social change or ideological change will arise. Many of the Nonprofits I studied used this method through diversity, conflict management and peace promotion programs, community development programs, and spirituality programs. For example, in Thailand the meditation and mindfulness program encouraged participants to become vulnerable with a partner they were paired with and share their life story in a “river map” they drew. The other person then interpreted this drawing and story and described the challenges their partner faced throughout life. Another exercise was to practice loving-kindness meditation by inviting your enemy to sit beside you in your mind and then projecting loving kindness towards them and ultimately forgiving them in your heart. In Israel, they had a program called “Through Others Eyes” in which Arabs and Jews had to describe the experience of being the other race/ ethnicity

through a digital project. All of these programs were training the individual to increase their empathy and compassion so that they would be stronger and more motivated social activists.

The last component of a successful intervention method to increase girls education is facilitated discussion, dialogue, and debate. According to *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*, we are naturally inquisitive individuals that yearn to critically engage with our environments (Shor 1992). Questioning and critiquing every factor, even what we as a society believe is “existing knowledge,” is the first step towards becoming critical. This critical view then leads to discussions and creating new views and ideologies. By engaging in these types of discussions, the participants learn how to become less dependent on society’s dominant ideologies, less passive, and more autonomous in terms of empowerment.

Girls education must become a priority for all societies, but this will not happen until women’s equality and women’s issues become a priority. Most of the Nonprofits that I visited and studied did not explicitly say whether they focused on women’s issues. Most of their goals and mission statements revolved around the conflict or poverty within the community. Some programs specifically had created women’s empowerment programs, but even within these programs the workers were reluctant to say whether they dealt with or saw gender inequality in their community. Most workers would describe the educational programs, but when asked about girls education or the biases against women in the community, they would say this did not happen. I even explicitly asked one worker about the phenomenon of only women working in the Shramadana community development work, because I only saw women digging the irrigation ditches while the men just stood around. The worker justified this by saying the men work all day out in the fields, so this is why the women take over the community work.

This reoccurring justification or ignorance of social issues within the community shows that most of the programs were only touching on surface level issues while both the participants and workers were justifying the social issues with their own ideologies. Thus, this is why using these factors mentioned is the first step towards a strong foundation of a successful program. I do not want to look at girls education and the social issue of girls being less educated than boys in the world as a single issue, but as a small surface level issue interwoven with many other issues. With these components, Nonprofits can tackle any social issue as well as gender related issues.

CONCLUSION

Girls education and women's empowerment have risen to the forefront of humanitarian issues, however most humanitarian organizations are still using the same intervention methods as they were decades ago. Using evidence based program evaluation with methods that involve funding and other physical measures are the main protocols for addressing social issues. In my ethnographic international study, I was able to see a wide variety of barriers and methods used to combat them. However, as a foreigner, it was easy to see that no matter where one traveled, the gender inequality and ideologies were all very similar.

In all four countries, women are seen and treated as inferior to men and they are not allowed to participate in society to the same degree as men. Women are often powerless in the system of patriarchy, however, they can receive some respect which can be converted into a small form of power when they participate in the system of oppression. This results in hegemony, which means that even women are consenting to the authority and dominance men control over them. Their consent manifests when women in these countries choose to follow the path of what it means to be a woman, such as being quiet, having a family, and

participating in traditional gender roles. This is why the system of oppression continues to flourish in each of these societies.

This ideological trend to justify the system of oppression results in a system in which changemakers such as Non Profits, are limited to challenging the social structure. One must target these ideologies first before engaging in social activism within the community. My analysis of these Nonprofits and the surrounding socio-cultural context was limited due to the short periods of time I spent in each country, my inability to speak the language, and my lack of transportation to be able to conduct interviews. Due to these limitations, as well as the small sample size, further research on intervention methods for girls education is needed. There have yet to be any specific studies on the impact of socio-cultural ideologies on barriers to girls education and how to address these barriers in the Nonprofit setting.

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Appendix A:

From: irbchair@ung.edu <irbchair@ung.edu>

Sent: Monday, April 23, 2018 3:35:34 PM

To: Kiera Chan (KYCHAN0298)

Subject: IRB Determination: No Formal IRB Review Required

Dear Chan, Kiera

The IRB Chair has reviewed your application and has determined that based on institutional, state and federal policies the research project does NOT require IRB review.

PI: Chan, Kiera

Research Title: Investigating Non Profit Workers' Attitudes towards an alternative intervention method of increasing girls' education

Reason:

The proposed research will be asking workers in selected non-profit organizations about the programs of the organizations and the culture of population serve. Because neither the research questions nor the interview questions apply to the individuals themselves, the proposed work is not human subject research based on the definition of "human subject" in the Federal guidelines and on the UNG IRB website ["a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information"].

Good luck with the study.

Thank you,

IRB Chair

Appendix B:

GIRLS EDUCATION GENERAL INTERVIEW FORM

Attitudes on Girls Education

How long have you been working here?

Can you tell me anything about this organization in regards to education?

Describe the attitudes of this organization towards girls education.

Tell me about how girls education is perceived in this area.

Would you say families want both their sons and daughters to become educated?

Are educated girls looked upon the same as educated boys?

How would you describe educational opportunities for girls vs boys?

Can you describe the factors that influence a child's ability to attend the educational programs? (What would cause a child not to attend school?)

Educational Programs

What kind of educational programs does this organization provide for the youth in this area?

Who is eligible for these programs? Is it open to all children of any age or gender?

Girls School Attendance

What do you think is the ratio of boys to girls in those programs? Is it equal?

How would describe girls participation in your programs? Is it equal to boys?

Do you have any specific examples of this?

Can you describe common barriers girls may face that cause them to stay at home rather than attend school?

Can you tell me about a time when a girl was treated differently than a boy in an educational setting?

Does the program do anything to keep girls in school?