A CASE STUDY OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN BURKINA FASO:

WHAT'S WORKING, WHAT ISN'T, AND WHY IT MATTERS

by

Georgia Gerard-Reed

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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2019

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ABSTRACT

Georgia Gerard-Reed. A CASE STUDY OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN BURKINA

FASO: WHAT'S WORKING, WHAT ISN'T, AND WHY IT MATTERS.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the education system of Burkina Faso to better understand how it impacts the lives of the people who live there. The study examined possible reasons of under-education in Burkina Faso and the impact of poverty on the Burkinabé people as it is related to education. The research questions are (1) what are the barriers to education, (2) how does under-education impact the ability of the Burkinabé to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing, and medical care, and (3) what are the consequences in terms of human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy, that are related to chronic poverty in Burkina Faso? The sample consisted of 27 teachers, missionaries, health care workers, and directors of orphanages who understand the depth of the difficulties faced by the Burkinabé people. Semi-structured interviews were the main source of data, along with observations, and documents. Open coding of transcriptions from participant interviews was used to develop themes. The findings of this study indicate there are many barriers to education in Burkina Faso and that a culture of survival and poverty, in particular, were two barriers that had the greatest impact on the ability of a person to receive an education. Future research could re-examine some of the same issues considered in this study, lengthen the time during which data would be collected, and include additional researchers to access a larger sample. Finding solutions to the difficulties encountered by the Burkinabé people in educating their children would also benefit other countries and communities struggling with similar problems.

Keywords: Burkina Faso, education, human life outcomes, under-education

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, David, for supporting me through years of studying, writing, traveling, and the many, many discussions we have had in regard to my completing this journey. He has been my best cheerleader and I thank God for him!

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge a number of people in my life who have provided inspiration and continued encouragement during my years of studying for my doctorate. First are my parents, who always encouraged me to strive for the best that I could possibly achieve in this life. Next are my three children, Joel, Melissa, and Jordan, who God has blessed me with and have always supported my efforts to complete this degree, and also my siblings, who have been instrumental, even when they did not realize it, in inspiring me to continue to persevere and finish this study even when I wanted to quit. I would also like to acknowledge and thank Dr. John Duryea, my committee chairperson, for the time and encouragement he has provided to me throughout this journey, my committee members and research consultant, Dr. Suzanne Bingham, Dr. Gene Tagliarini, and Dr. James Swezey for their prayer and support, and finally, Susan Terranova for her much appreciated support. The editor with whom I worked, Dr. Laura Halvorsen, proved to be a most valuable asset. Finally, the translator with whom I worked in Africa was truly a God send in helping me achieve all that I was able to achieve in a relatively short amount of time and for her continued support and encouragement. I also give praise to God for instilling stubbornness into my personality when He created me, as without it, I surely would not have completed this degree.

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List of Abbreviations

Burkinabé Response to Improve Girls Chances to Succeed (BRIGHT)

Escherichia coli (E. coli)

Education Policy Data Center (EPDC)

Gross national income (GNI)

Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Non-government organization (NGO)

Take home rations (THR)

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

University of Southern California (USC)

U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

World Health Organization (WHO)

Youth literacy (YL)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The education and training of a country's population is essential to preparation for the workforce. Businesses of all sizes are located around the globe and are in search of employees who have the necessary skills to help them achieve their economic goals, the most fundamental of which is to make a profit. Countries that are able to meet the needs of enterprises' quest for qualified and able workers naturally attract more businesses than countries that are not able to do the same. As humans move through the 21st century toward the future, it is crucial that countries be able to anticipate what the educational needs of its young people are going to be in order to have them ready for employment. Countries that cannot respond adequately to the need for quality education, risk being left behind economically.

This qualitative case study examines the education system of a country that has been struggling to educate children for decades: Burkina Faso, located in northwest Africa. Burkina Faso is one of many countries that encounter a plethora of difficulties in educating their children, facing barriers ranging from cultural practices and biases to insufficient resources and revenue necessary to provide a quality education to the multitude of children who need it. The purpose of this study is to examine the possible reasons of under-education in Burkina Faso and to determine the impact of poverty on the education of Burkinabé people.

The focus of this chapter is to present the research supporting the economic necessity of receiving an education and the repercussions of under-education in Burkina Faso. The chapter sets the background and context for the study and introduces foundational research and literature that is further explored in Chapter two. The chapter presents the importance of the study, its

problem and purpose, the researcher's interest in the subject, the research questions guiding the study, and relevant definitions.

Background

Education for children in the United States is understood to be free and of some level of quality that will allow children to progress through elementary school to secondary school and beyond, if desired. Of Burkina Faso, one of the poorest and most illiterate countries in the world, the same cannot be said. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2012) the adult literacy rate (ages 15 years and older) in 2010 was approximately 28.7% and it ranked 161 out of 169 countries in its economy ([U.S.] Department of State, 2012) with an annual average gross national income (GNI) of $670.00 (U.S.) per capita (World Bank, 2010). According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2012) a well established non-government organization (NGO) that works in countries across the world to promote children's issues, for the 2010-2011 school year, 61% of school age children were enrolled in primary school in Burkina Faso. Some barriers to school enrollment that exist in Burkina Faso include illness and disease, early marriage, malnutrition, a lack of clean, drinkable water, orphan-hood, and parental attitudes (UNICEF, n.d.).

Historical Context

Elementary school in Burkina Faso is referred to as primary school and covers grade one through grade six (ages six through twelve) and is mandatory (Education Policy Data Center [EPDC], 2014). According to the U.S. Department of State (2012), only 41.7% of Burkinabé children completed elementary school in 2012. The problem in Burkina Faso today is not just getting children in school but keeping them there once enrolled (UNICEF, 2012). Completion of

elementary school is a pre-requisite to entry into secondary education, which is necessary for obtaining a job with an income level that is capable of supporting an individual and family, yet approximately 65% of sixth graders in public schools fail the annual achievement test (Adeosun, 2013,) and are not able to progress to secondary school.

The government of Burkina Faso has recognized how crucial education is for the continued development of the country and has initiated programs aimed at attaining goals expounded in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015 (Holvet & Insburg, 2009). The MDG are eight far-reaching goals set forth by the United Nations that include resolving poverty, inadequate education, food insecurity, and gender inequality (MDG Report, 2013). While progress has been made in areas of education such as increased student enrollment in primary school, progress toward poverty reduction has been slowed due to citizens' poor health and insufficient education, both of which generally "deprive people of productive employment" (World Bank, 2012, as cited in MDG Report, 2013, section two, p. 5).

Social Context

Living in chronic poverty is also associated with poor health, crime, and higher death rates at earlier ages. Health is an important component of education and a comprehensive definition of health, encompassing the seven dimensions of wellness, is embraced for the purposes of qualitative study (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2002). Health is "a state of complete well-being, and not just the absence of illness." (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2002, p. 3). The interrelated seven dimensions of wellness are physical, mental, emotional, social, environmental, occupational (includes educational), and spiritual health (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2002). All of the aspects of wellness are equally important and the neglect of one dimension negatively affects all the others.

Theoretical Context

Research indicates that, worldwide, people who have higher levels of education have greater opportunities for employment and earn higher incomes (Grimm, 2011; Izeogu, 2008, Jensen, 2009; Kazianga, 2012; Okpala & Okpala, 2006; Tagoe, 2011). As the world's economy becomes increasingly global, it is equally important for all countries to be able to compete in order to sustain themselves economically. In order for that to occur, an educated populace is an absolute necessity (Miningou & Vierstraete, 2013). Although there appears to be no consensus on how that is to happen, Singh (2013) advocates for instruction in indigenous languages, in at least the early grades, to give students the best educational advantage possible.

Poverty hypothesis is examined in Dumas (2007). This work proposes that poverty theory explains why parents choose to have their children work rather than attend school. Poverty theory links child labor and poverty, holding that market and labor constraints dictate in families what parents will do in regard to enrolling or withdrawing their children from school when income fluctuates below subsistence level.

Human capital theory and the value of higher education are central to the decisions governments make in relations to educational policy (van der Merwe, 2010). Human capital theory holds that education increases productivity; each job contains core skills that can only be learned by formal schooling or training. Human capital theory assumes that what a person produces (marginal product) can be exactly identified and that the more education a person has, the higher the wage that person will earn. Job candidates with higher education credentials are frequently viewed as more capable than people with less education. Van der Merwe (2010) questions that assumption, noting that human capital theory rests on a neoclassical economic paradigm that makes it nearly impossible to demonstrate that education does, indeed, increase

productivity. However, the van de Merwe case study (2010) showed that respondents' earnings appeared to be significantly influenced by their educational attainment, regardless of their level of productivity. How study participants view education as it relates to the reality of living conditions in Burkina Faso is ontological in nature.

Klees (2008) holds that the neo-classical economic theory of efficiency and equity in free markets is an illusion as conditions these are based on, such as perfect market competition, perfect knowledge, and so on, are nonexistent in the real world. In neo-classical economics, the success of a person is defined by a person's human capital characteristics, such as education, work ethic, and ambition. The challenge to this traditional theory is that structural influences such as sexism, the size of a corporation or business, unions, and racism will influence a person's success in the labor market (Klees, 2008). Neo-liberalist theory derives from neo-classical theory and holds that free markets, and not governments, are what works best in social interest and have been instrumental in the development of globalization. As a result, "public policy and private actions have contributed to the further marginalization of certain individuals, groups and nations, while privileging others" (Klees, 2008, p. 318). This has implications for studies relevant to public policy in international education.

A Gap In the Literature

The majority of the research has generally centered on issues such as educational policy, the progress (or lack thereof) in the education of children in Burkina Faso, and whether or not attempting to educate all of the children in Burkina Faso is reasonable and feasible. Further, most research conducted on education in Burkina Faso use quantitative methodologies that yield primarily numerical outcomes. Few, if any, studies have involved examining the lived experience of the people of Burkina Faso and how receiving or not receiving an education

impacted them in terms of human life outcomes, such as the ability to financially provide for oneself and a family and health and life expectancy. Herein lies a crucial gap in the literature.

Situation to Self

I became interested in Burkina Faso when my daughter moved there with her husband. She began relaying stories to me of the extreme conditions and impoverishment in which many of the people lived. She described in great detail the people she met (teachers, missionaries, doctors, orphanage directors, and more) and how they were involved in ministering to the Burkinabé people. Through her stories, I became especially interested in the education system and how it was either supporting or neglecting the people of Burkina Faso. As I prayed about becoming involved in supporting various ministries there, the Lord began to speak to me about another idea: write the story. I had planned on designing my dissertation based on a country in the western hemisphere. I had never heard of Burkina Faso. I thought Haiti or Costa Rica would be fine countries in which to conduct educational research and I was already familiar with them. However, as I began to research Burkina Faso and started contacting people who lived there and who had first hand knowledge of the country, its culture, and the difficulties its people faced, much of it related to education, I changed my mind.

I came to know Jesus as my Lord and Savior at the age of 23. It is through His leading that I am pursuing a doctorate in education at Liberty University. I strongly believe that education can provide the foundation for people to obtain a means to a better life in terms of employment, level of income, and standard of living. I believe that Jesus is the only answer to the problems the world faces, but also am convinced that through education and the efforts of dedicated Christians, a person's future can change.

My worldview of education is based in its role in the wellbeing of the whole person, a

wellness principle that is also Biblical in nature. There are seven dimensions to wellness that are necessary for the good health of the whole person. Those dimensions are physical, emotional, mental, social, environmental, occupational (which includes educational) and spiritual. (Hoeger & Hoeger, 2002). Some models also include a financial element. A person's spiritual development is regarded as the element that provides a unifying power that ties or holds everything together. No one aspect of human development can be ignored as each element affects the entire person, not just one part of the person. The Bible addresses the development of the whole person throughout its entirety. Genesis describes how mankind came to be created by God, was created in the image of God, and the relationship with God that people were expected to maintain. This is repeated throughout all the books of the Bible. Proverbs provides teachings on how to live a moral life and describes how we should relate to one another. It encourages children to be obedient and to accept instruction. Jesus took into account people's everyday needs such as food (Matthew 14:17), finances (Matthew 22:17), moral and spiritual development (Matthew 5-7), and treatment of our fellow man (Matthew 7:12).

Social constructivism is the philosophical assumption underpinning this study. The basic premise of constructivism in qualitative terms and underscores the basic premise of constructivism is that reality is relative to the individual and is created out of the person's life experiences (Lee. 2012). The concept of more than one reality is relevant in qualitative research. In this study, social constructivism is relevant as the reality of receiving or not receiving an education in Burkina Faso has many implications that may be unique to that country.

I believe that the only true reality comes from God and that which is of God, as only God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8). Man's personal situations and experiences, however, can be ever changing and may not necessarily be universal. Consequently,

more than one reality can exist for the same event as it is based on a person's perception; this is

the basis of ontological assumptions. Ontological assumptions relate to the nature of reality and

the idea of multiple realities. The perspectives of the researcher and the participants take on a

central role in the research as the perspectives of the individuals are going to be different from

one another. This will be evident in the way each participant and researcher describes a

particular event (Creswell, 2013).

Axiology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of principles and values.

My assumption is that the outlook of the researcher may heavily influence the narrative and the

researcher should acknowledge and discuss his perspective in his interpretation of the findings

(Creswell, 2013). My worldview of human capital theory is formed around axiological

assumptions and must not be, to the best of my ability, allowed to influence the outcome of the

research.

Problem Statement

This case study is designed to gain a deeper understanding of the education system of

Burkina Faso and the impact it has on the lives of the Burkinabé people. UNICEF (2000)

defines an educational system as "a complex system embedded in a political, economical, and

cultural context" (p. 4) that encompasses the learner, environment, content process, and

outcomes.   An education system includes the surrounding world; it incorporates political and

economic systems, along with students, into an inter-relational entity (Qvortrup, 2005). For the

purpose of this case study, the education system of Burkina Faso comprises the educational

policies (enforced or not), politicians, schools, administrators, communities, teachers, and

students.

Researchers are not in agreement on the value of promoting education to all children in

Burkina Faso (Klees, 2008; van der Merwe, 2010). However, there are those who insist that it is the only way the country can move forward (Kourago & Dainda, 2008). Some researchers have been concerned with the difficulties of educating children in this poor, primarily agricultural African country (Daboné, Delisle & Receveur, 2011; Kazianga, 2012; Kone, 2010), while others have focused on the progress made in children's education over the last two decades (Nikièma, 2011; Uduku, 2011). Several focuses have guided the current literature on education in Burkina Faso, such as the adequacy of educational policy, the progress (or lack thereof) in the education of the children, and whether attempting to educate all of the Burkinabé children is practical or feasible. Further, existing research is dominated by quantitative methodologies, which is limited in their capacity to provide insight into meanings or the rich, lived experience related to peoples' interactions with the education system. The problem this study seeks to address is that few, if any, studies actually examine the lives of the people and how accessibility to an education impacts them—a key gap in the literature. This qualitative study examines what happens to the Burkinabè people when they do not receive an education and how that translates into human life outcomes such as access to health care, the ability to provide an income that is capable of supporting an individual and family, and life expectancy.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study is twofold: (a) to examine possible reasons for under-education in Burkina Faso and (b) to examine the impact of poverty on the Burkinabé people as it is related to education. At this stage of the research, education is defined by Smith (2015) as "The wise, hopeful, and respectful cultivation of learning undertaken in the belief that all should have the chance to share in life" (para 7). The theories guiding this study are human capital theory (van de Merwe, 2010), poverty theory (Dumas, 2007), and Mann's theory of

democratic education (1848).

Significance of the Study

According to UNICEF (2012):

> Children who drop out have few options: without sufficient education or skills to
> do a job some remain in their villages working alongside their parents, but most
> migrate to cities or neighbouring countries where they work as herders, labourers or
> domestic help without any real hope for the future (2012, p.4).

This statement illustrates the significance of this case study regarding the education system of Burkina Faso. The majority of the research has focused on the various educational policies in Burkina Faso, how they were formed, and statistical estimations of achieved objectives. The stakes of understanding the impact of the current educational system in Burkina Faso does not mean making sure there is a computer in every home; rather, education in Burkina Faso means a better chance at survival. Therefore, it is the human factor, which this paper is seeking to illuminate and what most other research has ignored. The significance of this study is that, by examining both the human outcome of accessing education in Burkina Faso **and** its approach to educational policy, it could change the manner in which educational policy is formulated. Specifically, from an approach that asks "what" or "how" to one that asks "why."

Research Questions

The research questions for this case study are (1) what barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso, (2) how does a lack of access to education impact the ability of the Burkinabé to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for oneself and family members, and (3) what are the consequences of chronic poverty in Burkina Faso on human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy?

Yin (2009) supports "what" and "how" questions for case studies which are frequently used for studying contemporary events and when behaviors and other elements of a study cannot be manipulated, as they can be in experimental studies. Charlés (2006), Hoppers (2005), Kazianga (2012), and Kobiané (2005) have discussed barriers to education so it is pertinent to investigate the reasons for those barriers in this study using rich, live experience as data.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs proposes that human beings have to satisfy a five-level hierarchy of human needs (physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization, beginning with the most fundamental, before priority is placed on the next level (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). The two most fundamental levels in the hierarchy are physiological and safety. Physiological needs include food, shelter, and water. Safety needs include a safe, stable environment and an absence of threats, pain, and illness (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003). For this case study, basic human needs will be minimally defined as adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, access to medical care, and a safe environment.

According to Quershi et al. (2001, as cited in Miller, 2012), there are three types of human outcomes: (a) maintenance outcomes, which are the aspects of a person's life he or she is striving to achieve or maintain; (b) process outcomes, which relate to experiences people have searching for, obtaining, and utilizing services and supports; and (c) change outcomes, which are related to improvements in physical, mental, and/ or emotional functioning that people are seeking from any particular service, intervention, or support (Miller, 2012). Human life outcomes in this case study will be minimally defined as a person's overall physical, mental, social and emotional health; access to health care; life expectancy; and the ability to provide an income that is capable of supporting oneself and a family.

Definitions

1. *Education* – The wise, hopeful and respectful cultivation of learning undertaken in the belief that all should have the chance to share in life (Smith, 2015).

2. *Educational system* – A system that encompasses the learner, environment, content, process, and outcomes as a complex system embedded in a political, economical, and cultural context (UNICEF, 2000).

3. *Human life outcomes* – There are three types of human outcomes: (1) maintenance outcomes, which are the aspects of a person's life they are striving to achieve or maintain, (2) process outcomes, which relate to experiences people have searching for, obtaining, and utilizing services and supports, and (3) change outcomes, which are related to improvements in physical, mental, and/ or emotional functioning that people are seeking from any particular service, intervention, or support (Quershi et al., 2001, as cited in Miller, 2012).

4. *Poverty* – Jensen (2009) defines six different types of poverty. For this study poverty will be defined as generational, absolute, and relative. Generational poverty occurs in families in which two or more generations have been born into poverty and they are not equipped with the tools to move out of their situation. Absolute poverty entails a scarcity of necessities such as food, shelter, and water. Families living in absolute poverty tend to focus on day-to-day survival. Relative poverty refers to a family's economic status, wherein income is insufficient to meet its society's standard of living.

5. *Basic human needs* – Basic human needs comprise physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization needs. Physiological needs include

those of food, shelter, and water. Safety needs include a safe, stable environment and an absence of threats, pain, and illness (McShane & Von Glinow, 2003).

Summary

Educating children is of primary importance, not the least of which is to prepare them for a future in which they will be required to provide for their own needs and for those of a family. Education provides a pathway to jobs and income in order for that to happen. Competition for jobs in a global economy is ever increasing and people need knowledge and skills that make them qualified candidates for employment. Educational systems—and specifically for this study, that of Burkina Faso—may not provide the knowledge and skills necessary to secure well paying jobs. The problem this study aims to address is that there is a paucity of current research on the lived experience of the Burkinabé related the education system of Burkina Faso, the barriers they encounter in accessing adequate education, and the impact insufficient education has on their lives. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine possible reasons for under-education in Burkina Faso and the impact of poverty on the education of the Burkinabé people.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Burkina Faso is one of the poorest and most illiterate countries in the world. According to United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO, 2012) the adult literacy rate (ages 15 years and older) in 2010 was approximately 28% and Burkina Faso ranked 161 out of 169 countries in its economy (U.S. Department of State, 2012) with an annual average gross national income (GNI) of $670.00 (U.S.) per capita (World Bank, 2010). As of 2012, approximately 41.7% of children in Burkina Faso completed elementary school (U.S. Department of State, 2012). Completion of elementary school is a requirement for students to progress to secondary education, which is necessary for obtaining a job with an income capable of supporting an individual and family. However, 65% of sixth graders in public schools in Burkina Faso still fail the annual achievement test, which has been a relatively consistent rate since 1965 (Odeosun, 2013). This perpetuates the difficulty of rising out of poverty and living in chronic poverty is associated with poor health, crime, and higher death rates at earlier ages.

Previous research has indicated that a link exists between education and poverty across the globe and that people who have attained higher levels of education have a greater potential for employment and the ability to earn higher incomes (Grimm, 2011; Izeogu, 2008; Jensen, 2009; Kazianga, 2012; Okpala & Okpala, 2006; Tagoe, 2011). According to Cour (2000) and Singh (2013), an educated populace is an absolute necessity if countries are going to be able to compete in an ever-increasing global market and sustain themselves economically.

Education systems are complex social, political, and economical entities that fulfill a basic need within a country to educate the populace for the purpose of enhancing national self-identity, strengthening cultural autonomy, and sustaining economic growth (Arnove, 1980).

They are comprised of managers, internal customers (students), external customers (businesses, community members), and various other stakeholders and consist of inputs and outputs of knowledge (Sahney, 2012). According to Kamat (2011), the inter-workings of those various entities, including the influence of outside sources such as philanthropic organizations, help determine the role education plays in a country. This process can be crucial to the economic development of a country and the welfare of its citizens. Kamat's research illustrates the uneven manner in which neoliberal globalization occurs in a given region. At the same time, Kamat demonstrated how Hyderabad, India, an economically depressed and dilapidated city, became the "hub of the information technology economy" (Kamat, 2011, p. 187), due in no small part to higher education and the re-structuring of educational policy. The plan was to transform Hyderabad into a technologically advanced city that would attract information technology (IT) businesses both from within India and from around the world. Within 10 years, that vision came to fruition, with companies such as Oracle, Microsoft, and Google locating there. However, without an educated, skilled labor force readily available, this advancement would not have been possible (Kamat, 2011). Part of the educational process of a country, then, includes having access to education, with the consequences of not receiving an education including diminished opportunities for employment, lower wages, reduced access to health care, and poor nutrition.

The majority of the existing research on education in Burkina Faso has been centered on issues such as educational policy, progress in the education of children in Burkina Faso, whether or not attempting to educate all of the children in Burkina Faso is a feasible goal, and quantitative studies that primarily examine numerical outcomes. There is a scarcity of studies that actually examine the lives of the people of Burkina Faso and how accessibility to education impacts them, and that is where a gap in the literature lies. In this case study, I examined the

lives of the Burkinabé people as it relates to education. The educational system of Burkina Faso was investigated to determine how and if it supports the people for whom it is designed to serve.

<div align="center">**Theoretical Framework**</div>

Human Capital Theory

Van der Merwe (2010) examined human capital theory as it relates to education in South Africa. Human capital theory proposes that the value of education lies in the greater monetary value of the laborer to the employer and the willingness of the employer to pay a higher wage in exchange for a higher education. The assumption of human capital theory is that employers perceive that the educated laborer will be more productive, thus compiling greater revenues for the employer. Van der Merwe conducted a case study in South Africa to determine if these assumptions held true in the marketplace of newly graduated students from traditional white and traditional black colleges. The results of the study were mixed, suggesting that while many newly graduated students found employment faster than their counterparts who did not graduate from college, as well as secured jobs that paid higher wages, this was not consistent among all graduates. In particular, this was less true among students who graduated from traditional all-black colleges in South Africa than among students who graduated from traditional all-white colleges in South Africa.

Three countries in sub-Saharan Africa—Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda—were examined in relation to fee policies utilized to help fund education (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). Prior to the 1990's, families were charged for basic educational necessities, such as books, that their children were required to use in school. This placed an additional burden on families who were already struggling financially. Increased financial burden has been shown to influence a family's decision whether to enroll their children in school or not as the value of an education to a child's

future is not readily visible to families and thus often lower in priority to more immediate financial concerns (Grimm, 2010). Since that time, all three countries have adopted a policy of free primary education to increase school enrollment and provide greater access to education to children who previously could not afford to attend. Oketch and Rolleston (2007) examined financial sustainability of the programs as well as the history of the region as it traversed the road of independence from colonialism toward adoption of government policies that would eventually make education universally accessible in all three countries.

Mann's Theory of Democratic Education.

Originally developed by Mann (1848), regarded as the father of American education, and later extended by Wimpey (1959), Mann's theory of democratic education suggests that education was not to be reserved for the elite but should be for everyone alike, regardless of station, fortune, gender, race or religion. The objective of the common school was to provide every child a free education that would set the child on the path to knowledge and away from ignorance, which would provide a unifying experience.

According to Mann, schools ought to develop and protect the freedom of intellectual activity; this is the essence of democratic education. He advocates for the utility in the courses of study; in other words, if only one person out of many will use advanced algebra in their profession, then it is not logical to force every student to study it. Intellectual education is a means by which poverty can be eliminated and is the great equalizer between the rich and the poor. About Mann's work, Wimpey (1959) writes, "Mann wished to see schoolhouses habitable, comfortable, even architecturally fine. The United States has built beautiful school buildings as a result of Mann's pioneering" (p. 206). This notion of democratic education reinforces the idea prevalent in many countries that education is a necessity not only for the wellbeing of the

citizens but for the prosperity and continuance of the country as well.

Progressive Theory

John Dewey's theories of education emerged from his pragmatic philosophical beliefs. Pragmatism denies absolutes and prioritizes change, the scientific method, and nature. Progressive theory in education is built upon pragmatism. It rejects teacher-centered instruction; the child is the center. Children have a natural desire to learn and educations should be tailored their interests. Education ought to be concerned with helping students develop new attitudes and interests in experience, not the succession of a course of study. In this way, learning should be ongoing and interactive. Education is a product of social interaction and the fundamental method of social progress and reform. Social interaction shapes a person from birth and through this process a person comes to share in the cognitive and moral resources of humanity. True education occurs through the stimulation of a child's mind by the demands of social situations he may experience. In describing the role of education in human lives, Dewey (1897) wrote, "Education is a process of living and not a preparation for future living" (p.78). Progressive theory refutes traditional education in that it promotes a form of learning that is responsive to the needs of the child rather than imposing a collection of subjects to be studied upon the child. In Africa, every child may not need to know how to speak English, but every child still needs to know how to read and write.

Public Choice Theory

Public choice theory is an economic theory applied to education that holds that "the monopolistic nature of state schooling allows the education bureaucracy to benefit by holding schools outside market discipline and accountability, leading to ineffectiveness and a lack of responsiveness to consumers" (Lubienski, 2006, p. 324). The establishment of market-like

conditions would compel schools to behave in a more entrepreneurial manner when "pursuing innovations and responding to diverse consumer preferences for schooling" (p. 324). Innovations, however, tend to be reserved for school administrations and have not filtered down into the classroom. Patterns have developed that favor administration and that stand in direct contrast to the assumptions of public choice. Public choice theory views the regulated, government bureaucracy as creating uniformity across public schools. Consequently, without competition, the incentive for change dies (Lubienski, 2006). This presents a contrast to public school education as the preferred method of educating children. In poor countries, such as Burkina Faso, where many families cannot afford private school, public schooling is generally their only option.

Social Innovation Theory

Social innovation theory is an economic and social theory that attempts assumes that innovation is rooted in civilization from the earliest of times and explains how innovation is central to economic growth and development (Backhaus, 2002). Joseph Schumpeter, the pioneer of social innovation theory, argued that societies did not develop from a centrally learned base of knowledge but rather from encountering chance occurrences that require solving a particular problem or difficulty or using a particular method (Fagerberg, Fosaas, & Sapprasert, 2012). Fagerberg, et al. studied the economic and social consequences of innovation within society. Innovation is viewed by Schumpeter as the "driving force of economic development" (Fagerberg, 2012) and, according to Galindo and Mendez-Picazo (2013), is an essential component of economic progress. Sears and Baba (2011) posit that innovation is a "dynamic, multilevel process aimed at transforming creative energy into novel tangible outcomes that contribute economic or social value and form the foundation for organizational, technological,

and social change."

 Drucker (1993) defines innovation as ''the application of knowledge to produce new knowledge…[it] requires systematic efforts and a high degree of organization" (p. 173, as cited in Johannessen, Olsen, & Olaisen, 1999, p. 121).

 Another definition of innovation holds that:

> To be called an innovation, an idea must be replicable at an economical cost and must satisfy a specific need. Innovation involves deliberate application of information, imagination, and initiative in deriving greater or different values from resources, and includes all processes by which new ideas are generated and converted into useful products. In business, innovation often results when ideas are applied by the company in order to further satisfy the needs and expectations of the customers. In a social context, innovation helps create new methods for alliance creation, joint venturing, flexible work hours, and creation of buyers' purchasing power (Businessdictionary.com, n.d., para 2).

 Innovation is a profoundly relevant concept in the system and process of education. The acquisition, development, and management of knowledge, more so than that of capital assets, is a requirement in today's global economy and increasingly competitive market if businesses are to be successful. According to Johannessen et al. (1999), knowledge is a "productive resource" and innovation is "the heart of productivity" (p. 122). Many business employees are highly educated and their job or function within their company is to transform information into knowledge. Lundvall states, "Contemporary capitalism has arrived at the point where knowledge is the most strategic resource and learning the most important process" (Morgan, 1997, as cited in Rutten & Boekema, 2005, p. 1131). Knowledge and innovation are seen as the fuel of competition in

firms, regions, and countries. Resources for innovation include skilled labor, venture capital, and various types of knowledge, and it is the transformation of knowledge into marketable skills and applications that drives economic growth (Rutten & Boekema, 2005). Countries substantially differ in their ability to foster innovation yet it is considered crucial to their economic development (Braczyk et al., 1998, Gregersen & Johnson, as cited in Rutten & Boekema, 2005).

Galinda and Mendez-Picazo (2013) examined ten countries to test seven hypotheses on innovation and/or economic growth. Four of the hypotheses are directly related to social innovation theory and relevant to this case study, and two of them, *H1* and *H4*, form a sequence of reciprocal cause and effect. These four relevant hypotheses are as follows:

H1. Innovations have positive effects on economic growth.

H3. Education has positive effects on innovation

H4. Economic growth has a positive effect on innovation

H6. Social climate has a positive effect on entrepreneurship activity

Each hypothesis tested was shown to have a positive, significant effect on innovation and/or on economic growth for each of the ten countries.

Innovation must be accepted by a society in order for it to be adopted on a wide-scale basis. The process of innovation follows a pattern of development in which it moves from the formation of new ideas to adoption of new processes and products to implementation within societies and organizations for the purpose of bringing new ideas, processes, and products to fruition, also known as innovation diffusion (Wejnert, 2002, as cited in Sears & Baba, 2011). Humphrey (1974) illustrated how innovation is accepted (or not) in a study conducted in Malawi, Africa regarding farming techniques and crops. Data were collected from 240 farmers in five rural areas of Malawi regarding labor, crop yield, income, expenses, attitudes, and beliefs. The

results indicated that the beliefs of farmers regarding output per acre (yield) and the amount of land available for cultivation were the two most important determinants in the number of acres a farmer farmed, the amount of labor used to produce a crop, the technology implemented to increase yield, and the actual yield achieved. The farmers with the lowest yield held onto their beliefs that increasing the amount of land to be cultivated would produce a larger yield. In contrast, farmers who changed crops and/or implemented other farming innovations aimed at increasing yield per acre did, indeed, increase their output. Sanders, Nagy, and Ramaswamy (1990) observed a similar phenomenon in Burkina Faso, where farmers generally preferred expanding land cultivation over new technologies (innovation) that initially required higher labor and cash investment but ultimately resulted in a higher yield per acre when adopted. In considering the results of these studies, education can be seen as inseparable from innovation and the economic growth of a country.

The results of the two agricultural studies are pertinent to this case study in that they illustrate how members of society either accept and adopt innovation, or reject it, and the possible outcomes of this in terms of economic development. On the level of human individuals, education and/or acceptance of innovation and could have an impact on personal and household income and have important implications for the decision to educate a child or children residing in a household.

Related Literature

Income and Employment

This literature indicates that child labor influences a parent's decision to enroll their child in school (Bell & Gersbach, 2009; Grimm, 2011). The study Bell and Gersbach (2009) conducted was informed by human capital theory: that an investment in education would

eventually increase monetary benefits to the recipient. The conclusions they reached are that an entire society can be perpetually mired in a relatively stable level of ignorance with corresponding low productivity where it is consequently necessary for children to work to supplement the family income (Bell & Gersbach, 2009). The economic model used to support their conclusions followed a tax-subsidy scheme whereby educated households did not fall back into poverty once they had been lifted from it. The inherent weakness in the model is that it has not been tested on any particular population. In reality, it may be difficult if not almost impossible for impoverished countries to totally fund education programs through taxation of the minority of people who may not have income-producing employment sufficient to pay the required taxes. Grimm (2011) discussed income shock in relation to farming practices with either food crops or cotton. Uncontrollable factors such as drought and crop yield profoundly affect the stability of family income, which in turn influences the decisions of a family to enroll their children in school. Household finances, rather than the future benefits of education (the cornerstone of human capital theory) determined whether families chose to utilize their children in helping to secure household income rather than enroll or keep them enrolled in school.

Kazianga (2012) examined the impact of income uncertainty on family's decisions to invest in their children's education in Burkina Faso. When households are frequently exposed to negative income shocks, in order to build a buffer against future anticipated shocks, families opt to not enroll their children in school at the onset, rather than risk enrolling them and later removing them from school should their income suffer a severe decline. The findings of the study suggest that income uncertainty has significantly more welfare costs in terms of human capital than what previous studies suggested. In discussing the findings of their study, Ram and Singh (1988) suggest that when families invest in education, even in rural areas of West Africa

where farming is the main revenue producing occupation, the rate of return on their investment overall makes the investment worthwhile. This supports and is consistent with human capital theory.

Calves, Kobiané, and N'Bouke (2013) studied first paid employment among youth in Ouagadougou, the capital city of Burkina Faso, as they transitioned into adulthood. The results of the study showed that students who complete secondary school, either private or public, have a significantly greater chance of securing paid employment upon leaving school than do students who do not complete secondary school. The average age of obtaining first paid employment for students who complete secondary school is 23 years versus a high rate of non-entry for students who only complete primary school. Students who do not complete secondary school tend to stay in the informal job market, working in very low-paying jobs or in family-owned businesses that do not pay a wage.

Calves, Kobiané, and N'Bouke's (2013) findings are consistent with an extensive World Bank (2012) report that details adult employment in Burkina Faso. Only one in 20 adult workers employed in agriculture have a secondary education, and as of 2003, 80% of the population is involved in farming. Workers with a secondary education tend to be employed in either the private or public sector (approximately 40% and 60%, respectively). However, according to the EPDC (2014), about 48% of primary school aged children in Burkina Faso are out of school at any given time and as few as five percent of the children complete their primary education (complete all six grades of school and pass the national exam) in a given year. Additionally, 16% of youth have an incomplete primary education, 56% have no formal education, and 72% of people ages 15 to 24 in Burkina Faso have never completed primary school (EPDC, 2014; see Figure 1). Of the total number of jobs in Burkina Faso, less than two percent (250,000 jobs) are

in the private and public sector (World Bank, 2012). In terms of accessing formal activities (i.e., private and public sector employment), then, it would appear that secondary and post-secondary education is a sound investment. Completion of primary school and the sixth-grade national exam are necessary for children who desire to attend secondary school, which is also important in securing paid employment.

Of youths and adults aged 15 to 34, "less than one in three…has any education at all, and less than one in five has completed primary or more" (World Bank, 2012, paragraph xiv, p. iv). In total, three-fourths of the adult population has no education at all, two-thirds of the urban labor force has not completed primary education, and one percent of the adult population has received an education at the university level (World Bank, 2012). According to UNESCO (2012), in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, about 90% of workers aged 15 to 19 years and 80% aged 20 to 24 years earn less than the official minimum wage, whereas older adult workers (over age 24), on average, earn two and a half times as much as younger adult workers (Nordman & Pasquier-Dourner, 2012, as cited in UNESCO, 2012). The minimum wage in Burkina Faso is 63.42 (U.S.) per month in the formal sector, which consists of non-farming, informal occupations (U.S. Department of State, n.d.; World Bank Group, 2014). The minimum wage does not "provide a decent standard of living for a worker and family" (U.S. Dept. of State, n.d., p. 22) and employers frequently pay less than this.

For illiterate adults in Ghana, Senegal, and Burkina Faso, the prospects of becoming literate have historically rested on non-formal education as financed first by individual governments and then increasingly by non-governmental and private agencies (Closson, Mavima, & Kofi, 2002). As governments began to decentralize services beginning in the 1970s through the 1990s, cutbacks were made in the number and type of social services the

governments would fund, including education. These measures were adopted to save money.

Closson et al. found that measures taken to privately finance adult education programs have

largely been neglected. According to Closson et al. (2002), one program enjoying some success

in teaching adults to read in Burkina Faso is a *bottom-up* program started by literate farmers in

1989, with the books paid for by a Burkinabé NGO. Instruction is provided by beneficiaries of

the program who become instructors through attained literacy (Closson et al., 2002).

   According to Okpala and Okpala (2006), poorly trained and highly illiterate individuals

comprise a significant part of the youth and adult populations in the majority of countries in sub-

Saharan Africa. In Burkina Faso, the adult literacy rate is 13.8% and the youth literacy (YL) rate

is 19.40%. With other factors equal, "a literate person enjoys a higher lifetime of earnings and

consumption, and hence is able to make a greater contribution to social welfare" (Okpala &

Okpala, 2006, pp. 203-204). The quantitative study they conducted examined the effect of four

different factors on YL in Burkina Faso. Of the factors studied, only one, parental education/

parental literacy, was significantly associated with higher levels of YL in Burkina Faso. Royer,

Abadzi, and Kinda (2004) studied adult literacy programs in Burkina Faso. As parental literacy

is associated with higher levels of YL (Okpala & Okpala, 2006), adult literacy programs may be

an important, contributing factor in the education of children in Burkina Faso. Royer et al.

(2004) found that literacy programs that combined different reading strategies (as opposed to a

phonics-only approach) were more successful in helping illiterate or low-literate adults achieve a

reading level comparable to fourth grade students. At a time when researchers, governments,

and donors/ sponsors are questioning the value of adult literacy in general in third world

countries such as Burkina Faso, the successful completion of an adult literacy program may be a

crucial component in the successful completion of primary and secondary school for their

children, with the possibility of ensuring a better financial future. Yabiku and Schlabach (2009) studied the transition from schooling to paid employment in a remote village in Nepal. The transition to paid employment occurred significantly more frequently for men than women (52% and 7%, respectively) and for men, more of those jobs were outside the agricultural industry than they were for women (10% and 2% respectively). Men averaged 7.5 years of schooling and women 4.4 years. At the time of first employment, 34% of the men were still in school in contrast to 18% of women. Men who were not in school found first employment at a higher rate than men who were still in school (51%) but for each year of accumulated schooling, the employment rate increased by 11%, which is consistent with human capital theory (Yabiku & Schlabach, 2009). The results of this study may be generalizable to other emerging countries as education becomes increasingly available to all segments of a population.

Aid and Funding

Aid to Burkina Faso has often been among the highest of developing nations, with as much as 57% of government expenditures deriving from external aid (Brautigam & Knack, 2004, Samoff, 2003, 2007). Over the last 10 to 15 years, a shift has occurred in providing aid to developing nations from a project stance to one that is sectoral, which is to say, to a specific area in need, such as education or health. Partnerships between donors and recipients are emphasized (Samoff, 2007). While this approach is thought to foster more independence and movement toward sustainability for the receiving country, the reality of foreign aid has changed little, with the initiative for change frequently dominated by a desire to maintain the aid relationship. Large transfers of money over extended periods of time, exacerbated by contributing factors such as corrupt governments, civil war, and economic crises hinder improved self-governance and movement toward economic independency (Brautigam & Knack, 2004). This has perpetuated a

continuance of policies that often reflect the contributor's agenda rather than what is best for the recipient country overall, and leaves governments unable to perform many of its core functions. The implication for education is that current policies and programs will remain in place which are not conducive for the vast majority of Burkinabé children receiving a quality education or any education at all (Samoff, 2003).

Japan has joined in the effort to educate children in Burkina Faso and other countries around the world. Activities conducted at 1500 schools in Burkina Faso drew assistance from local communities to provide additional classroom space, dig wells, and provide school meals, thus improving the quality of education at those schools (UNESCO, 2012). As a result of the success of these initiatives, the government of Burkina Faso decided to expand the assistance program to 12,000 more schools throughout the country. Japan initiated a second program in 2012 through the Japan Social Development Fund to provide economic assistance to 18 schools and 18 health care clinics in rural Burkina Faso (Tokyo Development Learning Center, 2014). Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are conducted at the community level, rather than from the traditional top-down approach, for the purpose of empowering and improving the lives of the poorest groups of people not served by other programs. Bado (2012), Buchert (2002), and Janzen (2008) also discuss the community versus top-down approach to M&E. In spite of recent economic difficulties in its own country, Japan has chosen to stay involved in international economic aid, recognizing the importance of community development and poverty reduction projects (Tokyo Development Learning Center, 2014).

Community-driven development is an approach to reducing poverty through improvements in education, health, capacity building, public works, and the management of natural resources. Traditional top-down methods are changed to a decentralized, local approach

to community needs such as education, health, governance, accountability, and revenue sharing (Bado, 2012). The effectiveness of community-driven development was not evaluated in this study; the data were pulled from older studies but did not substantiate the superiority of this approach versus other commonly used methods of community development for the purpose of alleviating poverty in rural areas.

Partnering between donor and recipient began in the 1970s and gained momentum throughout the 1990s. With local participation in planning how aid will be used, partnering is viewed as more likely to help a program succeed as well as reduce financial outlays (Michener, 1998). A case study conducted in Burkina Faso utilizing the Cohen and Uphoff method (1980, as presented in Michener, 1998) of categorizing and analyzing the dimensions of participation in community schools had mixed results, arising primarily from a difference between community members and NGOs over the definition of and commitment to participation.

What is Working in the Educational System and What is Not

Alternative schools and building design. A local association developed an alternative school in northern Burkina Faso to promote education among the nomadic people of the region (Brahima, 2012). The school initially targeted 12-year-old boys who had never been to school, but now accepts girls and children between the ages of six and 15 years. The pastoral calendar guides the school schedule, and its 85% success rate on the yearly exam has prompted the establishment of similar schools within the region. The curriculum is focused on pastoralism, earth and life sciences, and health and hygiene (Brahima, 2012). The attitude of parents toward the program was positive on average, and they indicated the belief that in order to succeed when there is insufficient space or land to farm or raise livestock, an education is necessary for survival.

Uduku (2011) studied the use of school buildings and school building design for feeding children as part of education programs in Ghana and South Africa. At the time of the study, feeding programs had been on-going in South African schools but were recent initiatives in Ghana. School staff believed that the feeding programs were of benefit to the children and the community in general, but there was no noticeable increase in school enrollment in South Africa or Ghana (although the programs in Ghana may not have existed long enough for a valid evaluation of its impact on school enrollment). Feeding programs are also utilized in schools in Burkina Faso, but there has been no literature on whether they contribute to increased enrollment or attendance.

The BRIGHT (Burkinabé Response to Improve Girls Chances to Succeed, Plan International U.S.A., n.d.) schools project has had a marked degree of success in enrolling girls in primary school in 132 villages in Burkina Faso since the inception of the program (de Hoop & Rosati, 2014; Kazianga, Linde, Levy, & Sloan, 2013). The BRIGHT schools provide a source of clean water, feeding programs, three schoolrooms, housing for three teachers, and learning materials. All these amenities are regarded as beneficial for increasing school enrollment and attendance in general for both boys and girls, but in particular for girls (de Hoop & Rosati, 2014; Kazianga et al., 2013). Two and a half years following the construction of the schools, student enrollment in the BRIGHT schools increased by a total of 13% and enrollment of girls increased five percent more than enrollment of boys. According to Kazianga et al. (2013), enrollment for boys and girls combined increased by 19%. de Hoop and Rosati (2014) reported mathematics test z-scores increased by 0.3-0.4 standard deviations in BRIGHT schools. Further, a study by Kazianga, de Walque, & Alderman (2014) indicated there was as increases in the number of correct answers on math tests by 9.6% for a combined pool of boys and girls who received meals

at school, as opposed to those who did not receive a meal. Kazianga et al. (2013) also reported an increase of .41 standard deviations on test scores in French and mathematics. In addition, there was increased completion of primary and secondary schools in the years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 (de Hoop & Rosati, 2014).

Children attending school in Burkina Faso are separated into three distinct age groups: preschool is for children ages 3-6 years; primary school typically consists of children ages 6-12 years; post primary consists of students between the ages of 13-6 years (Hernández, 2012). After post primary school, a student can attend a secondary educational program. Primary education is supposed to be free and compulsory but those stipulations are not always adhered to. Approximately 66% of the children in Burkina Faso have access to primary education and 17% have access to secondary school (Hernández, 2012). Dropout rates are high, however, as are the number of students repeating a grade (UNICEF, n.d.). World Bank, NGOs, and the government of Burkina Faso are all attempting to increase equity in education to help Burkina Faso reach educational goals it set forth in its 10 Year Plan, implemented in 2006. One of these goals was to make secondary school more accessible for students who desire to attend (World Bank, 2007).

Student enrollment in primary school has increased since the year 2000, from 44% in 2000 to 74.9% in 2010 (UNICEF, 2011); this has prompted the government of Burkina Faso to initiate a building program to accommodate the increased number of students desiring to enroll (UNICEF 2011). The Amité A school in Zorgho, for example, had 600 students attending, of whom approximately 50% were girls. In 2010, the government of Burkina Faso, in conjunction with UNICEF, built Amité B (due to the increase in school enrollment), a six-classroom extension of Amité A. In addition, according to the World Bank (2007), 7,000 classrooms were built in 2006 alone, primarily in rural areas, to help meet the increased demand. Still, according

to UNICEF (n.d.), enrollment in schools in Burkina Faso remains low with only one out of every three children ages 6-13 years attending school. Problems that persist in preventing children from attending school are poverty, illness and disease, forced and early marriage among children under the age of 15, malnutrition, a lack of clean, drinkable water, orphan-hood, and parental attitudes, (UNICEF, n.d.).

Traditional school buildings in Burkina Faso are typically rectangular, each classroom having its own door that opens to the outside. Some of the schools are little more than a thatched roof held up by several sticks. They are often over crowded with as many as 100 students in a classroom; ventilation is typically poor (Houston, 2011). One African architect, Francis Kéré, is gaining notice as he builds schools in Gando, Burkina Faso, primarily using local materials and workers (Dumiak, 2010; Kéré, 2012). Francis Kéré was born and raised in Gando, Burkina Faso and attended school there through the completion of his secondary program. He went on to attend college in Germany and studied architecture with the idea of returning to Burkina Faso to build schools in communities that were in need, prioritizing sustainability and community involvement. He uses innovative design to improve air circulation and longevity and utilizes materials to maximize durability of construction. The building of these schools has not only made school more accessible for children in communities where previously there were none, but also has made them more comfortable environments in which to learn (Dumiak, 2010, Kéré, 2012). Another NGO actively involved in building schools in Burkina Faso is Article 25, a charitable organization from the United Kingdom. They are building new schools in the provincial capital of Gourcy, to alleviate overcrowding of the existing Bethel Secondary School, which has been forced to turn away "scores of children every year." (Spring, 2012, para. 2). Article 25, together with Giving Africa, another charity located in the UK, plan to build 20

additional schools across the country using innovative design, local building materials, and workers from the regions in which the schools are built (Spring, 2012).

In contrast to the educational system of Burkina Faso, schools in the United States are the responsibility of the state governments, which then places this obligation on the local school district (Cocking & Morphet, 1949). There are approximately 33,370 private schools in the United States (Digest of Education Statistics, 2011, as cited in The Center for Education Reform, 2012), 89,817 public schools, and 5,997 charter schools (Phi Delta Kappan, 2014), in total serving 54,876,000 students (Digest of Education Statistics, as cited in The Center for Education Reform, 2012). Compulsory education is established at the state level, and required ages from which one is expected to be enrolled in school ranges from five years of age (as the minimum) to 18 years of age (as the maximum), with mandatory free education offered to students as old as 26 years of age under certain circumstances (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). The dropout rate for students aged 16-24 years (combined, all races) was seven percent nationally (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). As of 2011, enrollment rates for children ages 7-13 years was 98% in 2011 and 95% for students ages 14-17 years of ages (U. S. Department of Education, 2013). The high school graduation rate in 2012 was 80%, the highest in the history of the United States (Amos, 2014).

Language of instruction. Nikièma (2011) gathered data from previous studies and from government records detailing student outcomes using either French-only instruction or a combination of French and a first-language (bilingual instruction). Data were collected from 1963 through 2009 in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso. The article is potentially biased toward bi-lingual instruction, as evidenced by a failure to identify study limitations or areas of future research. However, bias aside, the data suggest that bilingual instruction in Burkina Faso and

other francophone countries would be a positive addition to the official curriculum and be effective in helping children achieve academic success not only in primary school, but in secondary school as well.

Omoniyi (2007) found that programs initiated in sub-Saharan countries to promote indigenous language(s) as the main language of instruction for the first four years of school were not always consistently implemented. This researcher explored the differences between macro-language planning (language favored by government) and micro-level language planning (language used or favored by individuals, groups, or communities). The conclusion was that micro-language planning had better results when used alongside macro-languages in communities and schools rather than the more common approach of macro-language planning only for official use in government and schools. This lends support to a bilingual approach to instruction. Research that Traoré, Kaboré, and Dieudonné (2009) conducted in rural areas of Burkina Faso is also consistent with literature suggesting effectiveness of bilingual education. Beginning in 2003, children who completed the bi-lingual program had a 52.8% success rate for the national exam for the primary certificate compared to the national average of 42% (Traoré et al., 2009). Pupils participating in the bilingual program completed their primary schooling in five years instead of the traditional six and mastered the four operations of numbers from 1-999 during their first year of school, as compared to students in traditional schools who were able to master numbers only from 1-20, and that with difficulty.

Bilingual instruction in sub-Saharan Africa, including Burkina Faso, was found to be one factor contributing to improved education in primary school along with improved teacher training programs. Bilingual instruction is consistent with student centered instructional methods as opposed to teacher-centered instructional methods (Dembélé & Lefoca, 2007). Two

countries, Mali and Namibia, were scrutinized closely in the study largely due to the implementation of bilingual education in their primary schools and the reports that bilingual students outperformed their French-only instruction counterparts in reading skills (Dembélé & Lefoca, 2007). The acquisition of reading skills is further recognized to be a learning tool and, as literacy overall is known to be quite poor among students in sub-Saharan Africa, the importance of helping students learn to read cannot be over emphasized.

Michaelowa (2001) and Trudell (2011) consider the language of instruction as a barrier to education in Burkina Faso. In many countries and communities in Africa, education is prized as a method and means of achieving a better life. Trudell offers a counter argument to the premise that all education is a gateway to a better life in terms of enhanced social, political and economic mobility, given that the instruction is presented in a language that is foreign to the child (i.e., not a first language). This practice renders education more of a barrier than a "gateway." (Trudell, 2011, p. 369). In Madagascar, where teachers instruct about mathematics in a local language through the first three years of school (and in French thereafter), fifth-grade students score better in math than do fifth-grade students in Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Senegal where the primary language of instruction is French through all the grades (Michaelowa, 2001). This would support the notion that the language of instruction can either be a support or hindrance to desired educational outcomes.

Access to education. In a review of the literature, Carr-Hill and Peart (2011) examine nomadic tribes of southeast Africa countries, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. It is an extensive review of the impact education, or a lack of it, has on the people of these countries and how they view themselves in light of traditional education, to which they have little to no access. The results contrast with the development of Shepherd's Schools for

children of nomadic peoples in northern Burkina Faso where the establishment of alternatives schools designed to meet the needs of nomadic children has been initiated and welcomed by the community leaders and parents (Ouedraogo, 2012).

A report by the Circle of Studies for Islamic Research and Training (2013) generated for the government of Burkina Faso indicates that Koranic schools could be another source of teaching literacy skills to Burkinabé children. At the present time, Koranic schools (either permanent, temporary, or migrating), are primarily for the instruction of the Koran. The report numbers over 7,000 Koranic schools throughout the entire country, which minister to approximately 150,000 children. The report indicates that the schools could also be involved in the education of Burkinabé children in all regions of the country. Researchers working with this organization are investigating how to integrate Koranic schools into the general educational process of Burkina Faso and help achieve the literacy goals established by the government of Burkina Faso to be met by 2015.

A literature review O'Ketch and Rolleston (2007) conducted examined how fees charged to families in East Africa for the education of their children affected their enrollment in school. The literature within the review generally supported free education for all children, including books, materials, sundry fees, and other costs the governments could expect to incur should education become a totally government-sponsored institution. Fees charged to parents for the education of their children were considered to be hardships that fell more disproportionately on the poor than on families who were more financially secure. This review is applicable to the educational system in Burkina Faso where fees for educational materials such as books are still commonplace.

The number of schools available for students to attend also affects access to education.

Article 25, a charitable organization from the United Kingdom is building new schools in the provincial capital of Gourcy, to alleviate overcrowding of the existing Bethel Secondary School, which has been forced to turn away "scores of children every year." (Spring, 2012, para. 2).

Special education. There is virtually no literature regarding the subject of special education in Burkina Faso. As noted in Bines and Lei (2011), Burkina Faso, along with Mali and Senegal, has made no national plans to provide schooling or educational services for children with disabilities, but that does not account for the dearth of information about the subject in Burkina Faso. Special education has received little attention in developing countries, in spite of programs such as Education for All and Education for All Fast Track Initiative (Bines & Lei, 2011). This void offers ample opportunity for research. The following literature regarding the topic of special education and students with disabilities will therefore be drawn from other countries in Africa where some limited research has been conducted.

It is estimated that less than 10% of children with disabilities on the continent of Africa attend school (World Vision, 2007:3, as cited by Bines & Lei, 2011). In Africa, to have a physical or mental disability of any kind is shameful—a social disgrace (Jilek, Jilek, Kaaya, Mkombachepa, & Hillary, 1997; Rule & Modipa, 2012). There is a stigma associated with disabilities because traditional beliefs held that, among other things, a disability could result from a divine curse or ancestral punishment that had befallen a family or individual. It may be regarded as a sign of bewitchment, a form of insanity, of a supernatural origin and therefore not treatable, or the person could be a subhuman (Jilek et al., 1997; Rule & Modipa, 2012). Consequently, a person may be rejected or shunned by the community or even the family, ridiculed, or abused. These children are often not allowed to attend school (Jilek et al., 1997). Person's suffering from epilepsy are frequently regarded with fear because family and

community members do not understand what is happening to the person when having convulsive seizures (Jilek et al., 1997). Prolonged, untreated seizure activity can lead to psychosocial behaviors such as hallucinations, paranoia, delusions, violence, and aggression. Moreover, there is a pervasive, commonly held fear throughout Africa that epilepsy is contagious, contributing to even greater social isolation. This makes employment difficult, if not impossible to secure, and marriage is equally problematic (Jilek et al., 1997). However, as Jilek et al. found through a study conducted in Tanzania, community education could help community members understand that epilepsy is a treatable condition, and relieve fears about epilepsy. These programs have brought about new ideas within the community of how to help children with seizure disorders succeed in school.

A study conducted in South Africa regarding adult learners with disabilities revealed that many adults with disabilities were not allowed to attend school as children (Rule & Modipa, 2012). Consequently, they are under represented at all levels of higher education and a significant proportion of adults with disabilities are illiterate, more so than in the population at large. Additionally, in the rural province of KwaZulu-Natal (population 9,426,017 in 2001; Statistics South Africa, as cited in Rule & Modipa, 2012), nearly 500,000 people have some kind of a disability, are at the highest risk for contracting HIV, do not have an education, and live in poverty (Rule & Modipa, 2012). Discrimination against people with disabilities is commonplace. The study investigated how community education and awareness programs could help change attitudes toward people with disabilities, echoing the work of Jilek et al. (1997). Instructors conducted workshops that allowed opportunity for interaction between able-bodied members of the community and those with disabilities and provided participants a place to openly discuss issues such as education, marriage, and social barriers (Rule & Modipa, 2012).

Community attitudes and perceptions toward people with disabilities are further discussed in Wagithunu (2014) and Yssel, Engelbrecht, Oswald, Eloff, and Swart (2007). Wagithunu studied teacher attitudes towards children with disabilities Yssel et al. investigated parent perceptions of inclusion of their children with disabilities in classrooms in both the United States and South Africa. Inclusion of children in regular classrooms has been found to promote acceptance of students with disabilities in both countries, acknowledge parents' rights to place their children in neighborhood schools, and promote the valuation of diversity among learners (Yssel et al., 2007). Results of the study produced evidence that parents felt frustrated with what they perceived to be empty promises from administration and teachers. Some parents felt that the school had not accepted them and their children. Parents who felt that they had to be stronger advocates for their children viewed themselves as opponents of the educational team rather than members. Nonetheless, this has provided an opportunity for them to share their frustrations and they were appreciative of the support they received from the school administration (Bennet, DeLuca, & Bruns, as cited in Yssel et al., 2007).

Wagithunu (2014) found that teachers in Kenya were more positive about inclusion of children with disabilities in their classroom if the teachers had training to help them teach children who had specific learning needs, thereby increasing their confidence. This is critical in a country where children with handicaps are likely to be denied entrance to school or receive any educational services whatsoever (Wagithunu, 2014).

Health and nutrition. Biddlecom, Gregory, Lloyd, and Mensch (2008) investigated the impact of premarital sex on educational outcomes in terms of school completion. In this study, it was found that of students enrolled in school by age 12, girls were more likely to drop out than boys at any age prior to completing secondary school. Girls who do complete primary school are

less likely to progress to secondary school than are boys. Possible reasons for this may include engagement in pre-marital sex, marriage, and pregnancy at an early age. Charlés (2006) examined issues related to girls and education in Togo, another small, West African country south of Burkina Faso. Girls in the rural community who participated in the study had a low school enrollment and attendance rate. Early sexual encounters, pregnancy, and forced marriage at an early age were some of the reasons why girls in Togo do not enroll in or complete secondary school at the same rate as do boys. Charlés opened a forum through which girls could come forward and discuss the issues they faced and propose possible solutions to help them improve their futures. Other research (Janzen, 2008) has supported this type of community involvement as a way in which long-term improvement in educational and social issues may be sustainably achieved.

Dabone et al. (2011) conducted a study on the prevalence of undernutrition and micronutrient malnutrition in school-age children in public and private schools in Burkina Faso. They hypothesized that undernutrition and micronutrient malnutrition would be widespread and that children in public schools would display more symptoms of under-nutrition and micronutrient malnutrition than children in private schools. The underlying assumption of the study is that nutrition impacts children's learning. Results of the study confirmed that malnutrition, whether undernutrition or micronutrient deficiencies, was highly prevalent in school-age children in urban areas. Previous studies focused on rural areas where the food supply was inadequate and nutritional status in school-age children was presumed to be poor.

Delisle, Receveur, Victoire, and Chizuru (2013) examined a pilot study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2006 in Benin and Burkina Faso, that served to explain some of the difficulties encountered in those countries in implementing food programs. The

goals of food programs included assisting school children and their families with access to food, improved overall nutrition, and improved sanitation, all of which impact the ability of children to learn. According to Delisle et al. (2013), "Child malnutrition cannot be addressed without attention to education" (p. 39).

Kazianga, Walque, and Alderman (2012, 2014) evaluated feeding programs to determine if they improved the overall health status of school children in Burkina Faso. For children who qualified for the program, take home rations (THR) helped them gain weight, while children who only ate meals at school only did not have significant weight gain. Girls who attended school for a specific number of days are eligible for THR, and boys qualify for this program if there are girls at home who are under the age of five. One possibility for the increase in weight is that the combination of programs providing meals at school and those offering THR helps children gain weight because there is more food available for all members of the family. Enrollment in school is higher for both boys and girls when a feeding program is implemented (Kazianga et al., 2014).

Cour (2000) examined food security in West Africa and the migration of people between countries. Although this study focused primarily on the economy of farming, food security is linked to health, nutrition, and the decision of families to enroll their children in school, all of which impact a child's ability to receive an education (Dabone et al., 2011; Delisle et al., 2013; Kazianga et al., 2012, 2014).

In sub-Saharan West Africa, water is scarce. Houenou, Odai, Annor, and Adjel (2012) and Santos and LeGrand (2012) studied access to water. With approximately 80% of the population living in rural areas (World Bank, 2007) and relying on subsistence farming for a living, access to water is of primary importance. In rural communities, 80% of the available water is used for farming (crops or livestock) and small reservoirs are commonly used to save

water during the dry season to irrigate crops and meet domestic needs, among other uses (Houenou et al., 2012). Disease transmission due to unsanitary water is a major health concern and is responsible for a loss of productivity and days attended at school (Santos & LeGrand, 2012). Access to tap water, which reduces the incidence of disease resulting from contamination, is considered essential to economic development and is an indicator of social equity, particularly in the areas of education and gender equality. The Santos and LeGrand (2012) study showed that people who had at least a primary education were more likely to have access to tap water at some stage of their life in comparison to people with no education. Further, access to tap water could reduce child labor, thus increasing school attendance (Santos & LeGrand, 2012).

Access to potable water is also the subject of a study by Savadogo et al. (2013). Similar to Houenou et al. (2012) and Santos and LeGrand (2012), Savadago et al. focused on access to clean drinking water in West Africa, specifically the Sourou River Valley in Burkina Faso. In urban areas, Burkina Faso adheres to the WHO standards of pollution for safe drinking water. In rural areas, however, up to 60% of the drinking water was contaminated at levels exceeding the recommendation of WHO (Savago et al., 2013). Illnesses from consuming impure, un-safe water remain a major threat to health across the globe and are a contributing factor in 70%- 80% of health problems in developing countries (Savago et al., 2013). Diseases resulting in diarrhea are responsible for 2.2 million water-related deaths annually and 90% of these deaths occur in children under five years of age (Savago et al., 2013). The pathogens Escherichia coli (E. coli) and fecal coliforms "were the most common microbiological contaminants found in 100% of the wells tested" (Savago et al., 2013).

Nitiema et al. (2011) examined the effects of rotavirus and diarrhea on children's health

in Burkina Faso. While the Savadago et al. (2013) study focused on unclean water and the effects it had on the health of children in Burkina Faso, Nitiema et al. examined other causes of gastroenteritis and diarrhea among children under or equal to five years old. Among the pathogens and infections identified were rotavirus, E. coli, Shigella, Salmonella, parasitic infections, and Trichomonas, some of which could be a result of drinking unclean water. Rotavirus was the most prevalent pathogen identified. The incidence of diarrhea among children under five years of age is estimated to be between six and eight occurrences annually (Nitiema et al., 2011). Children in this age bracket are also highly susceptible to malnutrition, which contributes to a higher death rate from diarrhea.

Malarial infections are most prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa during and shortly after the rainy season (June to November), but can also occur outside the rainy season, causing approximately one million deaths annually, primarily in children under five years of age (Tipke et al., 2014). In Burkina Faso, there is an average of two occurrences of malaria per child per year, and it is also one of the leading causes of death among children under five years old (Samadoulougou, et al., 2014; Tiono, et al., 2014; Tipke, et al., 2009). A shortage of health care facilities, primarily in rural areas; long distances that must be traveled (often on foot) from home to clinic; and inadequate preventive treatments are responsible for the high number of cases of malaria in Burkina Faso and sub-Saharan Africa in general (Samadoulougou, et al., 2014; Tiono, et al., 2014; Tipke, et al., 2009). The use of treated mosquito nets and anti-malarial medicines such as artemisinin-based combination therapy would help prevent and minimize the number of outbreaks and reduce malaria related mortalities experienced throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Tipke et al., 2009).

The literature regarding HIV in Africa is abundant. Children and adults infected and

living with HIV face considerable social and health difficulties, not the least of which is the decision to reveal that a person has HIV, which is complicated by the stigma surrounding the diagnosis. Maintaining confidentiality and secrecy regarding one's HIV status is paramount (Bernays, Jarrett, Kranzer, & Ferrand, 2014; Brouwer, Lok, Wolfers, & Sebagalls, 2000; Hamra, Ross, Orrs, & D'Agostino, 2006; Hejoaka, 2009; Kiawanuka, Mulogo, & Haberer, 2014; Kidia et al., 2013; Ouedraogo, 2012; Uys, 2000). The largest at-risk group for infection is young women, ages 15—24 (Ouedraogo, 2012), but the fastest growing group of people infected with and living with HIV in Africa is children under the age of 15, with 2.9 million HIV-infected children living in sub-Saharan Africa (Kiwanuka et al., 2014). Many of them have been taking anti-retroviral therapy since infancy and are now living into adulthood (Bernays et al., 2014; Hejoaka, 2009). There is no model to follow to know how to help these children cope with their illness and transition into adulthood because it is such a recent development. Long-term HIV infection does tremendous damage to the body and can result in learning impairments, including blindness and deafness (Bernays et al., 2014). The fear of others finding out they are sick forces adolescents to try to hide their medication regimen and lie about why they are ill. They most likely inherited the disease from a parent and consequently must face the prospect of orphan hood, as Thiombiano, LeGrand, and Kobiane (2013) documented. In addition, there is also a decrease in school attendance due to a change in the family structure and family finances. These children are more likely to have lower educational accomplishments due to interrupted school attendance and a lack of income to pay for school fees, all of which harms their ability to achieve future economic independence (Bernays et al., 2014).

Parents infected with HIV face as many dilemmas with everyday life as do their children who are living with HIV. Women who are infected with HIV fear telling their husbands

as he and his family may reject her; she may be forced to leave the home and possibly the village. These women worry that if they die, their children will not be properly cared for. They may not have money for food, schooling, or health care, the latter having significant importance if the child also has HIV (Brouwer et al., 2000). In some locales, if a child's HIV status is made known, he or she will be refused admittance to school (Hamra et al., 2006). If a parent is so sick that she or he is not able to properly care for the children, sometimes the children have to over see their own medication and walk to the hospital alone for check-ups. Parents often do not want to tell their children they have HIV because they do not think the child will be able to keep it secret (Hamra et al., 2006; Kidia et al., 2014; Kiwanuka et al., 2014; Madiba, 2013). Yet knowledge of the disease is viewed as necessary to ensure compliance with a prescribed treatment program and promote better overall health and well being (Kidia et al., 2014; Kiwanuka et al., 2014).

Adolescents, when given the choice of how they want to be told of their disease, have indicated they prefer a clinical setting due to the perception that the workers have more knowledge of the disease and that the information is legitimate (Kidia et al., 2014). They also have indicated they would prefer to know the truth about their health than to remain ignorant. Becoming aware of their HIV status, though, complicates their societal role in relation to continued education, the decision to reveal their HIV status to boyfriends or girlfriends, and the potential of attracting a marriage partner, which is a key component of entering into adult society (Ouedraogo, 2012).

HIV is at epidemic levels in Africa, and Burkina Faso has undertaken many steps to limit its spread. Kirakoya et al. (2013) examined HIV as a health risk for teachers. Teachers are considered to be in a higher risk category due to high mobility within the profession; mobility is

thought to increase the prevalence of HIV due the proclivity to engage in higher-risk sexual behaviors while away from home (Kirakoya et al., 2013). The study found that there was a higher prevalence of HIV among teachers in urban areas than in rural areas and that prolonged periods of absenteeism, early retirement, and mortality due to HIV infection also negatively impacted the rate of student attendance at school (Matchinda, as cited in Kirakoya et al., 2013).

Guo, Li, and Sherr (2012) conducted a global literature review on the outcome of education for children orphaned due to the death of one or both parents due to AIDS. Of the 23 studies that they included, 21 of them were conducted in sub-Saharan Africa. Their findings revealed, among other things, that in 2010, 15.7 million children in sub-Saharan Africa were orphaned by AIDS, school attendance declined in the months before and after the death of a parent, girls were less likely to be enrolled in school following the death of a parent; the death of both parents greatly affected the grade level in which surviving children would be enrolled, and surviving children were more likely to drop out of school when double orphaned. Given that "education is universally recognized to be essential for child development and has far-reaching impact on societies" (Guo et al., 2012, p. 994), it is imperative that governments put strategies in place to minimize the overall impact that parental death from AIDS has on a child's education.

The most recent health threat that the Burkinabé people faced was from the Ebola virus. Ebola, also known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, is a disease that can cause massive internal bleeding, is transmitted through body fluids, and has a mortality rate of 55—90%. Burkina Faso was one of 11 West African countries on alert for the potential spread of the disease from the countries with the worst of the epidemic, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia (BBC, 2014; WHO, 2014). As of October 25, 2014, there were over 10,000 reported cases of Ebola in West Africa with 4,912 deaths (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014). Short-term

predictions for additional cases of Ebola are as many as 10,000 per week by the end of 2014 and greater than 1,000,000 total cases by January 2015 if there are insufficient strategies to contain the disease (WHO, 2014, as cited by Sengupta, 2014). As school attendance is greatly influenced by the death of one or both parents (Guo et al., 2012), this major health threat is alarming. Fortunately, the outbreak passed and did not penetrate the border of Burkina Faso.

Policy and development. Janzen (2008) presented an argument based on post-development theory that imposing Western thought on education and the sharing of knowledge may actually be hindering developing countries' advancement (e.g. intellectual, economic) and their ability to solve their own problems. He argued that this might be true for all solutions Western countries impose that are not sufficiently informed by knowledge of the actual problems faced by people in developing countries. Janzen documented the experiences of 12 women in Uganda as they form a community group, write a constitution by which to govern their group, gain knowledge from outside sources (e.g. government agencies, NGOs), share knowledge within their group, and actively support each other in their economic and private pursuits. While Janzen supports their efforts to conduct their lives according to their common traditions, he is critical of their adoption of Western ideas that the women consider beneficial. Buchert (2002) offered a counterargument to the community approach, placing the focus on the cooperation of multiple agencies (government, NGOs such as World Bank, and UNESCO) for the purpose of developing and implementing programs designed to improve education. Monitoring and evaluation of the programs is managed at the community level. This follows a top-down approach to problem solving in lieu of encouraging local communities to identify problems and construct solutions that are community-oriented rather than government-oriented.

Kam and Sanou (2003), ministers of education within Burkina Faso, outlined policies and

practices within the government, culture, and education system that were hindering the advancement of educational goals. In particular, they addressed failures of the government to implement policies and reforms that had been initiated in years past. The new directives and laws would promote more teacher training, increased enrollment in primary school, maintenance of enrollment in secondary school, and reduction of financial barriers that graduates of secondary schools encounter that impedes their ability to pursue a college degree. The weakness of these reform policies lies in their lack of follow-up and accountability to determine the progress of their implementation as well as their outcomes on education.

Omolewa (2006) examined the British system of education in British colonial Africa and provided an explanation for why it failed. The European-colonial based style of education was implemented throughout much of Africa in the 1800s for the purpose of serving the colonizing country. It did not take into consideration the traditions, needs, or the language of the indigenous people. According to Omolewa, Africans were not "prepared for leadership, independent thinking, confidence building, and assertiveness" (p. 282), nor were educational programs "geared toward finding solutions to the problems of hunger, poverty, [or] technological backwardness" (p. 282). This supports the Jantzen (2008) study that governments in West Africa have attempted to use solutions derived from Western assumptions, and consequently continually failed to address problems in the education system.

Family structure. Pagnier et al. (2008) examined the impact of orphan-hood on the likelihood that a child would be enrolled in and finish grammar school. The significance of this study lies in the fact that orphanhood is a critical area of concern in Burkina Faso that can have a major impact on educational outcomes for this demographic. Additionally, orphanhood status in Burkina Faso may not only result from the death of a parent or parents; it may also be the result

of child fostering (Akresh, 2008; Pagnier et al., 2008). Child fostering is the practice of sending children to live with families who may or may not be related to them as well as taking in children from other families that may or may not be related to the fostering family. As noted in Pagnier et al., orphanhood has an impact on a family's decision to enroll their children in school. A child whose parents are no longer available due to fostering or other reasons may also be considered an orphan (Pagnier et al., 2008). This practice is widespread in Burkina Faso and is done for presumed or real economic and social benefit, including but not limited to better access to education, improved economic status of the fostered child, and better nutrition and healthcare. Akresh (2008) discussed this cultural practice in his study but did not address the length of time a fostered child may live with the receiving family; how many children are never reclaimed by their biological families; and the long-term educational, economic, social, and cultural impact of child fostering on the fostered child.

Serra (2009) found that child fostering in Africa may have benefits for the child such as improved nutrition and schooling. When a family sends one of more of their children to another family to live, it changes the structure of both households but the biological parents do not generally give up their parental rights. If both families desire the fostering arrangement, the fostered child is not usually put at risk for negative outcomes. However, if the fostering is due to an emergency, such as the death of a parent, the child is at risk for decreased school attendance and increased work responsibilities within the fostering home (Serra, 2009).

Thiombiano et al. (2013) found that the absence of a parent due to divorce and/or the death of the father significantly increased the incidence of mortality and decreased school attendance in children under five years of age in Burkina Faso. The risk was found to be greatest within the first two years after a divorce. As divorce and parental union dissolution is quite

common in Burkina Faso, Thiombiano et al. suggested that, due to the fragility of the family, policies and interventions should take into account the specific needs of children of divorced parents or a deceased father in order "to improve child health and schooling prospects" (Thiombiano et al., 2013) as well as the child's overall wellbeing. The death of the mother due to medical complications at birth was also associated with early child mortality (Soreng et al., 2012). The implication of this is that improved health services for the expectant mother can improve health outcomes for her and her child, thereby prolonging the life of the child (Soreng et al., 2012).

The Future of Education in Burkina Faso

Kouraogo and Dianda (2008) provided an analysis of the progress the country of Burkina Faso has made to meet the educational needs of children and families. The analysis examined progress the country has made in reference to a prospective study it launched in 1999, *Burkina 2025*, (Kouraogo & Dianda, 2008). The authors included past and present goals and objectives, and measure current progress toward those stated goals and objectives, providing a snapshot of where things currently stand. They also projected what the future of education might look like in Burkina Faso by 2025 depending on whether or not the stated goals and objectives are reached. The most optimistic projection is modest and avoids skepticism: the country will likely achieve some, but not all of its goals. The analysis is non-comprehensive but does cover a number of pressing issues including the official curricula, decentralization, yet another countrywide educational reform, finances, and more.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The literature to date is relevant to education in Burkina Faso primarily focuses on theory, advances (or lack thereof) in educating the children of Burkina Faso, barriers to

education in Burkina Faso, and educational policy, including the choice and development of curriculum and the language of instruction. This literature review details a comprehensive collection of scholarly writings that address both micro and macro issues related to or applicable to education in Burkina Faso. The literature is expanding to address issues such as the consequences for children who do not receive an education—e.g. consequences for their adulthood, social ramifications of older teens and young adults who are still in primary school, consequences for children who are abandoned, reasons parents abandon their children, reasons children are not enrolled in school and the consequences of this, street children, the role orphanages play in caring for and educating abandoned children, and health issues (HIV, AIDS, malaria, malnutrition, etc.) as they are related to education. Many of these issues emerged from this study as relevant to the participants' experiences with the educational system as well as barriers to education. Importantly, this literature review helped to determine where gaps in the literature existed and how the study could address those gaps.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Overview

The purpose of this case study is twofold: (a) to examine the various causes of under-education in Burkina Faso and (b) to examine the impact of poverty on the education of the Burkinabé. Gaining a clear understanding of the impact of receiving (or not receiving) an education in Burkina Faso on human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy, is critical to the formation of effective education policy, programs and curricula.

This chapter is organized into ten sections with six sub-headings. In the first, the reasoning for using a case study was explained. Following this, the three research questions this case study addresses and answers are listed, and the rationale and methods by which the participants were selected are explained. Subsequently, the selection of potential sites, for the case study is explained and the procedures of the study are then described. The researcher's background and personal beliefs that were pertinent to the study and the different methods of collecting data (interviews, observations, documents, and supplementary sources of data) and the type of data collected are justified. The section on data analysis then provides details about the methods of data analysis after the data were collected. Trustworthiness was established through validation, external audits, and rich, thick description. Finally, the section on ethical considerations addresses informed consent, confidentiality, and methods of storing, protecting, and disposing of the data.

Design

An intrinsic case study approach was used in this case study. Case studies are appropriate when the focus of the research is to seek a more in-depth understanding of an issue or a phenomenon (Yin, 2009). An intrinsic case study allows a researcher to focus on the case

itself, such as in program evaluation or system examination, rather than on a solitary aspect of a problem or a single individual (Creswell, 2013). The intrinsic case study approach was deemed to be the best design for this study, as the focus of the research is a system—specifically the education system of Burkina Faso. Time, geographical boundaries, education levels, and income bound the study, as defined in Creswell (2013). Interviews and observations were the primary tools used to collect data.

The case study, as a method of research, has been used in the field of social science for many decades. Frédéric Le Play may have documented the earliest use of a case study. Le Play was a Frenchman who studied the families of miners in France and surrounding countries for the purpose of compiling economic data and promoting social reform (Higgs, 1890). His research design was a monograph. A monograph is defined as "a detailed written study of a single, specialized subject or an aspect of it" (Oxford Dictionaries, n.d., sentence 1). When studying a family, Le Play would live with the family for up to a month, inquire about their family history, and gain their trust through sympathetic listening (Higgs, 1890). The data he gathered were later compiled into a meticulous report detailing the families' economic status and ways in which their status affected the family structure and their role in society.

 Case studies are frequently used to help explain a phenomenon in the fields of education, psychology, economics, politics, medicine, community planning, and in other areas of study. In case studies, investigators are able to retain the aggregate and relevant characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 2009). As such, this method is appropriate for this study, as the purpose of the research is to gain a more in-depth understanding of the impact of the education system on the people of Burkina Faso.

Research Questions

This case study is used to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso?

RQ2: How does a lack of access to education impact the ability of the Burkinabé to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for oneself and family members?

RQ3: What are the consequences of chronic poverty in Burkina Faso on human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy?

Setting

This study was conducted in the country of Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso was chosen as the site for this study based on information gathered about the country. The primary sites for this study consisted of two public elementary schools and seven private elementary schools located throughout Burkina Faso, one orphanage, one health care facility, and two government offices. The orphanages serve children and families from both urban and rural areas of Burkina Faso and one provides elementary education on-site. The orphanages are privately run by individuals from Burkina Faso and the United States and are located in rural and urban areas of Burkina Faso. The schools are located in urban and rural areas of Burkina Faso and the clinic is located in an urban area of Burkina Faso. The government offices are all located in Ouagadougou, the capital city. All sites were selected for their geographical proximity to one another within a three-hour drive of Ouagadougou, where I was staying, due to the difficulty of long distance travel in Burkina Faso.

Employees and volunteers staff all sites; they have in-depth experience working with the Burkinabé people and understand the significance why in which their lives are impacted by

education, or lack thereof. The two selected cities and two villages represent a cross section of Burkina Faso in terms of geographical location (rural or urban), employment, type of schools (rural, urban, private, public), access to schools, and availability to health care. This cross section was appropriate to the study, as multiple perspectives from people located in different areas of Burkina Faso was desirable in order to cover as much of the spectrum or range of perspectives as possible, as suggested by Creswell (2013).

Participants

The participants include both men and women from the United States and from Burkina Faso. The participants were currently working in schools, orphanages, health care clinics, and other select organizations in Burkina Faso. They were located in two cities of Burkina Faso (one large and one smaller city), and one or more villages based on their geographical proximity to Ouagadougou. The administrators of the schools, orphanages, clinics, and organizations were contacted and asked if they would consider allowing their employees or staff to participate in the study. The goal was that representatives from eight to 10 schools, two orphanages, two health care facilities, and two or more government organizations from the site cities would agree to participate in the study. Out of the 10 schools whose leaders were contacted, eight agreed to participate: two public schools and six private. One private school was a school for the blind, four private schools were Christian (two church affiliated, one missionary, and one NGO), and one was an international school. Two orphanages were contacted to participate in the study and one participated. In addition, two government organizations and one health care facility also participated in the study.

Teachers, directors, and staff in the participating schools, orphanages, health care facilities, and government organizations were contacted by email or in person to invite them to

participate in this study. The aim was that 20 to 30 people would respond and agree to be

interviewed, as this would have been an appropriate number of participants for this type of study

(Creswell, 2013). In total, 27 people participated in the study, all of who were over the age of

18. Purposive sampling was used to select participants. Purposive sampling is the selection of

participants by the researcher because they can "purposefully inform an understanding of the

research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2013, p. 156). A sample

from each area was desirable in order to capture a range of views of how access to education

impacts the Burkinabé people. The possibility of other participants to be selected was left open

in the event that, as the study progressed, it was deemed additional issues related to education

could have been clarified by the recruitment of additional participants.

Procedures

Approval for this study was sought through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to

February 28, 2015 (Appendix B). Contact with the potential participants was initiated in via e-

mail December 2013 for the purpose of establishing a relationship with the participants prior to

the commencement of the study. Follow-up contacts were conducted via email, cell telephone,

or in person. Initial contacts were also made in person for the purpose of establishing a

relationship between potential participants and myself prior to the commencement of the study.

Following IRB approval, I traveled to the country of Burkina Faso, upon which I conducted

interviews in person at pre-arranged locations, dates, and times and observed the actual study

sites. Documents were examined after all the data were collected; artifacts, such as photographs,

were collected and examined. I was limited to approximately two weeks to collect the data. The

specifics of the interviews, observations, and documents are detailed further in the following

section on data collection. At the conclusion of the collection process, the data were analyzed.

The Researcher's Role

I came to know Jesus as my Lord and Savior at the age of 23. It is through His leading that I am pursuing a doctorate in education at Liberty University. I strongly believe that education can provide the foundation for people to obtain a means to a better life in terms of employment and level of income. I strongly believe that Jesus is the only answer to the problems the world faces, but also hold the conviction that education and the efforts of dedicated Christians can change a child's future.

I am not a subscriber of social justice theory, but rather a believer in the Great Commission which, if read in the context of the entire New Testament, is more than informing people about salvation through Jesus Christ; it includes ministering to the entirety of their needs as human beings. From that platform, I chose to bring attention to the needs of a group of people living in a small, landlocked country in Africa. Words are inadequate to describe the conditions in which many of the Burkinabé live: people whose home is the gutter, who face the specter of starvation on a regular basis, whose babies are retrieved from latrine pits, who comb through garbage to find anything edible or usable—stark reminders of how much work is left to be done in this world before the return of Jesus.

It was necessary for me to set aside some or many of my preconceived notions or beliefs regarding these issues and not allow those ideas to bias my perceptions and interpretation of the data that are collected, but rather let the data speak for themselves.

I studied an education system in a country that is vastly different from the United States in terms of culture, sanitation, religion, and societal norms regarding the education of children and the role of education within the lives of the people of Burkina Faso. It was necessary for me to set aside some or many of my ideas regarding cultural issues (e.g. sanitation and living

conditions) and prevent those beliefs from biasing my collection and interpretation of the data that were collected, and observe cultural differences as objectively as possible and note them in the data.

Data Collection

To triangulate the data, three main sources of data were conducted or collected: interviews, observations, and documents. Data triangulation is recommended by Creswell (2013) to ensure validity of the case study. Typically, triangulation entails the collection of information from at least three different sources or the use of different methods to gather data for the purpose of corroborating data. In addition, artifacts such as photographs and an ongoing personal journal were used to supplement the other three sources of data. Initially, because they were the most time consuming and could only possible within the country, interviews and observations were conducted, field notes written, and physical artifacts gathered. Subsequently, I located documents detailing rates of school enrollment and attendance, test scores, ages of students, and other pertinent data. This step was conducted following the other methods of data collection, as it was possible to locate this information either while in country or from a remote location. In the remainder of this section, each method of data collection is more fully described.

Interviews

The main source of data collection was the semi-structured or focused interviews, which were designed to address each of the research questions. This formed the foundation of the case study investigation. A focused interview is an interview process in which the interviewee is interviewed for a short period of time and answers interview questions derived from the study protocol (Yin, 2009). Harvey and Long (2001) define semi-structured interviews as a type of interview in which a series of open-ended questions based on the topic of research are asked of

each participant. This type of interview allows sub-topics to emerge naturally during the interview, which can then be further explored by the researcher. Although the researcher generally identifies areas of inquiry prior to the interview, the interview should still be sufficiently flexible to allow new themes to surface that may not have been anticipated by the researcher.

Field notes were taken throughout the case study to include both descriptive and reflective information (University of Southern California [USC], n.d.). Descriptive information provides details about factual data, such as the date and time, settings, observed behaviors, and conversations. Reflective data comprise a record of the researcher's thoughts, ideas, questions, and concerns that are occurring either before, during, or after the data collection process (USC, n.d.).

Prior to the interview process, personal visits, emails, or phone calls were used to contact all participants a minimum of two to four weeks before the study began. During these contacts, the study was explained and the interview questions to be asked were outlined. Communication with as many participants as possible via email continued prior to the commencement of the study for the purpose of establishing and maintaining relationships. Participants were contacted and dates and times for the interviews were established, which I personally conducted. The setting for interviews were on-site and in person; however, it was determined that if follow-up discussions were necessary, they would be conducted via Skype, email, or over the telephone. Skype is a software application and online service that enables voice and videophone calls over the Internet (Dictionary.com, n.d.). Because it was possible that several English-speaking participants might have been out of the country at the time of the interviews or immediately following their interview, interviews and/or follow-up discussions may have needed to be

conducted by telephone or via Skype with these participants.

Several experts in qualitative design studies were consulted to review the interview questions prior to the dissertation proposal. In addition, six people outside the study sample from the education, health-care, and missionary fields (to replicate the participant pool) piloted the interview. The researcher and an interpreter interviewed all French-speaking participants together on-site. All selected participants (school directors, teachers, orphanage workers, health care workers, and missionaries) were initially interviewed over the course of two weeks. Interviews were informal and recorded with an audio recording device as well as manually (hand written and/or entered into a computer). Open-ended interview questions were prepared and approved by the IRB and each interview lasted between 15 and 45 minutes; due to time restraints, all questions were not asked of every participant (interview protocol Appendix C). Open-ended interview questions (Appendix A):

1. What is your position in this organization?

2. How long have you worked in this organization?

3. Why did you decide to work for this organization?

4. In your opinion, what do you consider to be obstacles or barriers to education in Burkina Faso?

5. In your opinion, why do you think children are not enrolled in school?

6. What skills are necessary for students to bring to your classroom in order for them to be successful?

7. What happens to children when they leave the orphanage, and are they required to leave at a certain age?

8. What happens to students who do not pass the national exam after completing

sixth grade?

9. What type of employment is available for people when they leave the school system?

10. If a student is not able to attend high school and graduate, can you tell me what type of employment that person might be able to secure?

11. In your opinion, do you think religion has an affect on a child's ability to receive an education in Burkina Faso? Please explain your answer.

12. Can you explain what happens to street children, including the Garibou?

13. Please describe how children are educated in your organization.

14. What do you consider to be the strengths of the education system in Burkina Faso?

15. What are its weaknesses?

16. What additional resources do you think educational stakeholders (families, teachers, students, and so on) may feel are necessary for combating under education in Burkina Faso?

17. In your opinion, do you think health and nutrition impact a child's ability to learn or to receive an education?

18. In your opinion, what health issues do you encounter on a daily basis that may impact a family's decision to enroll or not enroll their children in school or keep them in school once enrolled?

19. What can you tell me about life in Burkina Faso, as it is related to education, that we have not yet discussed?

Interview questions one through three obtained personal information about each

participant (see Table 1 and Table 2, Chapter four). To address research question number one, what barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso, interview questions four, five, and 16 were asked:

- In your opinion, what do you consider to be obstacles or barriers to education in Burkina Faso?

- In your opinion, what do you think prevents children from enrolling in school?

- In your opinion, do you think health and nutrition impact a child's ability to learn or to receive an education?

Interview question four is supported by multiple studies that indicate there are a number of factors and situations that present barriers to education in Burkina Faso. Several researchers have identified the language of instruction as a potential barrier to education when all instruction of students at all grade levels is conducted in a language that is not a student's first language (Dembèlé & LeFoca, 2007; Traoré et al., 2009; Nikièma, 2011; Omoniyi, 2007; Michaelowa, 2001; and Trudell, 2011). The preferred language of instruction in grades one through four is initially a first (i.e., indigenous) language followed by instruction in the official language, such as French or English. There is evidence to suggest that bi-lingual education produces higher test scores in math and reading than corresponding test scores of students who only receive instruction in an official, non-first language (Nikièma, 2011). However, not all schools in sub-Saharan Africa (including Burkina Faso) follow bilingual programs of instruction (Omoniyi, 2007).

Health and nutrition have also been identified as barriers to education (Bernays et al., 2014, Guo et al., 2012) with HIV/AIDS presenting the greatest risk to school age children (Bernays et al., 2014; Brouwer et al., 2000; Hamra et al., 2006; Hejoaka, 2009; Kiawanuka et al.,

2014; Kidia et al., 2014; Madiba, 2013; Ouedraogo, 2012; Uys, 2000). Family structure (Akresh, 2008; Pagnier et al., 2008; Soreng et al. 2012; Thiombiano et al., 2013) and family income (Grimm (2011; Kazianga, 2012) also carry the potential to present significant obstacles to the education of children in Burkina Faso.

Regarding the research base for interview question number five, there has been empirical support for several factors that prevent children from enrolling children in school. Akresh (2008) and Pagnier et al. (2008) found that student enrollment in school was impacted by family structure and the presence or absence of parents in the household. Moreover, Kirakoya et al. (2013) found that teacher attendance also had an effect on student attendance and enrollment. In addition, any form of disability hinders student enrollment at school (Jilek et al., 1997; Rule & Modipa, 2012). Health problems that afflict either the parents or the children are a factor in the enrollment status of a child (Hamra et al., 2006), and the death of a parent has been shown to result in a child not being enrolled in school (Guo et al., 2012). Members of UNICEF (n.d.) note that problems that persist in preventing children from attending school include poverty, illness and disease, forced and early marriage among children under the age of 15, malnutrition, a lack of food and potable water, orphan-hood, and parental attitudes, all of which present significant obstacles to a child's ability to receive an education in Burkina Faso.

Interview question 16 asks if health and nutrition impact a child's ability to learn or to receive an education. The interview question is supported by research conducted by Dabone et al. (2011), Delisle et al. (2013), Kazianga et al. (2012, 2014), Cour (2000), all of which link having an adequate food supply to the ability of a child to learn, and to decisions families make to enroll or not enroll their children in school.

Observations, documents, physical artifacts, and reflexive journaling were also used to

answer research question one. Creswell (2013) and Yin (2009) both support the use of observations and documents as primary sources of data in qualitative studies, and physical artifacts and journaling as secondary sources of data. Observations can capture behaviors or surrounding conditions that may be pertinent to the case study (Yin, 2009). In addition, using multiple sources of data gathering (such as observations, documents, and physical artifacts) helps to strengthen the study. According to Baxter and Jack (2008):

> Potential data sources may include, but are not limited to: documentation, archival records, interviews, physical artifacts, direct observations, and participant-observation… data from these multiple sources are then converged in the analysis process rather than handled individually. Each data source is one piece of the "puzzle," with each piece contributing to the researcher's understanding of the whole phenomenon. This convergence adds strength to the findings as the various strands of data are braided together to promote a greater understanding of the case (p.554).

To address research question number two, "How does a lack of access to education impact the ability of the Burkinabé to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for oneself and a family?" interview questions seven through nine were asked and observations were also utilized.

In this section, interview question seven asks, "Can you tell me what happens to children when they leave the orphanage, and are they required to leave at a certain age?" is supported by Bernays et al. (2014), Brouwer et al. (2000), and Guo et al. (2012) who note that the death of both parents has a tremendous impact on the school enrollment and attendance rate of surviving children as well as their ability to have access to money for food and medical care. The orphanage provides many life necessities to orphaned children such as reliable shelter, food and

water, clothing, medical care and/or assistance, a safe environment, and an education or access to education. Children who leave the orphanage before they are able to provide for themselves, therefore, may be at a higher risk for not having enough of or any of the aforementioned life necessities.

Interview question eight, which asks, "Can you tell me what happens to students who do not pass the national exam after completing the sixth grade?" and the related interview question nine, "If a student is not able to attend high school and graduate, what type of employment might that person be able to secure?" are informed by research documented in a World Bank report (2012) that one out of 20 people employed in informal, non-farm sector jobs have a secondary education, and those with at least a secondary education tend to be employed in the formal or public sector (approximately 40% and 60% respectively). The vast majority of adult workers in Burkina Faso are employed in the agricultural industry or subsistence non-farming activities and have little to no formal education (World Bank, 2012). Spring (2012) noted that overcrowding in a secondary school in Gourcy, a town located in the province of Zondoma in Burkina Faso, resulted in large numbers of students being turned away every year. Further, Hernandez (2012) found that only 17% of students in Burkina Faso have access to secondary school. Having access to and the opportunity to complete secondary education affords better employment opportunities (World Bank, 2012).

For research question number three—what are the consequences of chronic poverty in Burkina Faso on human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy—the interview questions I asked were number nine and 18, respectively: "If a student is not able to go to high school and graduate, can you tell me what kind of employment that person might be able to secure?" and "What can you tell me about life in Burkina Faso as it is related to education that

we have not yet discussed?" Interview question nine is grounded in a World Bank (2012) report that details employment opportunities for adults in Burkina Faso. The report was reviewed in the context of the previous interview question. Interview question 18 is open-ended and allows for responses that may not have been covered in other questions. Maximum flexibility during interviews for the purpose of obtaining information is supported by Aberback and Rockman (2002).

Observations

Observation is "an act or instance of viewing or noting a fact or occurrence for some scientific or other special purpose" (Dictionary.com, n.d.). It is an information-gathering technique that can be used for case studies and can be conducted on site to capture behaviors or contextual conditions that may be pertinent to the case study (Yin, 2009). Observations were conducted at the time of the interviews, and I, as the researcher, was a non-participant. Observations were recorded via field notes (protocol Appendix D) as described by Creswell (2013).

Research question number one, "What barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso?" was addressed by observations of the school environment. These observations provided information about environmental features that may be a barrier to education, such as the physical condition of the property, ventilation, learning materials, cleanliness, access to potable water, the number of children in a classroom, and the child-to-teacher-ratio. Observations of teachers within the classroom were not conducted, as all interviews were conducted outside the classroom(s) so as to provide a certain amount of privacy and minimize interruptions. Houston (2011) noted that classrooms are often poorly ventilated and over-crowded, with as many as 100 students in a classroom. Dumiak (2010) and Kéré (2012) also supported the notion that the physical

environment of the school can act as either an asset or a detriment to education.

Research question two, "How does a lack of access to education impact the ability of the Burkinabé to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for oneself and a family?" was addressed by observations of local environments. These observations included such things as observable sanitation practices, children and adults searching for food in discarded refuse, the condition of the visible infrastructure such as roads and buildings, the people's apparel (shoes and clothing), the manner in which business was conducted, and so on.

Observation field notes were hand-written. Field notes are essential in case studies, as they can provide information about the subject under study that is supplemental to data gathered from other data collection methods (Yin, 2009). Field notes can take many forms, but should, at the minimum, include some basic information, such as the date, a header that provides information about what is being observed, and a place for notes. Notes can be divided into various categories such as descriptive and reflective (Creswell, 2013). Field notes were taken throughout the case study to include both descriptive and reflective information (USC, n.d.). Descriptive information provides details about factual data such as the date and time, settings, observed behaviors, and conversations. Reflective data is a record of the researcher's thoughts, ideas, questions, and concerns that are occurring either before, during, or after the data collection process (USC, n.d.).

Document Analysis

To maximize the reliability of documents, data were only obtained from public records available on line from government or NGO sources, such as the World Bank. The data described enrollment rates, ages of students enrolled, program completion and drop out rates, rates of

attendance and non-attendance, and scores of sixth-grade students who took the annual achievement test. Yin (2009) recommended using administrative documents such as progress reports and internal records that can corroborate data collected from other sources.

Data examined from public records were used to answer research questions one and two*:*

1. What barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso?

For example, low enrollment and graduation rates and high drop-out rates may present a barrier to education.

2. How does a lack of access to education impact the ability of the Burkinabe to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for oneself and a family?

Enrollment, graduation, and drop out rates are also related to access to education, as are school attendance rates, sixth grade students' annual achievement test scores, and the ages of students enrolled.

Supplemental Sources of Data

Physical artifacts were included as a source of data and a contribution to the overall case study (Yin, 2009). Physical artifacts included examples of student work or photographs (taken with permission) to provide a visual reference. In addition, I kept a journal of my interactions with staff, children, and other people with whom I was in contact and were deemed important to this case study. Researcher journaling is a reflexive approach to qualitative research that can be used to examine the personal assumptions, beliefs, goals, and biases of the researcher (Ortlipp, 2008). It is a method of consciously acknowledging the values of the researcher and can be used to record personal experiences, clarify research aims, to facilitate inquiry, or record other written documentation that is related to the case study (Ortlipp, 2008). Hertz wrote, "Reflexivity depicts

the ability to direct one's thoughts back onto oneself: to examine one's theories, beliefs, knowledge, and actions... The interpretations of experiences, and insight into how one's interpretations came into existence, result in reflexive knowledge" (Hertz, 1997, as cited in Barry & O'Callahan, 2008, p. 56). Each journal entry includes the name of the journal, date, a title, and the reflections of the researcher. These entries are useful to revisit throughout the research and writing of the case study. The research question that these sources of data contributed to answering was RQ1, "What barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso?" Physical artifacts such as photographs and student work had the potential to provide evidence that corroborated conclusions drawn from sources of information, such as the physical environment, learning materials, student-teacher ratios, and the number of students in a classroom. Research journaling provided a venue for my personal reflections and experiences that clarified information gathered through interviews, observations, and documents.

Data Analysis

Categorical Aggregation

The data from the interviews, journaling, observations, field notes, documents, and artifacts were analyzed by categorical aggregation. Categorical aggregation is the grouping together of similar data (Creswell, 2013). The categories that were anticipated were interview responses, working conditions, average age of school enrollment, health issues, parental involvement, language of instruction, and finances; categories were identified and modified as the data became available.

Transcription and Coding

The data collected from the interviews, observations, documents, photographs, and journal writings were transcribed into an electronic document. Detailed descriptions of the data

were recorded, the data organized and coded, and recurring themes were noted (see Appendix E).

Creswell (2013) noted that five to six themes would be sufficient to fully reflect the essence of

the data. Themes were analyzed for commonalities and distinguishing factors between each

theme; this is appropriate for this case study because it will facilitate understanding of the

complexity of the case (Yin, 2009). Coding is the process of separating the data into different

categories. Categories were labeled according to the data assigned to them and were determined

throughout the transcription process. I aimed to establish 25-30 categories for this case study, as

recommended by Creswell (2013). Categorical aggregation (Stake, as cited in Creswell, 2013)

was used to search for collections of instances from the categories of data that produced relevant

meanings. This type of analysis "is rich in the context of the case or setting in which the case

presents itself" (Merriam, as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 101).

Case Description

Finally, after coding, a case description of the study was written. It included a statement

of facts, categorical aggregation, development of themes and patterns, and information that was

extracted from the collected data and organized into tables. This process allowed me to look for

similarities among the categories and develop generalizations.

To ensure a holistic analysis of the data, the entire case was examined (Yin, 2009). The

case description, themes, and interpretations relate to the whole case. This type of analysis is

appropriate for this case study because the purpose of the research was to examine an

educational system in order to understand how the system functions and how it impacts and

supports (or does not support) the Burkinabé people. Coding of the data was done manually in

order to facilitate the examination of every possible aspect of the data. The data were broken

down sentence-by-sentence, and in some instances word-by-word, and were reviewed at least ten

different times.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of this research was established through validation, peer review, and rich, thick description, as described by Creswell (2013). Validation in qualitative research, according to Creswell, is "an attempt to assess the accuracy of the findings" (Creswell, 2013, p. 250). Further, it is "made through extensive time spent in the field, detailed thick description, and the closeness of the researcher to the participants" (p. 250), all of which "add to the values or accuracy of the study." (p. 250).

Credibility

Validity, or credibility, was provided through prolonged engagement and persistent observation, as recommended by Creswell (2013). Prolonged engagement for this study was anticipated to cover two weeks to 12 months of interaction with potential study participants, beginning with initial introductions between myself and the potential participants, followed by email exchanges with those who have access to electronic mail service, and finally in-person interviews and observations (conducted by myself). Persistent observation was accomplished through site visits. This process increased the credibility and the reliability of the study because it allows trust to develop between the study participants and myself, thus reducing the potential for distortions and misinformation (Creswell, 2013). Credibility was also supported by triangulation of the data, which is the gathering of data from a minimum of three different sources and/or using different methods of data collection. Both Creswell (2013) and Yin (2009) recommended triangulation. The triangulation of the data for this study entailed obtaining information from interviews, observations, documents, and the use of supplementary sources of data.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability is crucial in case studies to ensure that the results will not be "subject to change or instability" (Creswell, 2013, p. 246). This also contributes to the study's credibility. In addition, dependability can be obtained by an external check of the research, which, for this study, was conducted via peer review and debriefing. Through peer review, the researcher is kept honest by a peer debriefer who "asks hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations" (Creswell, 2013, p. 251). This occurs through times of discussion between the researcher and the peer and both keep written records of the sessions, called *peer debriefing sessions* (Lincoln & Guba, as cited in Creswell, 2013). A member of the dissertation committee participated in the role of the peer debriefer.

Confirmability is essential for establishing value in the data collected for the study, and was established through an external review of the research (Creswell, 2013). Peer debriefing, as defined by Creswell (2013), was used in this case study to establish confirmability.

Transferability

Finally, rich, thick description provided copious, interconnected details about the case through the use of "physical description, movement description, and activity description" (Creswell, 2013, p. 252). As the principal investigator, I provided in-depth descriptions of the participants and settings that are included in the study. Rich, thick description allows the reader to form his or her own decisions about the transferability of the case to other settings based on the characteristics that the context from which the data were gathered shares with other data (Creswell, 2013).

<p align="center">**Ethical Considerations**</p>

Informed consent of the participants was obtained in person. If informed consent could

only be obtained long distance, an email with the consent form as an attachment would be sent to the participant. To date, long-distance informed consent has not been necessary. Execution of the study depended on the express permission from the participants to interview them and conduct on-site observations. The informed consent form was prepared in more than one language, necessitating the use of an interpreter. Permission to interview participants for the case study was obtained from the government minister in Burkina Faso who approves research. The IRB from Liberty University approved the study. A certificate was issued to me informing case study participants in Burkina Faso that I was granted permission to interview them. The government minister believed that this certificate would contribute to the establishment of trust between the participants and myself.

Regarding confidentiality, participants were assured that their responses to interview questions would be held in a secure location, and only used for the purposes of this study; pseudonyms were assigned to all participants. Physical data were stored in a secure location, specifically, a locking file cabinet within my home. Electronic data were stored on my personal computer and were password protected. Participants were assured that all data for this study would be destroyed within three years of the completion of the study. Participants were offered a copy of the study, if requested. In addition, it was explained to all participants that their participation in the study was purely voluntary and that they were allowed to withdraw at any time.

Summary

This qualitative case study examined the education system of Burkina Faso, a small, impoverished country in West Africa. Yin (2007) and Creswell (2013) were of primary importance in guiding the collection of data and providing a basis from which to analyze it. The

focus of the data collection was on open-ended questions and individual interviews; observations, documents, and artifacts were also gathered and analyzed. I used manual coding to categorize information and form the main theme and sub themes that subsequently answered the research questions and provided a rich, thick description of the participant's lives as they made crucial decisions to educate or not educate their children. Triangulation of the data, peer review, and rich thick description provided trustworthiness for the study. All ethical standards established by Liberty University were complied with during this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to understand the various causes of under-education in Burkina Faso and to examine the impact of poverty on the education of the Burkinabé people. Gaining a clear understanding of the significance that receiving (or not receiving) an education in Burkina Faso has for human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy, is critical to forming effective education policy, programs, and curricula. The following research questions served to inform this study:

RQ1: What barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso?

RQ2: How does a lack of access to education impact the ability of the Burkinabé to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for oneself and family members?

RQ3: What are the consequences of chronic poverty in Burkina Faso for human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy?

Data were primarily collected through semi-structured interviews with 27 participants as well as through observations of schools, other physical environments, information retrieved from government documents and secondary sources of information such as photographs, my personal journaling, and field notes. In the interviews, participants relayed their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings regarding the education system in Burkina Faso and factors that influence this system. They also shared their perceptions of how education impacts the lives of the Burkinabé and what changes, if any, might be implemented within the education system to improve its quality and accessibility. All participants were assigned a number and a letter for identification. Three of the participants held more than one position and have two identifying codes. Of note, many of

the interview responses are in a different language, and thus there may be subtle changes to the language and phrasing in translating their responses to English.

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. One overarching theme, a culture of survival, emerged from the interviews as well as six subthemes: poverty, income and employment, school enrollment and attendance, health and nutrition, passing the national sixth-grade exam, and government. These are the main theme and subthemes that developed from the interviews and observations, and they are presented according to category. The chapter is organized by the presentation of themes, followed by the observations, then the research questions, and each research question is answered narratively using the relevant data (beginning with the data collected from the interviews and following with data collected from other sources). Lastly, a concluding section is provided.

Participants

Participants in the study provided information in the form of semi-structured interviews regarding the education system in Burkina Faso. The participants are male and female and include people from the United States and from Burkina Faso who are currently employed in schools, orphanages, health-care facilities, and other select organizations in Burkina Faso. They are located in two cities of Burkina Faso (one large and one smaller city), and one or more villages based on their geographical proximity to the city where I was staying.

Administrators from the schools, orphanages, clinics, and organizations were contacted and asked if they would consider allowing their employees or staff to participate in the study. In total, eight schools, one orphanage, two government organizations, and one health care facility participated in the study. Teachers, directors, and workers in the cooperating schools, orphanages, health care facilities, and government organizations were contacted by email or in

person as potential participants for this study. In total, 27 people agreed to participate in the study, all of whom were over the age of 18.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants. Purposive sampling is the selection of participants by the researcher because they can "purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2013, p. 156). A sample from each area was desirable in order to capture a panoramic view of how access to education impacts the Burkinabé people. It was also possible that other participants would be selected as the study progressed if additional issues arose that were related to education.

Participant responses were organized into subcategories dictated by occupation or profession, which include educator (school director or teacher), missionary, orphanage director, health care worker, and government employee. Participant responses were arranged in a table and identified by a number (the profession or occupation) and a letter (the actual person) rather than by pseudonyms because of the large number of persons interviewed. The following demographics are provided for each participant: name, gender, place and/or location of employment, position within the organization, the organization, the length of time having worked for this organization, and their reasons for working for this organization (see Table 1 and Table 2).

Finally, there were two main groups of participants: those who were from Burkina Faso and those who were not, and these are designated as Group A Participants and Group B Participants, respectively. These participants were organized into separate groups because interview responses between the two groups sometimes differed considerably. I wanted the responses of the members of each group to stand on their own and to remain as true to the experiences of the participants as possible. Each participant had an opportunity to answer a

variety of interview questions but not all interview questions were asked of each participant. Numerical assignments were given to each category of participants (see Table 1 and Table 2.) based on their profession or position within their organization and a letter was also assigned to indicate which specific participant was being interviewed. The categories are as follows:

> 1 – school directors and teachers
>
> 2 – orphanage directors
>
> 3 – physicians
>
> 4 – missionaries
>
> 5 – government employees

Group A Participant Descriptions

Participant 1A is a male director of a public school in a rural village located within three hours of the city where I stayed. He is from Burkina Faso and has been the director of this school for three years. He decided to be a teacher when he was young and eventually was promoted to director.

Participant 1B is a female fourth grade teacher who is permanent (i.e. not a student teacher, temporary, or substitute teacher). She is from Burkina Faso and teaches at a public school in a rural village located within three hours of the city where I stayed. She has taught at the school for four years and decided to teach because she wanted to "contribute to my country's development and help in teaching young children."

Participant 1C is a male, sixth grade teacher. He is from Burkina Faso and has a permanent teaching position at a public school located in a rural village three hours from the city where I stayed. He has been at the school for two years and is a permanent teacher. He became a teacher because he enjoys teaching and wished to emulate an older brother who was also a

teacher.

Participant 1D is a male director of a public school in a rural village located within three hours of the city where I stayed. He is from Burkina Faso. The government assigned him to the village school after he applied for a teaching position.

Participant 1E is a male sixth grade teacher at a public school in a village about three hours from the city where I stayed. He is from Burkina Faso, is a permanent teacher, and has been teaching for five years. He applied for the teacher position through the government program. He passed the test and was hired and received his training through the government teacher-training program (a two-year program).

Participant 1F is a male director of a public preschool and primary school. He has held this position since 2003, and prior to this, he taught third grade for several years in a small village in northern Burkina Faso. He is from Burkina Faso. His family did not have sufficient financial resources for him to continue his education so he became a teacher through a government program designed to train teachers.

Participant 1G is a female preschool teacher in a private school located in a large city in Burkina Faso. She is from Burkina Faso and has been teaching preschool for 10 years. She began teaching part-time and eventually became a full-time, permanent teacher. She decided to teach because she loves children and was trained to teach at the school where she is working.

Participant 1H is a male sixth grade teacher in a private school in a large city in Burkina Faso. He is from Burkina Faso and is a permanent teacher; he has been teaching in this school for 16 years. He decided to become a teacher primarily because it was an available job, and he also wanted to improve the children's education. According to him, he believed "it was the will of God for me to be here, to be a teacher."

Participant 1J is a male director at a private school in a village on the outskirts of the city where I stayed. The school was founded by a couple from Europe and is funded primarily by donations. In this school, there are 251 students in grades one through six, with an average of 50 students in each class. He has worked at the school since 2006. He was personally motivated to teach children. He said,

> I am a teacher because of the children. I love children. I am a Protestant and I used to teach in the Sunday school. It was so hard for me [to] teach at the very beginning because many students were wrong lookers and listeners in classrooms [some of the children did not pay attention and wanted to talk to their friends in class].

Participant 1K is a male teacher at a private school in a village on the outskirts of the city where I stayed. He is from Burkina Faso. The school was started and is run by a couple from Europe and is supported by donations. He has worked for the same organization for 15 years. He began as a building supervisor and he also has knowledge of computers and the media. Two years ago, at the request of his employer, he began teaching computer skills to the students in the school. The room he began in now houses a media center with 12 computers in that space. He loves working with children; while he was a student in high school, people called him the children's friend.

Participant 1L is a male founder and director of a private school in a large city in Burkina Faso. It is a church school and is tuition based. He is from Burkina Faso and began the school nine years ago to provide children a holistic education: one where they could receive an education that integrated spirituality and academics.

Participant 1M is a female first grade teacher at a private school in a large city in Burkina Faso. She is from Burkina Faso, is a permanent teacher, and has been teaching for four years.

She loves teaching and after her teacher training, she applied and was hired to work at this school.

Participant 1N is a male founder and director of a private school for the blind in a large city in Burkina Faso. It is funded primarily from outside donations. He is from Burkina Faso and founded the school because after he lost his sight, he learned that "most of handicapped persons don't have chance to go to school. They are left alone and stay in closed houses. That is the reason why we have opened this school."

Participant 1O is a female director of a private school for the blind in a large city in Burkina Faso. She is from Burkina Faso and directs the school with her father, Participant 1N. She decided to work in the school with him because "living with a blind person help me to know how hard is their living condition."

Participant 1Q is a female teacher in a large city in Burkina Faso. She is from Burkina Faso and has been teaching for three years in private schools. She teaches English and also substitute teaches at various private schools in the city. Her life growing up was difficult. Her parents separated because her mother became a Christian. Her family only wanted to send her brothers to school and a woman at their church sponsored her in school. She is the only child from her family to graduate from high school and attend college. She enjoys teaching because she loves children and wanted to "help other young children who seem to feel rejected." She also thought it was a way "to contribute in training the future generation." In addition, she felt she had valuable skills that could be used in teaching children, such as effective classroom management and the ability to establish a good rapport with the students.

Participant 3A is a male pediatrician who has been working in a public hospital in a large city in Burkina Faso for four and a half years. He became a doctor because he wanted to help people. The government sent him to work at this hospital.

Participant 3B is a male general doctor and pediatrician. He has been working at a public hospital in a large city in Burkina Faso for four months. He wanted to be a doctor since childhood because he wanted to help people. He was excited to be a doctor and said during the interview, "It is a fabulous job!"

Participant 3C is a male physician who works at a public hospital in a large city in Burkina Faso. He has been employed as the director or chief of medicine at the hospital for three years and he described medicine as his passion.

Participant 5A was the only government employee interviewed from Burkina Faso. He is a male social worker in a large city in Burkina Faso. He is very knowledgeable about his field and offered a perspective that differed from some of the other participants. He has worked for a government agency for over 10 years and works primarily with adolescents in a downtown social center. He was motivated to work with young people because of the many problems they encounter. He believes that "if we succeed in getting those problems minimized today, someday they will completely disappear."

Group B Participant Descriptions

Participant 1I is a female principal at a private school in a large city in Burkina Faso. She is American. She initially taught at the school for a year, and subsequently became the principal; she has held that position for two years. She has also worked in other private schools in several different countries around the world. She enjoys the international school experience as it provides a broader, more global perspective of the world for her and her daughter as well as the

camaraderie international educators enjoy with each other. International education is its own, unique community.

Participant 1P is an American female teacher in a private school in a large city in Burkina Faso. She is also a missionary. She teaches elementary grades and special education and has taught for a total of 24 years. She has been at her current school for less than a year. She is a certified teacher and began teaching at a private international school in Burkina Faso where she received a discount in the tuition for her children. Eventually she left that school due to the high cost and also her desire for expanded opportunities for her children. She subsequently helped plan the establishment of the private school where she currently teaches. Most of the children who attend the school where she teaches are children of missionaries. She believes God brought people and necessary factors together "to make it work." The school teaches up to the eighth grade. To further one's education beyond this, the students must attend French school, boarding school, or homeschooling.

Participant 2A/4A is a female director of an orphanage and a missionary who has been working in Burkina Faso since 2011. The orphanage is located in a small city in Burkina Faso. She and her husband believe they were "following God's call." Her brother-in-law was the pastor of the church that sent its first missionary to Burkina Faso to start an orphanage, which was Participant 2A/4A's first connection with Burkina Faso. She and her husband are very active in the community in which the orphanage is located and provide a variety of services for people throughout the area.

Participant 2B/4B is a man from the United States who has been working as an orphanage director and missionary in Burkina Faso since 2011. His brother was the pastor of a church that originally sent a missionary to Burkina Faso to open an orphanage. The participant

felt he was answering God's call regarding his life, so he sold his business in the United States and he and his family moved to Burkina Faso. He and his wife run an orphanage, a school, a clinic, a women's shelter, and a women's ministry that helps displaced women learn a trade and develop an ability to provide for themselves and their children and live independently. He is also involved in drilling wells and bringing new farming techniques to local villages and farmers. He has arranged for organizations from the United States to work toward meeting the needs of the people in the community in which he is located. For example, every year he arranges for thousands of pairs of shoes from a major manufacturer in the United States to be delivered and distributed to people in Burkina Faso who would otherwise not have shoes to wear. This can prevent diseases from being contracted through the feet, and thus, this practice overall improves the health of citizens of Burkina Faso.

Participant 4C is a female missionary from the United States. She has been in Burkina Faso for 15 years. She began a non-profit organization in the United States that eventually sent her overseas. The first priority in her organization was to establish child sponsorship programs, which link a child to a family, and through donations, supports a child in need. The first orphanage and school she began is located in a small city in Burkina Faso. She is now working in a different remote, rural area of the country where she is developing services to assist children and families in need. Current plans include a school and an infirmary.

Participant 4D/1R is a female missionary who has been in Burkina Faso for one and a half years. She came to Burkina Faso after retiring from teaching in the United States and visiting Burkina Faso in 2011. She spent 42 years teaching at the same school in the United States and taught several generations of children. She is currently serving in a rural area in Burkina Faso and works for a non-profit organization located in the United States.

Participant 5B is a female government employee from the United States who is stationed in a large city in Burkina Faso. She has worked for the U.S. government for two years in her current position and she specializes in politics.

Participant 5C is a male government employee from the United States who is stationed in a large city in Burkina Faso. He has worked for the U.S. government for two years in his current position. He wanted to work overseas in countries where he could use his language skills and promote U.S. values in foreign policy. He specializes in finance.

Table 1

Participant Descriptions and Demographics – Group A

Identification	Gender	Location	Occupation Position	Organization	Time with organization	Reason working for this organization
1A	Male	Rural village	School Director	Public school	3 years	Always wanted to work with children
1B	Female	Rural village	Teacher	Public school	4 years	Wanted to contribute to children's education
1C	Male	Rural village	Teacher	Public school	2 years	Older brother is a teacher; decided to be a teacher too
1D	Male	Rural village	School Director	Public school	4 years	Needed a job
1E	Male	Rural village	Teacher	Public school	5 years	Needed a job; took gov't training program
1F	Male	Rural village	School Director	Public school	11 years	Applied for gov't training program
1G	Female	Large, urban city	Teacher	Private school	10 years	Trained here, offered full time job

1H	Male	Large, urban city	Teacher	Private school	16 years	It was the will of God and needed a job
1J	Male	Rural village	School Director	Public school	8 years	Loves children; started as Sunday school teacher
1K	Male	Rural village	Teacher	Private school	15 years/ 2 years teaching	Had experience with media; offered a permanent job
1L	Male	Large, urban city	School Director	Private school	9 years	To provide children with holistic education
1M	Female	Large, urban city	Teacher	Private school	4 years	Trained here and applied here
1N	Male	Large, urban city	School Director	Private school for the blind	11 years	To provide blind children a place to go to school
1O	Female	Large, urban city	School Director	Private school for the blind	5 years	Co-directs with father; wants to help him
1Q	Female	Large, urban city	Teacher/ English	Private schools	3 years	Loves children, speaks English
3A	Male	Large, urban city	Physician	Health care facility	4 ½ years	Wanted to help people
3B	Male	Large, urban city	Physician	Health care facility	4 months	Wanted to help people
3C	Male	Large, urban city	Chief of medicine	Health care facility	3 years	It is his passion to help people!
5A	Male	Large	Gov't. employee	Social worker	10 years	Wants to help teens because of their problems

Table 2

Participant Descriptions and Demographics – Group B

Identification	Gender	Location	Occupation/ Position	Organization	Time with organization	Reason working for this organization
1I	Female	Large, urban city	Principal	Private school	2 years	International educator, wanted a tour in Africa
1P	Female	Large, urban city	Teacher	Private school	2 years	Wanted affordable schooling for her children
1R/4D	Female	Rural village	Missionary, retired	Non-profit organization	1 ½ years	Became involved through sponsorship program
2A/4A	Female	Small city	Orphanage director,	Private organization	4 years	Believed was called by God to this organization
2A/4A	Male	Small city	Orphanage director,	Private organization	4 years	Believed was called by God to this organization
4C	Female	Rural village	Missionary	Non-profit organization	15 years	Founder of the organization
5B	Female	Large, urban city	Gov't employee	Political	2 years	Career choice
5C	Male	Large, urban city	Gov't employee	Financial	2 years	Wanted to work overseas, promote U.S. policy

Results

This qualitative case study was designed to investigate the various causes of under-education in Burkina Faso and to examine the impact of poverty on the education of the Burkinabé people. The section is organized according to the primary theme and subthemes that arose from the data analysis. Subsequently the research questions that guided the study are answered in narrative form using the subthemes and primary theme. Pertinent observations and examples from the data are used to illustrate each of the subthemes and primary theme.

Theme Development

A main overarching theme and six subthemes were derived from the data that were relevant to answering the three research questions. The data primarily consisted of participant responses to interview questions; observations, field notes, and journaling supported the interview responses. Detailed descriptions of the data derived from the interviews were recorded, organized, manually coded, and recurring themes were noted. In total, 142 different codes were extracted from the interviews and categorized by the most prevalent main ideas, which then became the main theme and six sub themes of the study (see Appendix E for a list of codes). Similarities between themes were noted and finally, themes were analyzed for commonalities and differentiating elements between each theme. The predominant theme, a culture of survival appeared only in Group B participant responses. The six subthemes of poverty, income and employment, health and nutrition, school enrollment and attendance, successful completion of the sixth-grade exam, and government appeared in Group A and Group B participant responses.

The participants differed somewhat in their perspective about the elementary education system in Burkina Faso depending on their nationality. All the participants identified poverty

and/or income and employment as an obstacle to education. Participants who were from Burkina

Faso tended to blame the government for the problems with the school system; however,

participants who were not from Burkina Faso generally conveyed a more diverse perspective

regarding the challenges facing the education system. Please note that the main theme and

subthemes were not presented specifically in the wording of the individual interview questions,

but rather emerged from the responses of the participants to the individual interview questions.

The main theme and six sub themes with the participant responses, and observations, field

notes/journaling, and a description of artifacts pertinent to those themes, are presented further in

this chapter. Table 3 presents the participants responses by category.

Table 3

Participant Responses

	Total Responses	Burkinabé Participants *Group A*	Non-Burkinabé Participants *Group B*	Total % of Participants Who Discussed This Subtheme
Primary Theme:				
A Culture of Survival	3	0	3	11%
Subthemes:				
Poverty	18	13	5	66%
Income and Employment	17	11	5	59%
School Enrollment and Attendance	20	15	5	74%
Passing the Sixth-Grade Exam	18	14	4	66%

Health and Nutrition	13	7	6	48%
Government	19	13	6	70%

Combined Subthemes Poverty and Income and Employment:

Poverty and Income and Employment	23	16	7	85%

Human capital theory was central to the development of the main theme and the subthemes. The value of higher education is an important component in the decisions governments make regarding the formation of educational policy (van der Merwe, 2010). Human capital theory states that education increases productivity in that core skills necessary to successfully perform a particular job function can only be learned through formal schooling or training. Thus, job candidates with higher education credentials are frequently viewed as more able than people with less education. Van der Merwe (2010) does not necessarily accept those assumptions, noting that human capital theory rests on a neoclassical economic paradigm that makes it nearly impossible to demonstrate that education truly does increase productivity. Regardless, the van de Merwe case study (2010) did show that respondents' earnings seemed to be significantly influenced by their educational attainment, independent of their level of productivity. In Burkina Faso where the number of jobs is insufficient for the number of people searching for one, hiring practices do favor the applicant with more education. In addition, human capital theory requires a long-term view of education in order for its value to be realized. However, it is the perception of the value of an education that influences a family's decision to send or not send their children to school and as the value of an education is not realized for many years, it is frequently minimized in favor of more immediate needs necessary for daily living.

A culture of survival. This is the primary, overarching theme that connects and unifies the six subthemes. Meeting basic human needs is the first tier in Maslow's hierarchy of human needs and is the basis for the major theme, a culture of survival. It is the depth of the impact a culture of survival has on the population of Burkina Faso, rather than the number of participants who discussed it in their interview, that determined why it became the main theme of this case study. Survival affects every decision a family must make and is much more influential in those decisions than any other factor presented in this study. Three participants in Group B identified a culture of survival as the underlying societal stanchion that arose from tremendous and chronic poverty and the many complications associated with this poverty. They noted that in many families, everyone has to work toward survival, and when a person is primarily striving to survive, then formal education falls low on their list of priorities, if prioritized at all. Due to extensive, abject poverty, a large number of citizens of Burkina Faso, as much as 40% to 60% of the population (United Nations Development Program, 2016; Roser & Ortiz-Ospina, 2017; World Bank, 2017) or more are continually focused on meeting the most basic of human needs. This was evidenced by comments shared during the interviews as well as from observations and artifacts (or sometimes a lack of artifacts), with access to a secure food supply being the most pressing of all their needs. Access to food is consistently referenced throughout many of the interviews (Participants 1D, 1K, 1L, 1O, 1Q, 3B, 5A, 2A/4A, 2B/4B, 4C, 4D/1R, 5B, 5C). This culture of survival theme is important to understand, as it is a barrier to education and addressed research question #1.

Observations that supported the participant statements regarding a culture of survival included physical manifestations of malnutrition such as distended abdomens and bright orange hair; clothing that was in very poor condition; children who had no clothing; children and adults

without shoes; children and adults sifting through garbage looking for food; children who were helping in a business rather than attending school; adults and children begging on the streets; a mother who asked me to adopt her child; people living in unfinished or abandoned buildings; houses in disrepair; men parking vehicles for less than a penny per vehicle; unclean drinking water; a lack of indoor plumbing; a lack of public restrooms; and an overall infrastructure in various stages of disrepair or unavailable altogether. In addition, there was a lack of basic goods and amenities such as paper; books; electronic equipment such as televisions, computers, and audio devices; sanitation services and inspections; sanitation supplies (such as toilet paper, soap, hand towels, waste baskets); modern farming equipment and/or heavy equipment; air conditioning; and electricity.

Artifacts that supported a culture of survival included clothing and shoes that were in very poor condition; small chalkboards for students to use in school rather than books or writing equipment; decorative pots filled with water to clean hands with after toileting; bicycles (as opposed to motos or automobiles for transportation); rocks (to fill in holes in the city streets); eggs given to me as a gift; yarn that was hand-woven into cloth; treadle sewing machines; and farm tools. Photographs also provided visual support for the main theme of a culture of survival.

Participant 1K said there is a saying in his country (Burkina Faso) that an "empty stomach doesn't allow hearing." Participant 5A made a similar comment: "If you are hungry, you can't hear and concentrate on what people are telling you and may not attend school regularly." He also said:

> …Not all children are in good health because there's not enough food…if parents fail to have food, they [children] will not have courage to go back to school. Most of the time, people only cook one time a day, dinnertime. Child knows if go to school, there is

something to eat, will go back to school…

Of all life's basic needs, food and water are the most fundamental. We are only able to survive a limited amount of time without a sufficient supply of either. Participants indicated routine and prolonged hunger was not uncommon. Participant 4C said, "…[They] don't have enough to eat; go to school without breakfast; [they're] hungry; they don't get lunch at home either, because parents are working. [They] get one meal a day." Participant 4D/1R noted that everyone works, even though they may not receive an income from a family-based business and that many are working to feed their families (adults and children) and to survive.

Participant 2A/4A discussed the plight that girls often encounter in their families because of poverty. Participant 2A/4A pointed out:

If there's a lot of girls in the family and they can't take care of all their kids, they'll

give the girls away to another family who say they're going to take care of them.   They'll

be house girls, working for food, doing all the work in the house…[then there's]

arranged marriage[s]…they allow this old man to take their daughter and marry them.

Because the guy gives a bride price or gives them animals or does something that,

y'know, they're desperate.

Participant 2B/4B said:

It's ultimately a matter of survival and it's self-survival. So, you'll find, even with

parents, their survival is more important than their children's survival. Uh, you will

see them sacrifice their children—put them out on the streets and like marrying a

husband who does not want to accept their kids. It's a matter of if I don't do this I

won't survive. So, kids, you're on your own. Education comes far down the list when it

comes to survival.

This comment underscores why, in spite of efforts from the government of Burkina Faso and many international agencies and NGOs to provide families opportunities to educate their children, many families still choose to not send their children to school. Struggling to survive does not allow families room to prioritize any goals other than basic needs.

  Poverty. Of all the possible reasons that could be identified as a barrier to education in Burkina Faso, poverty was overwhelmingly identified as a primary problem; nearly every participant mentioned poverty in the course of their interview. As a subtheme, it is intricately associated with a culture of survival and is a main contributor to that culture. Some of the qualities of poverty participants noted include:

  a) Not having enough money to purchase necessities

  b) Scant supply or insufficient amount of food/constant hunger

  c) No access to clean water

  d) Inability to pay for children's education

  e) Limited access or no access to adequate health care

Synonyms include destitution, need, and want and imply a state of deprivation and lack of necessities. Poverty denotes a serious lack of means for proper existence. Destitution implies a state of having absolutely none of the necessities of life. A definition of poverty for this study is provided by the United Nations (1995) as cited in Gordon (2005): [Absolute poverty is] "a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also access to services." This definition supports the statements made by many of the participants regarding poverty.

  I spoke with and visited many people in Burkina Faso during my two visits to the

country. None of the people with whom I spoke indicated that they considered themselves to be

living in poverty or dire need, which could have a number of explanations. The study

participants with whom I spoke who were from Burkina Faso also did not identify themselves as

living in a state of poverty, possibly due to the fact that they were employed and received

payment for their services on a fairly regular basis or for other reasons. All of the study

participants were able to readily identify other individuals and groups of people who were living

in poverty.

The perception of many of the Burkinabé study participants with whom I spoke was that

there was a much greater occurrence of poverty in rural areas as opposed to urban areas.

However, upon observation of cities and villages, it appeared that poverty existed everywhere I

visited: children attired in clothing that was ripped, torn, and dirty; shoeless children and adults;

very thin children and adults; children with protruding abdomens and bright orange hair

(indicators of malnutrition); parents who inquired of me if my family could take their child in

order to provide a better life than what they could provide; children and adults begging on the

streets; children and adults urinating and defecating in public; buildings and houses in disrepair;

people living in unfinished buildings; men parking cars for less than $.01 per car (United States

dollar [USD]: if calculated at 50 cars a day, this is less than $200.00 a year in USD, well below

the poverty standard in the US); children and adults combing through trash and removing

anything of interest or value, including food; and children who were not attending school. Non-

Burkinabé study participants also observed that poverty was not confined to rural areas. Specific

data obtained from study participants that supported the notion that poverty was a major problem

in Burkina Faso and a contributor to children not attending school are presented according to

their source: those participants who are from Burkina Faso (Group A) and those who are not

(Group B).

  Group A participants. Many aspects of life in Burkina Faso are linked to poverty such as income, literacy, a steady and secure food supply, access to potable water, access to healthcare, culture, and more. Participant 1D believed that poverty affected parents' abilities to educate their children. He said, "In primary school, school is free and not much more payment is required. After primary school, parents are responsible for the school fees. So after primary school, many children drop out because parents can't afford to pay." This thought was also shared by Participant 1F, who noted that children drop out of the village schools because their parents are poor and prefer that the children go to the mines to work instead of to school. Participants 1C, 1G, 1J, 1N, and 1O had similar responses. Insufficient money to pay school fees was frequently mentioned. Participant 1L stated, "Because parents have to pay for education, it keeps many from sending their kids to school." Participant 1Q shared,

> School is expensive and parents do not have the financial means to afford it. Eighty-five percent of the population live in the countryside and farm. They are really poor and illiterate...many people…would rather keep their children [home to] help with rural activities instead of sending those to school that cost them a lot of money; they even fail to pay. Parents are illiterate; they ignore the importance of school. They think school take them [too] much time to benefit from.

Participant 1G had a similar observation and noted that because the parents were uneducated and illiterate, they were not able to help their children with their schoolwork.

  Some participants noted the relationship between health factors and poverty. Participant 3C, a physician, commented "Every time a parent brings their child to the hospital for malaria they have to spend money. That affects their budget and takes money away from education."

Participants 3A and 3B, asserting that their country is poor, also shared similar thoughts.

Participant 5A agreed, saying, "There is big poverty here" and pointed out some of the problems

brought on by poverty:

> If they [children] go to the mines and find gold, they know they will have a future.
>
> If go to school, don't know when they will finish and when will have a job…even if the
>
> child is successful in school, may have to leave the family to go to high school [not all
>
> villages have a high school] and stay with another family so that they can go to school,
>
> and if they leave the family, money is also leaving. First through sixth grade need
>
> programs to help them stay there in all six grades. If parents fail to have food they [the
>
> children] will not have courage to go back to school. Most of the time, people only cook
>
> one time a day: dinnertime. Child knows if go to school, there is something to eat.
>
> [They] will go back to school and is an encouragement for the student to go to school.

These participants, then, acknowledged that poverty is a major obstacle to education for children

in Burkina Faso. They were aware of the difficulties families encounter in educating their

children and the opposition parents raised to sending their children to school when other needs in

the family arose that were regarded as more important, but still indicated that they felt that

education was necessary regardless of those hardships.

Through the observations and field notes I took while staying in Burkina Faso, I found

that attitudes toward non-essential items and activities as well as the choices people have to

make were different from what I was accustomed to in the United States. For example, a

missionary I knew taught English as a second language to Burkinabé young adults. She was

telling them about America and common activities people participate in, such as going to the

movies. There are no movie theaters in Burkina Faso. As they were discussing this, a person

commented that he would never spend money on a movie when he could give that money to someone who needed food or some other kind of help.

In Burkina Faso, if a person can afford it, they hire someone to help in their home. It is an expectation in their culture of both citizens and non-citizens. We went to lunch one afternoon at a missionary's home and a story was told about their cook/housekeeper. The cook had a dog that killed one of her chickens. The chickens earned her an income. While eating dinner one night the family discovered she had killed her dog and used the meat in that evening's meal, which greatly diminished the family's appetite. However, the anecdote illustrates how and why value is assigned to one thing over another in Burkina Faso. What can produce an income has a much greater value than something that does not and sentimental attachments have almost no priority.

I also discovered that businesses and corporations from countries other than Burkina Faso own at least some of the industries in which children may opt to seek work from in order to earn money. It is not unusual for wages to be extremely low (if paid at all), and the work may be very dangerous (e.g., mine shafts collapse, poor air quality). While some children may willingly stay at a remote location and work away from their family home (such as in the cotton fields), others are forced to stay at their work site. Further, while work inside or outside the family may provide some immediate benefits to the child, there is no guarantee that it will continue to do so over a long period of time. Thus, what the child has sacrificed in order to have food or money may not be balanced by what he or she actually received in exchange for his/her labor.

Group B participants. Participants in this group also considered poverty to be a major obstacle to education in Burkina Faso and voiced concerns throughout their interviews about the many, varied aspects of poverty and how it impacted education throughout their interviews.

Participant 1I thought that both poverty and the distance children may have to travel to get to school were major obstacles for students in getting an education in Burkina Faso. Additionally, the participant believed that there were too few schooling options for all children, Burkinabé and non-Burkinabé alike, and that only very few families could afford a private education. Participants 2A/4A and 2B/4B also agreed that poverty is a major obstacle to education in Burkina Faso. According to Participant 2A/4A, "All schools cost money here. Even though it may be a very little bit, they may not be able to go." She also said that the children might be able to attend primary school when the fees are low (two to five mille, or approximately four to 10 USD per year), but when students reach secondary school in seventh grade, there is a high attrition rate of students because the fees are much higher—the equivalent of 170.00 USD per year. "So, they may be able to get them started, but then when the next payment comes due, they don't have it and the child gets kicked out of school."

Parents may also keep their children home to help them run a family business, farm, or work at the gold mines. Participants 4C and 4D/1R believed that poverty interfered with a child's ability to receive an education. According to Participant 4D/1R,

When you're poor, what you're most interested in is survival. Education isn't always a priority. With that in mind, if you have the money to send your children to school, then you're taking them out of working in the field, so poverty is part of it. But, also, if you're not educated yourself, you don't know the importance of education, of knowing what opportunities there are, and I am basing this on education I can see in the village.

This comment illustrates the generational effects of poverty on the lack of prioritization of education. Consequently, the legacy handed down to each successive generation is not one of education but of poverty.

Participant 5C, in discussing the level of poverty in Burkina Faso and what it would take to bring citizens of the country out of poverty, referred to the foreign aid Burkina Faso receives. He said,

> They couldn't do it on their own [lift themselves out of poverty]. I think they have the political ingredients that they need…the political stability, to have that environment necessary for growth…that's only one piece of the puzzle, y'know…the other pieces are…can they put the economic ingredients together and can they, can they build national industries and that kind of stuff and, um, I think it's gonna take a long time. I don't see them being an overnight success story like South Korea…They have certain structural disadvantages…it is landlocked…energy is very, very expensive…because the level of development is so low. So, y'know, they don't have, ah, coal burning power plants [from] which you can get cheap energy. So, that's an impediment to industry. I think they are at such a geographic disadvantage and historical disadvantage that, um, I do think they will advance but I think they will advance slowly.

In Burkina Faso, poverty is pervasive and interferes with the ability of the majority of the population to have access to the most basic necessities of life, such as food, clean water, and health care. This, in turn, can hinder or outright prevent children from gaining access to education and completing their education.

Income and employment. The subtheme income and employment, although closely related to poverty, emerged as a separate subtheme. As per the definition of poverty provided earlier, under the subtheme of poverty for this study, poverty is more than a mere lack of income; it is a severe lack of the basic necessities of life. The U.S. Internal Revenue Service has a working definition of income. Anytime you perform a service for another person or business,

payment in the form of wages, salary, services, property, bartering, and fringe benefits is considered income (Internal Revenue Service, 2018). Employment, then, is paid work and paid work generally involves a fee or salary paid to a person in exchange for a service or if the person is self-employed (owns a farm or business; Internal Revenue Service, 2017).

 The translator I worked with took me to many out-of-the-way places that tourists normally did not visit which provided valuable information about life as it is lived by the Burkinabé people. The observations I made in my travels with her supported or further clarified many of the statements made by the participants in their interviews. Some of those observations are included in this subtheme to provide a better understanding of how people in Burkina Faso earn a living.

I stayed in a large city in Burkina Faso and visited several smaller cities and towns, communities, and villages. I noticed that business was conducted every day for as many as 16 hours a day in the larger urban areas and fewer hours in the smaller communities. In the larger urban areas there were constant opportunities through storefronts and booths to purchase food, beverages, clothing, shoes, household goods, jewelry, souvenirs, rugs, bicycles, small motorcycles (called motos), and much more. There were thousands of storefronts and vendors in the large city where I stayed, a great deal fewer in the smaller cities and towns, and almost no storefronts or vendors in the villages. However, everywhere I traveled, there were always roadside or street-side vendors. It was quite common for a person to approach a vehicle and make a sale with a person in the vehicle. Things typically sold in this manner included fresh bread, boxes of tissues, cell phone minutes, bananas, and several other items.

Approximately two to three percent of the people in Burkina Faso at any given time are non-nationals. It is presumed that visitors, particularly Caucasian visitors, are wealthy and have

more money to spend than do the local population. When I entered a market (which is different than a storefront) within a city or town it was obvious that I was a visitor and it was common for vendors to follow me and zealously entreat me to make a purchase. Market day, usually held once a week in the smaller communities, was an especially busy day and generally well attended.

All the markets I visited were predominantly open-air spaces and many different goods were available at the market. Most people sold their wares on a table with or without protection from the sun and a cluster of shaded tables or stalls could provide shade over a larger area. Some vendors displayed their goods on the ground. Many people, adults as well as children, were present in the market, selling and purchasing a wide variety of items. Prices for items sold at any setting fluctuated from vendor to vendor, and price negotiations were expected. If the price remained too high for the buyer, even after vigorous negotiations, the buyer often walked away, in which case, the seller would usually decrease the price in order to complete the sale. Consequently, incomes generated from sales are typically not stable or dependable from week to week. In the following subsections, interview support for the theme of income and employment is presented according to participant group.

Group A participants. The majority of the population in Burkina Faso lives in rural areas. Over 90% of the populations of Burkina Faso are employed in agriculture. Participant 1B commented that "on market day, most of the children attend the market and only a few children come to school." Indeed, when I went to shop in the markets, it was common to see children there helping their family or occasionally playing with other children.

Regarding teaching as a profession, Participants 1B and 1M shared their experiences regarding the difficulties teachers face, including no pay raises, different location assignments for husband and wife if both are teachers, and "bad living conditions," and that overall, "teachers

are not treated well." Some of the teachers interviewed for the study became teachers, at least in part, because they were looking for employment (Participants 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G, 1H). While teachers expressed their frustration concerning some of the issues they encounter, very few indicated that they were looking for other employment or wanting to quit the profession.

Participant 1K considered education to be a business and thought the governing bodies of private schools were not necessarily interested in providing a quality education. He stated:

People come to teach not because they love children but because it is a job. Teaching is an opportunity for them. They think that qualified teachers cost a lot; they would rather hire cheaper teachers and they don't care if they are trained or not…private schools are in this sector not because they have a goal to improve education but their aim is to get more profit, as private schools are expensive. They only need to get the student's payment.

He also said parents think that it takes too much time for their children to gain education and the time invested does not justify the profit that students eventually make from their education. Participant 1C commented, "Small jobs are appreciated because they will earn money as quick as possible…when a child starts a sewing activity he will be able to save money in five years. But school will take them more time to have money." These participants argued that the delay before a family can benefit from a child's education poses a barrier to a parent initiating or maintaining a child's enrollment in school.

Participants also expressed their opinions on other issues related to employment and income. Participants 1A, 1B, and 1D commented that even though jobs are often related to the level of education a person has, there is no guarantee that a person will be able to find employment once graduated. According to Participant 1A, "There is a very high unemployment rate." Participant 1D said:

When a child graduates and there is no job, they don't want to continue to go to school. The government should include training programs instead of just teaching programs and technical school so when they're finished with school, have something they can do with their hands. Children can have a better job if graduate from secondary school. They can apply for a test; the government is looking for people to work. International companies need workers.

Participant 1L thought that unemployment could be solved if there were technical schools to provide training specific to the available jobs.

Lastly, some participants argued that there were few or no opportunities available to physically and/or mentally disabled children for both education and employment. As children with disabilities are considered an embarrassment to the family and are regarded as a curse or the result of a curse, they are often secluded from society and denied its benefits. They may not be provided for by the family and forced to beg their living on the streets from an early age. Participant 1N commented that at the school for the blind where he works, they "train blind adults, older blind persons, to garden, braid, breed [animals], and make hand crafts." About the same school, Participant 1O shared:

Normal teachers think it is very hard to teach handicapped persons. They want high salaries…but our budget is limited…we train blind adult to be a teacher and they will come to teach in this school. The handicapped persons easily accept our salaries because they have no choice; they are unemployed. We enroll them to train them how to teach those classes. This is a good opportunity for them. They have no job opportunities, even though they can read and write Braille.

While most participants believed education and training would be beneficial in obtaining

employment when a student completed his or her education, others did not agree, recognizing

that even with an education, employment is not guaranteed.

Group B participants. Everybody works in Burkina Faso, sometimes from a very early

age. If a child is able to go to school through elementary and secondary grades, the opportunity

for employment may be improved, but it is not ensured. This fact presents a stumbling block to

parents who may desire to send their children to school but cannot afford the school fees or need

their children's assistance at home to help provide family income. Additionally, the longer the

delay between the completion of a child's education and the time she or he can find a job, the

less an education is valued in the eyes of the parents. Thus, parents are often reluctant to educate

their children, particularly when fees increase with entrance into secondary school. This was a

common comment made by participants in both groups.

The employment rate (employment outside the family) in Burkina Faso, according to

Participants 1P and 5C, is approximately15% and at least 85% of the population consists of

subsistence farmers. Family-owned businesses and farms generate revenues that are funneled

back into the family, and according to Participant 4D/1R, wages are not paid to family members

who work the family business so they are not bringing additional revenue into the family.

Participants presented different perspectives regarding income and employment and how

it was related to education. Some of the hindrances to employment that they discussed were

directly related to education while others had subtler connection. For example, Participants

2A/4A and 4C talked about specialized government-issued tests as an avenue to employment.

They described how students who completed the 10th grade (and passed the mandatory exit

exam) are eligible to take one or more government tests and enter a government-sponsored

training program. After completing the program of study, which typically involves a year of

bookwork and a one-year internship, students might be able to find employment within the

government (e.g., teacher, nurse, policeman, military, other) or with a private agency. However,

the person may pass an exam in a specialized field for which she or he has no passion or desire.

Participant 2A/4A said,

> People become teachers because it…guarantees a monthly income. After 10th grade,
>
> people can take specialized tests to go into specialized areas…and if they do well, the
>
> government will pay for their education. After two years, you can be teaching…it is a
>
> sought-after career.

Participant 4C expounded on that:

> They go and take three, four, or even five of the government issued exams. Maybe what
>
> they'd really like to be is a nurse. But if they pass the exam to be a teacher and fail the
>
> exam to be a nurse, they will go and study to be a teacher…they're happy to get a
>
> paycheck but they may or may not give a rip about teaching the children. It's a job…and
>
> it doesn't matter if their children are learning or not.

Additionally, Participant 4C pointed out that up until about 2012, students with only a

sixth-grade education could attend the state school and become a primary school teacher. She

said,

> Right now they have to have a 10th grade education…there are many, many teachers out
>
> there who have only, I would venture to say the bulk—far more than half of the primary
>
> school teachers out there—have a sixth-grade education.

A person with a sixth-grade education has very restricted options for employment. A

government paid training program and a possible government job with a monthly income is an

attractive alternative to perpetual unemployment. It does not matter whether the person is skilled at, passionate about, or even enjoys the job; it only matters that they have secure employment. Some participants in Group B indicated the specialized tests encouraged mediocrity and job dissatisfaction, and that basing job placement on a test score prevented potentially good employees access to better paying and more satisfying jobs based. If a person had enough money he or she could by-pass the government program and enter a private training program, but this option is expensive and thus unavailable for the majority of people.

Participant 1P said in her interview that exams are used to weed students out, consequently preventing them from moving up into secondary school and beyond and denying them access to higher paying jobs. One reason she gave for this is that there is not enough classroom space in secondary schools for all the sixth graders who could potentially move up into seventh grade.

With only a sixth-grade education, opportunity for employment outside the family is quite limited. These individuals might become housekeepers or guards, fill other domestic positions, go to the gold mines or the cotton fields, or become laborers. However, they could also be competing for those same jobs with people who have a higher education. As a participant in Group A observed, employers customarily place a higher value on a diploma than on experience.

Another obstacle to employment noted by participant was the lack of available jobs; it was the most frequent barrier noted by participants in this group. According to Participants 1P and 5C, there is an insufficient number of jobs for the number of young people searching for them, and that is unlikely going to change any time soon. Participant 1P stated:

For the Burkinabé, even if they get a good education, they don't always have good options for jobs. Even getting into university and then getting a job—there's just not that many options for them. They end up being guards or house ladies; you know…there aren't but so many jobs. There just aren't very many jobs.

Participant 5C also argued that there were not enough jobs for the number of people looking for them and that high school and college graduates could spend years looking for employment.

Participants 2A/4A and 2B/4B mentioned that families who have a business frequently kept their children occupied with chores associated with farming or running a business rather than sending them to school. According to these participants, it was not uncommon to see young children working as mechanics or participating in other activities designed to help the family, such as looking for gold.

Participant 2A/4A discussed several barriers to employment. She said:

The reality of getting a job after just regular university, it is very difficult. It's like you need to know somebody. If someone went for social work, they'd really have to know somebody, or their family would need to know somebody to be able to get a job. If you have your degree…in a specific subject, like French, you could teach French in the public school. So you don't necessarily have to go to teaching school; you just have to have a degree in a specific area to be able to teach. But a good majority of people who go to university have nothing [referring to employment].

The actuality of finding a job after graduating from college is daunting. However, not having at least a minimal education makes the prospect of finding a job even more elusive.

Compounding the problem of entering the job market due to barriers to education, such

as parental attitudes, expense, tests/exams, inadequate school preparation, limited education and job options, and more, is the exiguous job market itself. Many participants commented in their interview about high unemployment and a lack of jobs. With a young population (65% of its populace is under the age of 25 [Central Intelligence Agency, 2017]) and an employment rate of approximately 15%, the problem of unemployment is going to continue into the foreseeable future. This severe lack of jobs in turn affects school enrollment and attendance and becomes a barrier to education itself because, as previously noted, when there is no prospect for employment awaiting students following graduation, it is common for students to stop going to school and forego the opportunities that may be available to them if they were to continue.
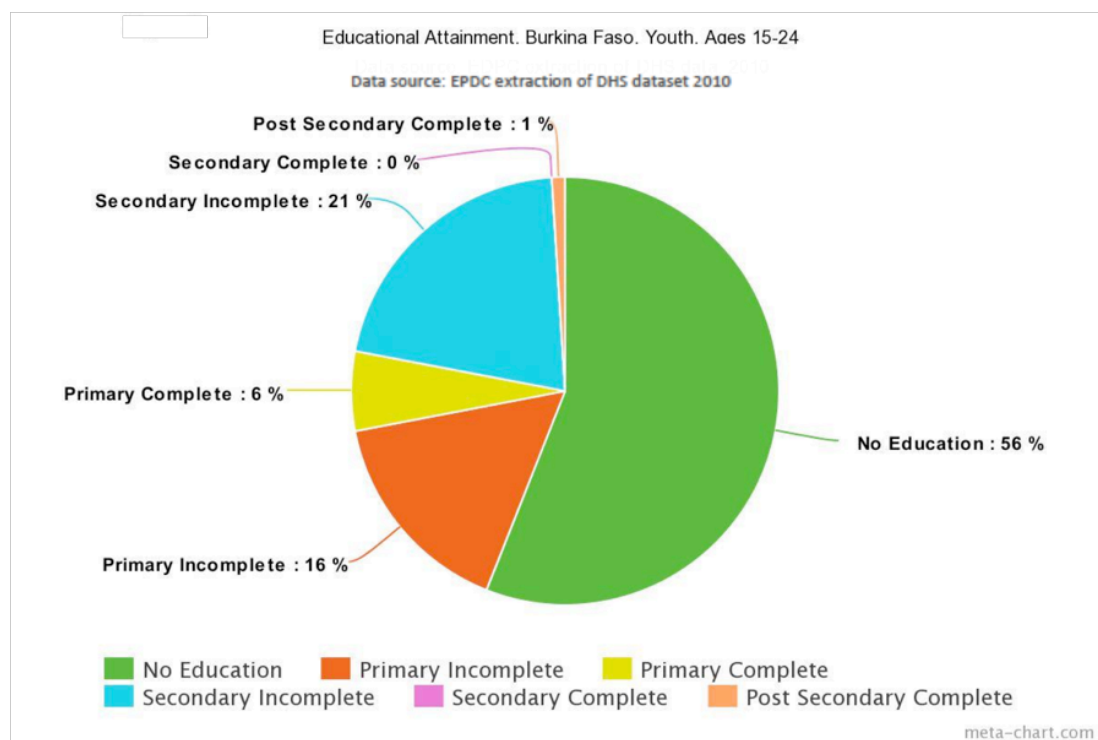
We live in a world where people compete for jobs across borders, continents, and oceans. For the person who does not complete school, learn a skill or trade, or have a higher education with the expertise necessary to compete with hundreds of applicants in a tight job market, the opportunity for employment in Burkina Faso is likely to dwindle rather than increase. This is compounded by people from other countries around and beyond the region immigrating into Burkina Faso to take the jobs that are there.

School enrollment and attendance. The subtheme of school enrollment and attendance is linked to poverty as well as to income and employment as both impact the ability of the family to send a child to school. Closely related to school enrollment is school attendance because the participants indicated that students do not necessarily attend school even if they are enrolled. This is supported by data from the Educational Policy Development Center (2010) that the overall out of school rate is 48%. In addition, the number of years a person attends school in Burkina Faso (school life expectancy) is lower than the compulsory years of education. Some people I spoke with in casual conversations indicated that the average number of years a person

attends school in Burkina Faso could be as low as four non-consecutive years. However, according to the United Nations Development Program Report (2016), the expected years of schooling for a person in Burkina Faso is 7.7, but the mean school life expectancy is 1.4 years and the primary school completion rate may be as low as only 6% (EPDC, 2010; See Figure 1.) Additionally, study participants claimed that school enrollment and attendance rates are lower for girls than for boys and overall enrollment and attendance rates may be lower in rural areas than in urban areas. Participants also said there are an insufficient number of school buildings and teachers to accommodate all the children who are enrolled. Finally, participants noted that not all communities have a primary or secondary school located within them, or even nearby, so children may have to travel several miles to attend school (Note: in Figure 1, secondary complete is less than one percent).

Figure 1

Educational Attainment. Burkina Faso. Youth. Ages 15-24
Data source: EPDC extraction of DHS dataset 2010

Post Secondary Complete : 1 %
Secondary Complete : 0 %
Secondary Incomplete : 21 %
Primary Complete : 6 %
No Education : 56 %
Primary Incomplete : 16 %

Legend: No Education, Primary Incomplete, Primary Complete, Secondary Incomplete, Secondary Complete, Post Secondary Complete

meta-chart.com

Group A participants. When the participants were asked why they thought children were not

enrolled in school, they noted several factors that posed barriers to school enrollment for children. Participant 1A voiced her belief that the primary reasons parents kept children out of school was that they are too poor to send them and children can help the family with farming or other responsibilities. Participant 1K stated that because there are not enough public high schools for students, many students drop out after primary/elementary school because their parents cannot afford to send them to a private school. Participant 1B agreed, and also noted that the school year runs from October to July but around October, there is intense need for help harvesting crops on the farm, so parents will keep their children home to help with this task. She stated,

> It's not possible for a child who misses two months of school to make it up. The teacher won't have time to come back to those [missed] classes…parents ignore the importance of school…they will never come to school and make sure if their children are doing well at school or not.

Further, if all the children in a multi-child household are sent to school, there would be no one left at home to help with the crops, childcare, and other chores. Participant 1D commented,

> Children are not sent to school because 80% of the parents are illiterate. The main population is farmers. If all the children go to school, there will not be enough [people] to help at home. Girls stay home to help with the young children and boys stay home to help shepherd animals.

Absence from school for extended periods of time puts a great deal of hardship on the child as she or he can seldom study at home to make up missed classes. The barriers to completion of home study include no electricity to study by in the evening, no books, and time consumed by afterschool chores.

Several participants in this group (C, D, E, J, K, N, and O) echoed the notion that parents ignored or failed to understand the importance of school, which they felt contributed to children not being enrolled in or attending school. Participant 1C also commented that children are not enrolled in school because "parents think that school will take time for their child to get a job." This participant also noted that parents often justify keeping their children from attending school because they believe the child can earn an income sooner using skills such as sewing. Participant 1C countered this belief, stating that going to school was "a good way to learn a better job sewing. Being a tailor will require a basic knowledge of figures and numbers that are learned in school."

In the past, government-sponsored food programs proved to be an incentive for children to attend school, but if the government stopped sending food, many children stopped coming to school. Participant 5A said:

> They need programs to help children stay in school…children know that if they go to school and there is something to eat, will go back to school. It is an encouragement for students to stay in school and work hard. I suggest we have a food program in every school, at break time, for them to eat. This will help them in school if they have something to eat.

Girls face additional hurdles such as a cultural bias toward education for boys, early marriage (sometimes as young as nine years old), and pregnancy. According to Participant 1J, girls are kept at home "so that they can learn how to be a housewife in the household." According to Participant 1K, girls are very intelligent but parents think "it is a waste of time to send girls to school because they have to be married and take care of their household." Girls typically leave their families to go live with their husband's family, while the boys stay in their family of origin

and the parents "can profit from the boys' education." Participant 1L said that in the villages girls will "abandon school if forced to be married." These barriers specific to girls makes it that much more difficult to receive an education.

Group B participants. The participants in this group were concerned about educating children from not only Burkina Faso but other countries as well. A small but growing number of children have traveled abroad to live in Burkina Faso and require education. There are a limited number of options for all children in Burkina Faso: the public school system of Burkina Faso, several international schools, private schools, and for some, homeschooling.

Participants 1I and 1P both work in private schools that are based on the North American school system. Their student population consists primarily of children whose parents are in the country for employment purposes or as missionaries. Participant 1I thought children from Burkina Faso were not enrolled in school because of the distance they may have to travel to school, suggesting "if there is not a school close enough for them, they may not be able to make it." Participant 4D shared this belief. Participant 1I mentioned that children from Burkina Faso were enrolled in the school where she worked but she did not know how many. Some children from Burkina Faso were funding their education through scholarships, and others were able to attend the school because their parents could afford the tuition. She also indicated that parents who worked for the government of Burkina Faso were able to enroll their children in private schools and send them to college in Europe or the United States.

Participant 1P, who was involved in a new startup school for children of missionaries, proposed that it was difficult for American students to be accepted into the French schools and some have been denied admission. The need for an affordable school (kindergarten through eighth grade) that would provide an alternative for the children of missionaries and expatriates to

attend was a key reason for beginning a new school. She emphasized that educating their children has become an issue of great importance for many missionaries, noting that missionaries "are leaving the field over education for their kids." Thus, finding a solution to the lack of education for missionaries and expatriates is imperative not only in Burkina Faso, but on a global scale as well. Problems include incompatibility between grade levels across countries, barriers in language of instruction, curriculum compatibility, and affordability.

According to Participant 1P, an issue with enrolling children from Burkina Faso in a private European or North American-type school is the incompatibility of the school systems across countries if the child is required to leave school prior to completing his/her education. Participant 1P also acknowledged that although children from Burkina Faso are not permitted to enroll at her school, there are plans to allow this in the future. One reason for restricting enrollment to non-Burkinabé children is because children from Burkina Faso would have difficulty transitioning into the Burkina Faso schools at the end of eighth grade; the two school systems are so extremely different. She said:

> For the Burkinabé, if they can afford to send their children to international school
> or the French embassy, they'll graduate from there and go to Europe or the
> United States for college. American students who graduate from French or
> American schools in Burkina Faso will go home to go to college. At this time,
> this private school has not enrolled any Burkinabé students because there is not a
> good option for them when they leave eighth grade. They will have nowhere
> else to go because they are not in their own school system and the two different school
> systems are not compatible.

The underlying assumption that Participant 1I and 1P expressed is that the students attending their schools will eventually graduate from high school and attend college. This is not the norm for the majority of school students from Burkina Faso. This may be due to a variety of influences, such as better teacher preparation in the United States (i.e., a college education versus a sixth or 10th grade education), different curricula and teaching methods, school funding, parental expectations, culture, and more. People who are striving to survive on a regular basis, out of necessity, are more likely to place a higher value on meeting their basic human needs than on education; adopting a long-term view of education that includes college is not tenable for the majority of Burkinabé students.

Additional barriers to attendance include language barriers and commuting. Participants 4C and 4D/1R commented on this. Participant 4C said:

> We live in the bush and the number one barrier is that parents don't value education; neither one of the parents can read and write. The child's coming up and he looks big enough to start first grade, and there is a discussion if do we [the parents] send him or not. So they decide to send him and he goes into first grade from a home that is totally Doula speakers, not French…98% of the schools are supposed to teach and speak French from day one. So you have these little children coming in who don't understand a word the teacher is saying. So it puts them at such a disadvantage…it holds them back for sometimes their whole education…[there is] a small, small group will go to middle school and higher education.

Participant 4D/1R noted that of the children who pass the sixth-grade exam (which requires proficiency in the French language), approximately half of them will advance to the seventh grade. The rest will not advance because of the insurmountable barrier posed by the physical

distance to the new school location. If the child has family near a school, he or she may be able to attend, but these participants personally knew of only five or six children from the village who were attending secondary school in a nearby city. Participant 4D/1R asserted:

> It's one thing to take your bike four miles one-way. It's another to take your bike four miles in 108 degrees…the kids in the village become mostly farmers and the girls get married and raise families and work in the fields. The people there are farmers—they might raise cattle, so they don't make it through school.

Consequently, biking to school, with its added difficulty, becomes much less important than contributing to the success of the farm, which has a direct impact on the family's ability to survive. Future investment into additional education, especially given the uncertainty of securing a job upon graduation, is prioritized so far below the basic survival needs of the family that it is not a viable part of a family's plan for most children in Burkina Faso.

Several participants mentioned a lack of available schools as a factor in low school enrollment and attendance. Participant 4D/1R explained how this can impact a child's ability to attain an education:

> There was one school with three classrooms when we arrived here. The first year they were teaching grades one, three, and five. And if the child failed and they didn't go onto the second grade, they had to wait out the year if they were going to repeat a class because first grade wasn't going to be offered the next year [in the second year grades two, four, and six are taught]. So, basically, you were out of school a year and then you might go back into first grade.
>
> So, the government came this year and built another school so eventually they'll add on other classes. This year they added grades…first, second, fourth, and sixth. [Our

organization] is paying for a first-grade teacher. And then hopefully the government will send another teacher next year so that there'll be up to five teachers and eventually have six classrooms.

Participant 2A/4A also said,

[It's] even harder for girls. Not enough money to send all the children so will send the boys. Muslim culture, second-class citizens, still battling those issues. If [the girl] gets pregnant, will drop out of school. We had a girl in our school, she was kidnapped by a guest in their house, and the family has no idea what happened to her. Other times, girls are married off early or sent to another home to be a house girl.

Participant 2B/4B said, "There's no legacy of education here," referring to past generations of Burkinabé children who did not receive an education and have not carried that pride and expectation down to their children. According to this participant, the underlying attitude or assumption is that if the parents have been able to get by without an education, so can their children.

School enrollment and attendance is a complicated subtheme, influenced by many factors that overlap into other sub themes. Observations and comments from the participants indicate a child's enrollment and attendance in school depends on culture, parental attitude, finances, availability of school buildings and teachers, food, school supplies, the learning environment, transportation, potential employment, and more. Some of those issues overlap with the other subthemes; the following is a summary of how those issues relate to school enrollment and attendance:

- A parent cannot enroll or send a child to school if there are no finances available to do that.

- A child can only be enrolled in a school if one is present in the community.

- It is more difficult to regularly attend school if there is inadequate transportation.

- Regular school attendance can be regarded as less important than fulfilling increased responsibilities at home, such as the harvest and other family needs.

- Prolonged absences from school due to illness and other unforeseen events, such as early marriage and pregnancy, can force a child to leave school permanently.

- There are no provisions for students with special needs in the public schools.

- Parental preferences and attitudes toward school will ultimately be the overriding determinant regarding whether a child goes to school.

Passing the sixth-grade exam. At the completion of primary school, which is sixth grade in Burkina Faso, all students must take and pass the national exam to be able to progress to secondary school, which is seventh through tenth grade. Claims by teachers and school directors that the primary school completion rate and the pass rate of the sixth-grade exam were 100% at their school were not always consistent with the reported statistics. There is a drop in school enrollment prior to secondary school, and this is due, in part, to students not passing the national exam (cite). The decrease in school enrollment and attendance from primary to secondary school is considerable and is fairly consistent across sources. Further, the literacy rate of youth 15–24 years of age is remarkably low, which would be more likely to reflect accuracy of poor school attendance, as these data would be inconsistent with high attendance or high passing rates of the sixth grade exam.

The physical and learning environments of the schools may not always promote quality learning and may minimize the likelihood of a student passing the sixth-grade exam. Although research has shown that visual aids in a classroom and a better physical environment are

conducive to more effective learning, (see chapter three Shabiralyim et al.,2015, Dumiak, 2010, Kéré, 2012), in most of the schools I visited, these attributes were lacking. For example, two of the schools I visited were air-conditioned but most lacked electricity for fans or other conveniences/necessities. Of those that had electricity, it was not always available due to frequent power outages. In addition, some schools did not have a well and/or potable water on site. Provision for bathrooms varied greatly from school to school, and nearly all of the schools lacked indoor plumbing and running water. Many of the issues regarding the school and learning environment apply to more than one subtheme.

   Group A participants. If a child completes his/her sixth-grade studies but does not pass the national exam, he or she is required to leave school; however, students have the option to repeat the sixth grade and retake the exam until they reach the age of 16 years old (Participants 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G, 1H, 1J, 1K, 1L, 1N, and 1O). This option is not free, however, and families may not have the money to pay for their children to enroll again in order to study for the test. There may also be a fee to retake the national exam, although there was contradictory information from participants regarding this.

   According to Participant1B, a student "can stay back to sixth grade until he is 16 to take part in the national exam, but not as a permanent student, as a private student, applying to take the national exam." Participant 1E added, "…once a student reaches grade six [he or she] will do best to succeed; difficult to study at home due to no electricity to study at night and very busy with home activities." Participant1F followed up with this comment:

   If a child doesn't pass the exam, if parents know the importance of school, will encourage

   child to go back to school and study and do well. Other parents encourage children to

   find a job, a trade, and go to evening classes so can pass the national exam. Children

who go to afternoon classes can succeed. If the classes are well organized...sometimes

they can have better rate than the day classes.

Participant 1K commented that sometimes students might leave school if they fail the sixth-grade

exam because their parents will not pay for them to continue (at this point, school is no longer

free). Private schools are expensive and not an option for most students. Parents can apply for

financial assistance but they may not be approved for a variety of reasons, including filling out

the form incorrectly.

Participant 1L expanded on this and noted a connection between passing the exam and a

family's negative opinion of the child him/herself:

If a student fails to pass the national exam he will have a second chance to take it back

[repeat the grade]. Otherwise, some students will leave school when their parents do not

encourage them or dislike them because of their failure. Some students leave because

they are tired of school and tired of taking the exam every year…It is sad but if the child

fails to pass the exam the family will blame the child for not passing because he did not

work hard. They discourage him instead of encouraging him. They talk bad to him.

[He] will abandon school and look for something else.

Passing the sixth-grade exam is a milestone in the education of Burkinabé children and it allows

for the option of pursuing (or not) a secondary education—or beyond—and enjoying the benefits

associated with acquiring a higher education. For those who do not pass it—and even for those

who do—many families find themselves in the difficult position of having to decide whether to

continue their child's education or encourage them to follow a different path that has a more

immediate benefit to the family.

   Group B participants. The difficulty of passing the national exam is not always limited

to the test content but is influenced other factors as well. Participant 1P had this to say about passing the national sixth-grade exam:

Fewer and fewer kids [pass]. They really weed them out. People say they're fixed [the exam]. So people pay money, and they try to do different things, but a lot of times, the people with connections and money get their kids through and the kids without, they just make it almost impossible. Even the test taking and passing can be corrupt.

We have lots of people in our lives, they got to the sixth-grade, they may or may not have passed that certificate, and then they end up being guards or house ladies…It really matters here that you've passed that certificate…it's a lot of jumping through hoops: memorizing, writing things down, and regurgitating on tests. That's how they get through the school system.

Participant 4D/1R said

The test at the end of sixth grade is called the CEP [the primary school diploma]. It is a pass/fail test and about 50% of the children pass it. If they do not pass, they must re-do sixth grade and then try again the next year. Often children take it two or three times before being allowed to continue to seventh grade.

By American standards, a 50% pass rate is quite low; it would suggest the students are not prepared well enough to take and pass the exam. It may also mean that the exam might not be testing what students have been taught.

Passing the sixth-grade exam is the first of several exams students have to pass in order to gain a certificate of completion and have the opportunity to continue onto higher education. Participant 2A/4A commented on exams following completion of the 10th grade as well as the terminal year (equivalent to the 12th grade):

We had a boy who failed two years in a row, his terminal year. And he brought his report

card to us and…we wondered how this could happen…he was in the top 10% of his class

and he failed. That means more than 90% of the class failed. He was a boy who lived in

the orphanage and he was already, y'know, they start late and they fail and he was

already 23 years old…and he wanted to live off campus…we said we would help

him…pay for his school and then he failed. He did end up passing the third time around.

Participant 2B/4B added:

We're talking about a couple hundred kids. Over 90% of them failed. And this is

very common. Very common…It's the system…[The teachers] give information for the

purpose of memorization. Not teaching them to use their minds…[it's] mainly dictation.

No problem-solving skills.

Participant 2A/4A described the process children have to go through if they fail the sixth-grade

exam. Generally, they can repeat the grade but if they fail the test (and consequently, the grade)

they can repeat the grade a second time (which costs money). But if they fail again, they have to

go to a different school. Some students may move from school to school until they pass the

exam or give up and drop out. Some schools may accept them and promote them to a higher

grade (without passing the exam) but in doing so, the student may have missed critical skills.

This participant also said that in their program, they help students find alternatives if they do not

pass the sixth-grade exam, such as technology schools or a trade school, so there are options for

students if they cannot continue with academic schooling. Some of these trade schools,

however, also require that students have successfully completed the sixth-grade in order to be

admitted, so, without passing the sixth-grade exam, a student's options for future employment

could be very limited.

Participant 4C presented a different approach to this topic and noted the interaction between school enrollment and the culture of expectations of children. She said:

So long as they are in school—and that goes all the way through university here—they [society] call them children here—les enfant—all the way through high school. The good part is that society, in general, allows them to—does not put adult responsibilities on them if they are a student, allowing them to study and to pursue their studies…they're not living in an adult world…they are not taking responsibility, they are not expected to…in the village they're allowed to be in school. The girls are expected to work when they get home. The boys not so much. They're outside playing sports, may be asked to draw water from the well…if they don't go to school, life in the village is totally different. They learn by seven or eight years old that you're taking major responsibility in the family. But if they're sent to school, they're allowed to be a child longer.

She also explained that students from wealthier families sometimes take longer to finish their education because their parents can afford to pay for it. They step into adult society and begin to accept adult responsibilities at a much later age than students who leave school at an earlier age (i.e., mid-20's versus teenage years or younger).

The participants were consistent in their responses that there were multiple obstacles to completing elementary school and passing the sixth-grade national exam. Further, passing the exam did not necessarily guarantee a student entry into the seventh grade. They were also in agreement that, despite the barriers, passing the exam and completing secondary school was, in the long run, more beneficial to students than dropping out of school at the end of sixth grade, even if the student were able to find employment or take up an income-producing trade.

In addition, as noted in the subtheme enrollment and attendance, some barriers that

prevent students from attending school may also affect a student's ongoing education and impact his or her ability to learn enough to pass the sixth-grade exam. The combination of the low quality of teacher education, poor learning and environmental conditions, and a lack of learning and teaching materials, contributes to conditions in which students simply may not be learning enough to pass the sixth-grade exam.

Health and nutrition. Health and nutrition, as a subtheme, are so strongly related that it would be difficult to address them as two separate issues. In addition, income and poverty greatly affect the quality of health a person may enjoy as well as the quality and amount of food he/she has to eat, so there is some overlap in the subthemes poverty, income and employment, and health and nutrition. In my travels throughout the country of Burkina Faso, I observed the living conditions in various areas. Within the cities and towns, livestock may be raised in small areas of a person's courtyard or outdoor space. People make use of whatever space they have available to them. For example, a horse may be stabled on the corner of a street, goats and chickens may be feeding in the street or in an empty lot, and livestock may be driven through the city streets on their way to market or some other location. In rural areas, livestock are generally not kept within a fenced area but are allowed to freely roam and graze wherever they could find something edible. In addition, animals are raised almost exclusively as food rather than pets.

Farms and gardens tend to be small. Most farmers are subsistence farmers and some also produce a cash crop. Some farms are devoted to raising cotton; very large cotton farms are the work of international, commercial organizations. Access to water is a ubiquitous concern, as it is needed not just for human consumption but also for crop and animal farming. Water is in abundance following the short rainy season (June through August), but if the rainy season produces insufficient precipitation, the rivers, streams, and barrages from which people normally

draw water are considerably depleted, particularly near the end of the dry season. A short and unproductive rainy season can spell the difference between a successful growing season and food shortages, or worse, famine. In addition, the available water may not be safe for human consumption yet people drink it anyway. It is not unusual for the nearest clean water source to be located several miles away, requiring families to rise early in the morning and walk to a well or tap to get enough water for a few days time (which could interfere with a child's school attendance). People often told me water is life; however, they did not necessarily recognize a lack of clean water as having an impact on a child's education.

Even though food was not abundant in some of the places I visited, I was nearly always offered some type of sustenance—refreshment, a meal, or possibly even fresh eggs or a live chicken as a parting gift. Physical signs of malnutrition were apparent in children in many cities and villages where I traveled, so it was difficult to accept the generous offer of food, but culturally it was considered impolite to refuse these gifts.

The hospital I visited refused to grant permission to tour the facility but the waiting rooms through which I walked to where the interviews were conducted appeared to be very clean and in good condition. Many people were waiting to be seen and at least one staff member was taking information from them when they arrived. Outside in a large courtyard, more people waited to see a physician. Some people were lying on benches and sleeping; it was busy, quiet, and orderly.

The following two sections detail the impressions shared by Group A and Group B participants about the relationship between health and illness and children's education.

Group A participants. Participants 3A, 3B, and 3C are physicians and all were adamant that children in Burkina Faso were vulnerable to a large number of ailments that could delay or

prevent them from receiving an education. Participant 3A felt that chronic diseases were the main health issues faced by students. He said

Some of them are severe: rheumatism, AIDS, drepanocyte [sickle cell disease].

Drepanocyte is a disease of the blood and is passed to the child from the parent.

Rheumatic fever attacks the joints. Students with AIDS, we wonder if they should be

sent to school. They are chronic and lifetime diseases and can't be cured. Periods of

crisis are repetitive and keep students away from school…there is the possibility to

prevent the spread of disease by having regular medical checkups in the school.

Participant 3B elaborated on health problems children encounter in Burkina Faso:

Burkina Faso is a country with frequent epidemic diseases, such as meningitis, that

regularly attacks children's nerves in their brains and goes along with trouble with vision,

hearing, and speaking. Chicken pox, in spite of vaccination opportunities, still have cases

of chicken pox all across the country…chicken pox is dangerous and very contagious.

[It] requires affected child to stay at home…[and] not go to school to minimize the risk of

affecting others. Most children with chicken pox have to be separated from others for

two weeks.

He also noted there is a type of measles called "skin coetaneous outbreak" that can cover a child's body and keep them out of school and that malaria was a "big problem" in this particular area. He went on to discuss several other maladies that can afflict children:

Diarrhea and vomiting caused by a lack of hygiene, mainly when young children eat or

touch food without washing their hands. Wind blows dirt, gives many children breathing

problems, bad for asthma and even for children who don't have asthma. Can keep

children out of school for as much as seven days. HIV [is] not a problem generally as

hygiene between people keeps them relatively safe. But if a child comes in contact with something, that will keep them out of school.

Few participants in either group discussed mental illness. Participant 3C was the only Group A participant to do so. His comments were particularly noteworthy:

> The month of crazies—hysteria—is frequent among children of grade six who will
> take part in the national exam. The affliction is caused by fear and anxiety of
> testing…it can keep students out of school…in such a situation we need a psychologist or
> a mental illness specialist to follow up with them.

Although Participant 3C mentioned that in specific situations a student should see a mental health professional, there are few practicing mental health professionals in Burkina Faso. This is the only participant who referenced mental health professionals in Group A and no one discussed them or their role in the medical community in any other conversation.

Several participants thought that a lack of food was a problem for children in Burkina Faso. Participant 1L thought food programs in the schools were necessary. Without food in the schools, he said, "Children…are likely not to come to school, are likely to not like school, are likely not to come if they don't have food." Participant 5A, a social worker, had a similar point of view. He stated, "Not all children are in good health because there is not enough food," and suggested food programs be implemented in all the schools as an incentive to help children stay in school. According to this participant, if children dropped out of school, they faced other health hazards:

> …They may join a social group that may not be a good group. Will teach them to do
> drugs and do gay behaviors because that behavior will give you money—even if you are
> not gay! When they join these different groups, this can also lead to unwanted

pregnancies and to abortion. Even boys will prostitute themselves here. Even if the boys

don't get pregnant, they are still exposed to sexual disease.

Food, then, is more than an incentive to come to school; it also provides needed nutrition to

children and can deter risky behavior and associated health problems simply by helping children

stay in school longer.

Group B participants. Group B participants generally had broader visions of the impact

of health and nutrition than Group A participants. They discussed many health-related items

other than illness that could impact a child's ability to receive or have access to education.

Participants 4C and 4D/1R commented on the health and nutrition of children in rural Burkina

Faso, where these participants have lived and worked for nearly two years. Participant 4C said:

Kids come; they live with malaria and various other diseases. They don't have enough to

eat. They're usually sent to school with no breakfast. How can they work? Study? Do

well? Most of them in the village don't get lunch. Momma's out working in the field,

they're sent home from noon to three, but they don't get lunch. They go all day and get

one meal at the end of the day. That's what they have to work on.

Participant 2B/4B believed the lack of skill and knowledge of doctors in Burkina Faso played a

role in health and nutrition:

Meningitis—everything is common here…the basic education of the medical here is at

such a low level. They know the basic of what is common. They know what to give

antibiotics for, they know things that are easy to diagnose. Anything that is beyond

normal here goes undiagnosed.

Participant 2B/4B also mentioned malnutrition, illness, and a lack of diagnostic ability within the

medical profession as contributors to a child's inability to attend school. Additionally,

Participant 2B/4B commented on the intersection between mental health and school success. He said:

> In America, there are a large number of kids on medicine for different mental
>
> problems; they don't have that here. So, an ADD or ADHD kid…is undiagnosed and
>
> goes into the school system. Not only is he unable to learn, he is a major distraction to
>
> the rest of the class because he's going un-medicated. There's no therapy for someone
>
> like this and it breaks down the entire class.

Participant 2B/4B indicated that although a student may need to seek help from a mental health professional in Burkina Faso, there are few resources for them to access to obtain the help they require.

Participant 2B/4B and Participant 2A/4A discussed the treatment of injuries. Participant 2B/4B said that an injury can keep a child out of school. Further, if the family chooses traditional medicine (i.e, a medicine man) an injury can be prolonged if the child doesn't receive a proper diagnosis or treatment. Participant 2A/4A elaborated:

> We're talking compound fractures of the bone, the leg, whatever; they'll kind of stick it
>
> in there [push the bone back into the leg], wrap it with leaves and massage it and it won't
>
> heal properly. There was a boy in the school, got into an accident with a bicycle, and he
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> went to a traditional medicine. Dropped out of school, couldn't go back because of the
>
> injury. It's been eight months and they're coming to us to see if anything can be done to
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> help him. They'll have to break his leg again or he'll lose it. We see a lot of people
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> coming a year or two after the fact. Without having the medicine we have [in the United
>
> States] that was all they had [traditional medicine]. But now they've got an opportunity
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> to have something better but either could be money or fear that brings them to do the

traditional [medicine].

While modern medicine is available in Burkina Faso for the treatment of injuries and illnesses, it is still a common and accepted cultural practice for people to seek medical treatment from a traditional medicine practitioner, regardless of the outcome. It can also be less expensive and more convenient (in terms of travel, particularly in rural areas) which can further influence a person's decision regarding from whom they will seek medical help.

While most of the interview discussions focused on the obstacles to education a child in Burkina Faso often encounters, Participant 2A/4A talked about sponsorship as an approach to overcoming some of those obstacles:

> [Sponsorship]…is where we come alongside and partner with families…we give them grain to feed the child. At our school, they get a hot meal everyday. If they are not in our school but in our sponsorship program, they get bi-annual grain…the families get it to ensure that there's food. We don't want the kids to suffer. We want them to be healthy and not malnourished. It's also an incentive for families because as soon as their kid is in school, they're in the sponsorship program and they will receive their grain. If they pull the child out…they no longer get this grain. You'd think parents would want the absolute best for their kids, but it's survival.

Illness plays a very important role in determining school attendance for students in Burkina Faso, but other problems related to health and nutrition are equally important. The cost of healthcare, for example, can be prohibitive as health insurance is almost non-existent for the majority of people, which was not discussed by any of the participants. All health care, even surgery, is paid for in advance; patients are expected to purchase their own supplies that are to be used before, during, and after treatment and/or surgery. Traditional medicine, even with its limitations, is still

considered a viable option for many because, in the short-run, it is less expensive and people are accustomed to using it. The long-term consequences of choosing traditional medicine over modern medicine, however, can include reducing school attendance in cases when traditional medicine does not effectively address injuries or illnesses.

Government. Government is the final subtheme that emerged from the data. Group A participants viewed the government as the primary factor in whether or not education was accessible to all children of Burkina Faso. They tended to blame the government for all or most of the problems the school system and students have encountered, including a lack of school facilities, inadequately trained teachers, overcrowded classrooms, no or very few supplies with which to teach, teacher placement, pay and pay raises, curriculum, nutrition, and more. Group B participants overall offered a broader view of the source of problems facing students and the school system at large, noting a lack of resources (both natural and other, such as financial), infrastructure (such as running water, electricity, and transportation), technology (access to the internet, electronic devices, other), poverty, illiteracy, culture, and corruption in addition to the issues participants in Group A addressed.

Group A participants. An area of particular concern to participants in this group was teacher training. Participants 1A, 1C, 1E, 1J, and 1M all believed that the training was inadequate and that follow-up training was necessary to help ensure that teachers are suitably prepared to teach. In addition, Participants 1A, 1D, 1F, 1H, 1J, 1L, and 1O noted that the curriculum was unwieldy and out of date. Participants 1A, 1E, 1F, 1K, 1L, and 1Q all mentioned that the government did not care about education or did not do enough to ensure that every child could receive an education and that the government was working to privatize as many schools as possible. In addition, teaching supplies and materials, working conditions, and politics were also

discussed in relation to the government as an obstacle to education.

Participants 1A, 1J, and 5A discussed the politics of education in Burkina Faso and connected politics with teacher training. Participant 1A said:

Political leaders not motivated to help with education...do not want to face

problems. Prefer to privatize schools…teachers are poorly trained, not qualified;

prevents [them from] giving their best in the classroom. After the first training, the

teachers no longer receive [additional] training.

Participant 5A added, …"[I] wish it wasn't political decisions…need to have well trained teachers for all the schools and I think this is something the government [should] do". Participant 1J noted that teachers in the private schools are not allowed to be re-trained in the government program that is available to teachers in the public schools. According to this participant, the teachers that work in private school are not as qualified to teach because they are not as well trained as public school teachers and felt that all teachers should be eligible for re-training. The participant also commented on the government-mandated curriculum, saying it was too large. In addition, Participant 1J noted that the government recommended multiple teaching methods for teachers to use but that the teachers found this confusing.

I found it noteworthy that Participant 1A and Participant 1J had conflicting comments about ongoing teacher training; Participant 1A said no teachers (public or private) received re-training while Participant 1J commented that only private school teachers did not receive government re-training. I was unable to ascertain the reason for this discrepancy.

Another issue discussed by participants was teaching and learning materials, including the curriculum, school funding, and the learning environment. Participants 1B and 1D commented that there were no books. Participants 1C and 1D were concerned about a lack of

materials, such as charts or maps, which prevented them from showing the children things about Africa or the Old World. In addition, Participants 1C and 1D said that some of the schools do not have buildings and classes have to be held outdoors; they also noted that some schools do not have wall mounted blackboards or they may have a small blackboard that is on wheels but cannot be seen from all parts of the room.

Participant 1E commented on overall working conditions, and his assertions echoed the comments of Participants 1B, 1C, and1D. He linked poor learning conditions with poor working conditions:

Working conditions are bad, learning conditions are bad. Some schools, no buildings or rooms; classes are held outside. [There is a] lack of materials—need documents in French and English, rulers, squares, basic elementary materials. Need images to show children—or the real thing—otherwise we can explain [or] draw on the board; children have to imagine. Government does not care and trying not to take responsibilities for studies. More schools getting privatized, only country schools are public; most schools in the city are private. The government does not want to solve the problem.

Participants 1B, 1C, and 1D comment's regarding working conditions were similar and indicated that teachers have not received a pay increase and that pay increases are necessary to help keep teachers motivated. They also pointed out that (a) teachers are leaving the field for better paying jobs and going to the gold mines; (b) that education is negatively affected when teachers are not treated well; (c) that the government often sends husbands and wives' to two different places to teach which creates poor living conditions for them and their families and prevents teachers from doing their best; and (d) that minimum training is not enough. These participants suggested that

teaching conditions could improve when the government gives teachers necessary teaching equipment.

Participants 1A, 1D, 1F, and 1H all identified the curriculum as a responsibility of the government and that it was impeding children's progress in school. Participants 1F and 1H both thought that what is currently being taught in the schools is too old. They believed the government should reorganize the school curriculum and choose programs that meet the needs of the new generation. They said the government tried to implement a new program in 2013 but, due to a lack of preparation on the part of the government, the program failed. Participants 1A, 1D, and 1H also commented that the curriculum currently in use was the same curriculum that was taught to their parents. They felt that officials in the government should study what needs to be changed in the curriculum so that it is more relevant to the needs of the current generation, including how to prepare them for employment. They noted that if parents are not sure there are jobs waiting for their children in the future, they are not as likely to enroll their children in school, particularly if the parents are illiterate. Lastly, they also believed that a positive change with the curriculum would help parents have a better opinion of the schools.

Participants 1A, 1D, 1F, and 1H identified the following interventions as necessary to maximize the success of implementing the new program into the education system: training teachers, building additional classrooms, and educating (sensitizing) the population about the importance of school. They indicated that there was not enough classroom space for all the students to move up to the next grade and that some of the primary school grades were mixed (sixth and seventh grades) to provide more space for overcrowded high school classrooms.

Participants 1J and 1L both commented on the limited amount of space for all the children who want to attend school, which Participant 1L attributed to an insufficient number of

schools, while Participant1J linked overcrowding with the budget allotted for education.

Participant 1J said:

> Government doesn't have enough money to pay for all students' school fees. Will
> only take a few students into public schools [after sixth grade]. The rest have to go to
> private schools, which are expensive. The government has a set budget to finance
> education but this budget limited; not all [of the] villages have public schools. Some
> classes are also overcrowded. We have 100 students in same class to be taught by one
> teacher.

Participant 1L noted that private schools have emerged due to the issue of overcrowding but that
they are expensive; the participant also said, "not enough classroom space is a big problem."

Both Participant 1J and 1L indicated that girls' education should be a responsibility of the
government. Participant 1J in particular felt that it was "urgent" that the state to work to improve
girls' education. "Girls are very intelligent," Participant 1J said, "but the society thinks that they
don't need school. They have to be married and take care of their husbands." Participant 1L
noted that even though the government has budgeted money to finance girls' education, the
budget is limited. Participant 1L also thought food programs in the schools were a source of
motivation to encourage children to attend school and that food programs help keep students in
school longer. According to this participant, this also should be a responsibility of the
government.

Finally, Participant 5A said,

> Problems that prevent children from going to school—they say school is free but even if
> it is free, they need programs to keep children in school…they need freedom of
> education to be applied to very school in every village. Wish what they say and what is

written on paper they would do.

Collectively, Group A participants viewed the government as the entity primarily responsible for the success or failure of public schools in Burkina Faso. They all thought the government could do more to ensure students' success by making changes in the curriculum, improving teaching conditions, building more schools, instituting and maintaining food contribution programs, providing free education, and by making decisions related to education based on the needs of the students and teachers and not on politics.

 Group B participants. Women's participation in the governing process is an important component of women's issues in Burkina Faso. Traditionally, men conduct the governance of the country and programs and budgets are directed to their concerns, with little attention or resources given to women's issues. Participant 5B commented on women in government and how education affects their ability to participate in government:

> Generally, representation only used to be one woman on the ballot—not the general assembly—and she was at the bottom [which assured that there would be no women sitting in parliament]. They—women's organization—is asking for 50% of the national assembly: man/woman, man/woman. There is much opposition to this—even women are opposed. They say this is not good representation because women don't have enough education. Because women have less education, it affects their entire lives. Opportunities are much more limited. Women in politics are few in Burkina Faso and in West Africa in general.
>
> There is a huge imbalance between the education of men and women. So, you have an imbalance in educational policy that does not promote girls' education. The Ministry of Women and Gender Promotion is always led by a woman and it is the

smallest and least funded ministry. The only reason gender is brought into the

conversation is because of The Ministry of Women and Gender Promotion and it is from

outside influence, such as the U.S., Denmark, England, France, etc.

At the government level, decisions are made about funding by default and will go

to boys and not biased toward girls. So, without bias toward girls, will by default be

biased toward boys and they will benefit more.

Educated people have reservations about allowing people without an education to

participate in the political process. They think they vote poorly because they don't know

anything…the previous political party would distribute goods to women to get their

vote…now some political parties…are afraid women might vote for the former ruling

party because they were so easily bought in the last election…educated men and women

are saying these things about women.

This participant also commented on the way women who participate in and/or have a job in the

government are perceived by society in Burkina Faso. They are sometimes questioned about

who they may have slept with in order to have the job or position they have and that they should

be home taking care of their husbands and families. Participant 5B also believed that girl's

education was impeded by government policies and linked a lack of education to a diminished

quality of life overall. That many Burkinabé women accept a lack of education as a fact of their

lives is apparent in their attitudes toward women voting and participating in government.

Participants 4D/1R, 4C, 2A/4A, and 2B/4B echoed some of the responses made by Group

A participants regarding the responsibility of the government in making teaching materials

available and training teachers. They cited that teachers often have little, if anything, to teach

with except for a chalkboard and a piece of chalk; the chalk they sometimes have to provide

themselves. They also noted that there are usually no books in the classrooms, something the government is supposed to provide, and if there are books, they often are shared by three children and can never be taken home to study. Participant 4D/1R interviewed a school director from the village where they are stationed. She inquired about some of the challenges the woman faced as a school director:

> I recently interviewed the director…of the [village] school. I asked her about the challenges [she faced] and her answer was it's the government's fault. The government built the schools…they make promises to provide materials and they [teachers] are still waiting.

The lack of teaching and learning materials for teachers and students was a common complaint about the government.

Participant 4C commented on teacher training, another of the government's responsibilities, and provided some valuable insight about a facet of teacher training not previously discussed:

> Teacher training—the level of educations of teachers is a problem. The system has changed slightly the last year or two. Prior to that, with a sixth-grade education, people could go to the state run teacher's school and become a primary school teacher. Right now they have to have a 10th grade education and they are moving toward the BAC [the terminal year test]… there are many, many teachers out there who only have a sixth grade education; would venture to say the bulk, far more than half of the primary school teachers out there have a sixth grade education.

Participant 2A/4A shared similar comments regarding the age of teachers in the schools and the amount of education the government requires them to have in order to teach:

There used to be a system, where, after 10th grade, they could take a test to either

become [or] go into teaching, nursing, police, or military and if you did well on those

tests, the government would pay for your education and you'd be required to work in a

government school. There are alternative schools that are private, meaning you didn't

have to pass the [government] test but you still had to pass the PDC [10th grade] test.

This year they changed it and want students to pass the BAC the final year. That means

they'd have to go three more years to school and then pass the test to be able to go into a

specialized area…instead of having a 10th grader going to teaching school…at least they

have a little more education and experience and they're older. But the system, the way it

is, sometimes it is nearly impossible to pass the BAC. Many people do not. So there are

a lot of specialized schools.

Participant 4C also commented on the government training prospective teacher candidates

receive, including what they are taught in the program; persons training as nurses, police, and for

other government positions have similar training programs. Participant 4C said:

It is a two-year program. One year of classroom work and one year of practice…it was

not, uh, enough but they did give them some good basics. It is focused education…it's

educational courses, that's all. There's no math, no science, no French on the side. It's

not a well-rounded education…it's that way with the medical people, social workers,

nurses…it's very specialized. They pack a lot into it.

The specialization of the government training programs trains people in a relatively short period

of time to perform a particular job. Because the training program focuses on a particular area of

employment in which the person will be working, it does not include subjects of instruction that

would provide a better education overall as well as contribute to a higher quality trained

employee. However, the training programs offer an opportunity for people to move out of the

education process and into paid employment, which is the desired outcome.

Children with special needs were also addressed. Participant 2A/4A and 2B/4B noted

that despite the fact that the government has mandated all children be accepted into school, they

are not. Participant 2A/4A said,

> All the kids that have a handicap are not really able to go to school…families still believe
>
> that a handicap is a curse on the family…and they're embarrassed…there was a boy with
>
> Elephantitis of the foot and…he was never able to go to school. Had nothing to do with
>
> his brain or ability to learn…he just looked different.

Participant 2B/4B concurred with this comment, noting that what the government expects to

occur regarding school enrollment for all children and what actually happens can be two

different things, based more on culture than on government regulations. If government officials

do not oversee and follow-up on school enrollment data, the problem of not allowing children

with special needs to attend school will continue unabated.

Personal Observations of Schools

Observations are an important element of qualitative research. They provide information

that might not otherwise be available through interviews or a literature review and at the same

time may corroborate data provided by the study participants. The observations I collected

provide an overall illustration of the educational environment for students and teachers of

Burkina Faso. The intent is to help the reader gain a better understanding of the lived experience

for teachers and students in Burkina Faso, which contextualizes data gathered from other

sources, such as participant interviews. The observations addressed research questions one and

two and also contributed to data that led to theme development. Their essential purpose was to

provide a more comprehensive view of the country as a whole, including a level of technological development and standard of living that is common throughout Burkina Faso, and primarily informed and supported the main theme, a culture of survival, as well as the sub themes of poverty and income and employment.

The observations in this section begin with the public and private schools of Burkina Faso and progress to private schools that were established from a country of origin other than Burkina Faso; all the schools in the observations participated in this study. The observations detail and describe a variety of elements that are indicative of income, or a lack of it, reflected in the condition of the school environments, essential and non-essential amenities (such as books, food, water, plumbing, and electricity) available at the school, and the students themselves. The observations also provide a contrast between schools that exist in a country in which there is a great deal of poverty and schools that have higher revenues with which to work. The observations are presented in this section according to the chronological order in which they were obtained and recorded.

I visited many public and private schools while I was in Burkina Faso in both urban and rural areas. I observed the physical and learning environments at each of these schools as research has shown that the school environment has an impact on learning (Dumiak, 2010; Kéré, 2012; Shabiralyim, Shahzad Hassad, Hamad, & Iqbal, 2015), which may, in turn, affect school attendance. Two of the private schools I visited had electricity, air conditioning, a municipal water supply, and indoor plumbing. The remaining seven schools were not air-conditioned and most lacked electricity; of those that had electricity, it was not always available due to frequent power outages. In addition, some schools did not have a well and/or potable water on site. Provision for bathrooms varied greatly from school to school, and nearly all of the schools

lacked indoor plumbing and running water. Although the lack of air conditioning, indoor plumbing, or potable water may have made it uncomfortable to attend school and sit in a classroom, it may not have greatly deterred school attendance as all the classrooms were at or near full capacity on the days that I visited. It is important to note, however, that it is possible that children came to school specifically for my visit, as my observation visits were scheduled in advance. These observations supported the sub theme of poverty in that the lack of basic amenities available to the school such as potable water and electricity, indicated a lack of revenue at the macro level, which impacts the amount of money the government has allocated to fund education and finance its infrastructure.

In schools established for the local student population of Burkina Faso, an afternoon break extended from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m., during which time the students would either stay on campus and eat lunch or go home and come back at 3 p.m. It was unknown to me if the children who went home received a meal or not; however, from the interview responses, I understood that many children did not eat lunch at home. Some of the schools had a food program. The boarding type schools and the orphanage school provided the students on site with a meal generally consisting of cooked, mashed millet, called tô (pronounced toe). Rice or other cooked grain, and sometimes meat, were served on occasion. There were no overweight students or adults in any of the local population schools I visited, urban or rural. Some of the children had bright, orange hair, and others had distended abdomens—both of which can be symptoms of protein-energy malnutrition (Liu, Raine, Venables, & Mednick, 2004). Several participants have commented that a food program can be an incentive for parents to enroll their children in school and for children to attend school. This implies that in the absence of the availability of food at school, children may be inclined to not attend. These observations contributed to the

development of the main theme, a culture of survival, and the sub themes poverty and income and employment.

In addition, in none of the local population schools I visited, nor in any of the villages or cities, did I see any child with eyeglasses. Eyeglasses among adults of the local population were also uncommon. Information gathered from the interviews indicated that physicians infrequently saw children unless a child was ill or injured. Thus, the absence of eyeglasses did not necessarily indicate universally adequate vision. Untreated vision impairment could negatively impact a child's ability to see the blackboard from any desk in the classroom and make it even more difficult to learn and possibly prevent regular school attendance altogether. These observations supported the sub theme of poverty and income and employment, as they indicated a lack of income that would be able to provide a family with access to healthcare.

The school for the blind I visited, a private school, was the only school in Burkina Faso that was dedicated solely to the needs of visually impaired students. I was also informed that it was one of three schools in the country that accepted children with disabilities. In this school, there were multiple buildings, including small dormitories (with bunk beds) that housed six to eight students, an administrative building, classrooms, and a kitchen. On site, there was a water pump, several buildings that were still under construction, and chickens. No students were observed to use a cane for walking but they were able to navigate the compound, including stairs, without them. They had Braille instructional and learning materials. All the instruction was in French. The students sat at long tables with their books. There was no air conditioning and no indoor plumbing. There was one teacher per classroom and a maximum of 15 students to a classroom. All of the teachers, except one, were also blind. The students were quiet and attentive in the classroom. They did not wear uniforms and most did not wear shoes; their

clothing was in poor condition. This school had the fewest amenities of all the schools I visited and the children were among the poorest however, without this school, these children would have no access to education whatsoever. These observations contributed to the development of the main theme, a culture of survival, and the sub themes poverty and income and employment.

The orphanage whose staff participated in the study had an elementary school on site. There was a covered play area on the grounds, which provided shade and equipment where children could play soccer or other games. The children wore uniforms (as they did at most of the private schools I visited). They also had a health clinic on the property, which was staffed by one or more nurses from the area. Small animals raised on the grounds would eventually provide meat and eggs for meals. A garden area provided fresh vegetables and a hydroponic garden was under construction which, when complete, would use less water than conventional gardens. Mango trees provided seasonal fruit and there was municipal water and a well. There was also a women's outreach center on site that provided assistance and help for women to support themselves and their children. Through the women's outreach center, women could learn a trade, budgeting, and other life skills. During my visit, I saw young women weaving cloth by hand and using treadle sewing machines to make garments and other products that could be sold at the market. Food, water, recreational activities, and a health clinic are all available to the children in the orphanage as well as students who attend the on-site school. Amenities such as these encourage school enrollment and attendance.

A married couple from Europe established one of the private schools through the NGO the couple founded. It was a newer facility and in exceptional condition based on my observations during my visit. It also provided more amenities on site than most of the other private and public schools I visited, such as a planetarium, a computer lab (all the computers

were covered with material or plastic to protect them from dust), a driving course where students could ride bicycles and tricycles for the purpose of learning how to safely navigate traffic, and a play area. On one of the days I visited, staff was giving grain to the families of the children who attended—a biannual event. The school had a well that provided water for the school and from which student families could also receive water. Classrooms were large, with windows in each room, and each classroom held a maximum of 50 students. Students had copybooks, textbooks (that remained at school), and there was at least one world map. All the students wore uniforms. The school left me with the impression that the founders and staff were deeply committed to the success of the students and were very deliberate in the programs they initiated to encourage continued student enrollment and attendance.

I visited a private school that missionaries founded (primarily for missionary children) and was located in a downtown commercial building. There were several rooms that served as classrooms, a small library with several hundred books, an area for eating, and bathrooms. There was electricity and indoor plumbing. All the students had textbooks. There were visual learning aids on the walls and student work was displayed. English was the language of instruction. Music, art, and current events were incorporated into the curriculum. Tables served as desks and the students were observed to work quietly, either individually or in small groups. Students did not wear uniforms but were generally well dressed.

The international school I visited was the largest of all the schools. There were multiple buildings that housed offices, classrooms, bathrooms, and a library. There was an outdoor swimming pool, a basketball court, and a large field for outdoor sports. In addition, there were two playgrounds with play equipment. Outside each elementary classroom were cubicle shelves (cubbies) for students' personal belongings. All students brought their own food and water (or

other beverage) and ate lunch in the classroom. There was electricity, air conditioning, indoor

plumbing, and all the rooms had glass windows in each room. The classrooms I visited had

chalkboards and separate desks at which the students could sit. Student work (such as art,

science, and various projects) and multiple visual learning aids, such as maps and posters, were

prominently displayed on the walls. There were fewer than 30 students per room. Most

classrooms had one teacher and the kindergarten and pre-school kindergarten classrooms also

had a teacher aide. All the students had textbooks, book bags, writing utensils, and paper. They

also had access to a variety of learning tools such as books, paint, markers, crayons, flashcards

and pictures. Music and art were part of the curriculum. Although both teachers and students

alike came from many different countries of origin, the language of instruction was English. The

students did not wear uniforms but were generally well dressed. This concludes the personal

observation of schools section.

Research Question Responses

      Research question one. Research question one (RQ) 1 is **"**What barriers to education

exist in Burkina Faso?" Interview questions (IQ) 4, 5, and 16, observations, physical data from

public documents such as school enrollment rates, and sixth-grade national exam test scores all

contributed to answering this research question. The theme of a culture of survival, and the six

subthemes of poverty, income and employment, school enrollment and attendance, passing the

sixth-grade exam, health and nutrition, and government were relevant to answering research

question one. Participant responses to the IQs laid a foundation upon which the subthemes and

the primary theme were built. In the analysis of the research questions section interview

responses are not categorized according to participant groups.

      Participants frequently cited the subtheme of poverty as a barrier to children receiving an

education in Burkina Faso. Because education is not free in Burkina Faso, it is difficult for

families to pay for schooling. IQ 4 is, "In your opinion, what do you consider to be obstacles or

barriers to education in Burkina Faso?" Participants 1C, 1D, 1F, 1G, 1J, 1L, 1N, 1O, 1Q, 3A,

5A, 5B, 2A/4A, 2B/4B, 4C, and 4D/1R all commented on poverty in Burkina Faso, and they

each believed that it directly impacted the ability of a child to receive an education. Most of

these participants indicated directly or indirectly that poverty is generational, meaning that

successive generations continue to be impacted by poverty. Many of the parents are illiterate

because they did not receive an education and therefore are not able to help their children with

homework, which can have long-term effects on how well they perform in their studies overall

and their ability to advance from one grade to the next. Some of the participant's quotes follow:

Participant 1G stated, "[The] problem in Africa is the poverty, the lack of means…"

Participant 1A said, "Parents are very poor. Poverty and illiterate parents prevent parents

from helping with homework."

The impact of poverty is so pervasive it extends well beyond the school walls, and it

dominates nearly every aspect of the child's life to the extent that parents are forced to choose

between sending their children to school and providing for the basic needs of the family. It is an

important contributor to the formation of a culture of survival.

Continuing with the subtheme of poverty in answering research question one, Participants

1L, 1D, and 1Q all commented on the inability of parents to afford to pay for their children's

education, which, in turn, affects school enrollment and attendance. If children are not able to

attend school regularly due to a lack of family finances to cover school fees, they will not learn

effectively in school and their chances of advancing to the next grade, passing the mandatory

exams, and graduating will be lower. In support of this, Participant 4D/1R said, "You can't

ignore the poverty, which I think is at the base of all this." Participant 1I agreed: "In a word, poverty. I think if Burkina Faso were not so poor, they may be able to be a little more systematic, a little more available, to all the children here." Without an education, it is unlikely that they will be able to compete on a global scale in any field, or even for domestic employment, in which case, there are little opportunities for breaking out of the cycle of poverty.

IQ5 asks, "In your opinion, why do you think children are not enrolled in school?" and was written to elicit more specific responses from the interviewees rather than the more general, broader format of IQ4. If children are sent to school, families are losing their workers—free labor—and thus losing help with the farming or other family business, cleaning, cooking, fetching water, taking care of younger children, and so on, which relates to the subthemes of income and employment, school enrollment and attendance, and the main theme, a culture of survival. Participants 1A, 1D, and 1F mentioned that children are often kept out of school to help with farming or other family-directed business activities. According to Participant 1A, "Many parents think it is better to keep their children at home to help both in household duties and rural activities [farming]" rather than send them to school. Participant1D concurred and added, "Girls stay home to help with the young children and boys stay home to help shepherd animals." Participant 1F said, "in the small villages students stop [going to] schools because parents are poor and they prefer their children to go in [to] mining sites…rather than going to school." Keeping children home to help with the needs of the family is a common practice in Burkina Faso and is ultimately detrimental to a child's education. In reality, this practice has the opposite desired effect by perpetuating the cycle of poverty rather than alleviating it.

IQ16 is "In your opinion, do you think health and nutrition impact a child's ability to learn or to receive an education?" Access to food, potable water, and quality health care were

determined to be obstacles to education and important factors in whether or not a child might be able to attend school and receive an education. As poor health, illness, and injuries, can keep children out of school, the two subthemes of health and nutrition and school enrollment and attendance overlapped. The participant comments were revealing in how they viewed health and nutrition, and even the expertise of the medical community, in relation to school attendance. Some of their quotes follow. Participant 2A/4A stated:

> [The] clinic [on site at the orphanage] serves the health needs of children who attend the school, children in the orphanage, and others who are in the sponsorship program. All the kids in the school are getting care and getting well quicker, whereas before, lots of times kids would miss school because they're ill. Something like malaria can be a three-day thing if you take the medicine. Without it, it could go on for a while.

The participant went on to name several reasons for the occurrence of malnutrition, such as illness, a mom who is unable to provide enough milk to feed her babies, and children who have lost weight and don't have enough food to gain it back. In these and similar instances, the children may experience a delay in starting or attending school.

Participants 4C and 4D/1R both commented on the health and nutrition of children in the villages. Participant 4D/1R said

> They're hungry. They're ill. We had [a doctor] come out…and do medical exams on the children at school, and a lot of them, this was their first medical exam. In talking with the doctors after, she said 80% of the children tested for malaria tested positive. When asking these children how they felt, they said 'fine,' an example of they don't know what feeling fine is because they feel poorly all the time, so feeling sick is natural to them. I asked the doctors how this impedes their education and they said repeated

malaria certainly lessens their ability to concentrate and impedes their developmental

progress. All of those things that the kids are putting up with they take for granted—

being sick is normal.

Participants 3A, 3B, and 3C are physicians and the health experts in Burkina Faso. Their

viewpoint on the health issues they see and treat on a regular basis was instrumental in my

understanding of the complex, and sometimes subtle, health problems that children contend with

and how it contributes to school attendance. Participant 3A felt that chronic diseases were the

main health issues faced by students. Participant 3B thought some of the main health problems

children encounter in Burkina Faso were epidemic diseases and respiratory problems, such as

asthma, all of which can keep children out of school for a week or more. Participant 3C felt that

the main problem was malaria. He commented:

It is the main cause of hospitalization in young children under five. It is very severe in

our area. When a child is hospitalized two or three times a year, this can affect school

because of the long absence from school activities. First the student will have to stay

in the hospital four or five days. Then he needs to stay home and rest for aftercare.

Additionally, it was noted that every time a child visits the doctor or is hospitalized, money has

to be removed from the family to pay for treatment, further exacerbating already strained family

finances. This will have an impact on both current and future school enrollment and attendance.

Participant 3C noted that every visit to the hospital detracts money from the family that might

have been spent on education.

Participant 1B commented on a child's attendance in reference to children missing school

when the harvest arrives, but the statement is also applicable to the impact of illness on the

ability of a child to attend school and maintain their studies. Participant 1B asserted, "It's not

possible for a child who misses two months of school to make it up. The teacher won't have time to come back to those [missed] classes." Thus, regardless of the reason the child is missing school, the teacher will not able to help him or her catch up, which will negatively impact that child's education.

Interviewees frequently referenced the government as the entity responsible for making sure there is an education system in the country that has the ability and resources to educate the populace, as an obstacle to education in Burkina Faso for many different reasons. Participant 1A expressed an opinion that was shared by many participants:

Political leaders not motivated to help with education...[they] do not want to face problems. Prefer to privatize schools. The curriculum is too old, does not fit the reality of the new generation. Teachers are poorly trained, not qualified; prevents [them from] giving their best in the classroom. After the first training, the teachers no longer receive [additional] training.

Participant 1Q noted that funding is insufficient, saying, "The government fails to manage the budget to target education." Participant 5B said, "There are very limited resources at all levels…there is a large segment of the population that are not being offered any opportunity for access to education."

With limited access to education, many and varied obstacles to education, a lack of supplies and teaching materials, a shortage of school buildings and teachers, as well as poorly trained and unqualified teachers, it is not only extremely difficult for a child to attend school, it is also difficult for that child to learn and receive a quality education within the Burkina Faso education system. In addition, if a child is not allowed or is unable to continue onto higher education following the sixth grade, the important skills of computing, reading, writing and

speaking French or English are quickly lost if they are not maintained through the education

system. There are no public libraries; there is very little written material in indigenous languages

and children are not taught to read and write in predominantly oral languages. Most often a

foreign language such as French or English is not reinforced at home. Further, outside of school,

there may be less of a demand for learned math skills. Therefore, the value of six grades of

education may not be realized once the child leaves the school system.

Research question two. RQ2 is "How does a lack of access to education impact the

ability of the Burkinabé to earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as

adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care for oneself and family members?" IQ 7 (Can

you tell me what happens to children when they leave the orphanage, and are they required to

leave at a certain age?), 8 (Can you tell me what happens to students who do not pass the

national exam after completing the sixth grade?), and 9 (If a student is not able to attend high

school and graduate, what type of employment might that person be able to secure?) were

designed to help answer research question two.

The data collected through observations, published data, journaling, and interviews

revealed that many people in Burkina Faso live in poverty and the majority do not have the

equivalent of a sixth-grade education. Participant 1K said, "It takes 10 years for child to get a

job and earn an income. That is too long!" Participant 1C added, "Small jobs are appreciated

because they will earn money as quick as possible…when a child start a sewing activity he will

be able to save money in five years. But school will take them more time to have money."

Participants 1A, 1B, and 1D commented that even though jobs are often related to the level of

education a person has, there is no guarantee that a person will be able to find employment once

graduated. According to Participant 1B, "Gold mines and farming are two jobs students can go

to" although neither of these jobs require an education. However, the mines present considerable safety hazards, and there is no guarantee a person will find enough gold to provide an adequate income to support oneself or a family. Farming, which is completely dependent on rainfall, also may also not provide sufficient income to support family members. Participants 1A and 1C indicated that children who do not do well in school or pass the sixth-grade exam are frequently kept at home to help rather than sent to school, and the attitude of the parents is that there is a different path for that child to take. Consequently, these children have fewer opportunities for future employment than students who are able to stay in school longer.

Job vacancies are applied for by people with varied levels of education, regardless of the job requirements. Participant 1D noted that when people with higher levels of education apply for a job opening, they are more likely to get the job even if they had less training or experience than other applicants. This participant said, "It is the Francophone system. They want to see a diploma…if a person is competent with a secondary degree and a person with a bachelor's degree apply for the same job, bachelor's degree is favored instead of competency." The perception is that people with a higher level of education are more competent, even if it is not true, which further limits the likelihood that a child with a lesser education will find employment outside the family as an adult.

For the physically and mentally disabled, there are few, if any, opportunities available to them for education or employment. Participant 1N said, "A blind child is considered a charge to the family and the only thing they can do is beg his bread on the streets." In Burkina Faso, where jobs are scarce, any hindrance to education influences the prospect of a better future. Children with physical disabilities are generally not enrolled in school. They are an embarrassment to their families and shunned by their community and society in general. There

is no provision made for them by the government for education or for their basic human needs, such as food, water, clothing, and shelter. With no education or marketable skills, they turn to the public for their support, which is not profitable, and beg on the streets for food and money because they have no other options. Although the job market in Burkina Faso is tenuous and uncertain, and cultural attitudes toward disabilities are complex, a learned skill or trade can help support academic achievement and has the potential to provide an income regardless of a person's physical capabilities.

Income produced by businesses and farms that belong to the family are used to pay the costs of the business, and consequently, individual family members do not receive a wage for their labor. According to Participant 4D/1R, wages are not paid to family members who work a family business. According to Participants 1P and 5C, 85% of the population are subsistence farmers, which does not require an education. Hence, this portion of the population is not earning an income, per se; their family is caring for them. Given this, it is difficult to see how the education system is significantly contributing to the economic growth of either the populace or the country at large. In addition, even though a person might complete secondary education, or graduate from college, there is no guarantee that they will find employment. Participants often mentioned that it might take years for students find a job after high school or college. The benefits of an education may not be immediately apparent; people are confronted with the dilemma of feeding themselves and their family on a daily basis—at least once, twice would be better—so the rewards of an education that is 12 or 13 years into the future are elusive. These rewards are future-oriented, and if not chosen, the cycle of poverty has little chance of being broken. Yet, a person who is forced to choose between eating and learning in school will likely choose eating every time. The cycle of poverty is an immensely complex problem. Participant

4D/1R offered an insightful comment and said, "In my opinion, education is the key to break that cycle and offer hope to future generations."

Participant 5C pointed out that there is a type of "Catch 22" situation in all of this:

"…If there's no trained work force, then what company's gonna want to come and put in an assembly plant…or simple electronics or something like that because there isn't a skill set…but until there is some kind of a job base, the government's not going to, I think, invest in that kind of vocational training, if there aren't jobs waiting for them. So, it's agriculture. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy here and it [requires] techniques you learned from your…mom and dad…

I find that the business owners, um, and those that work for the private sector companies, are, they can really be the most educated. Many of them have studied in France, or the U.S., or in Ghana. So, there's an elite kind of business class that are educated and they're successful. It's a very small portion of the population. Next, I would say the government workers, which represent probably the top of their class in Burkina…Then after that you have the shop owners, laborers, they may be security guards, drivers, service types of jobs. Then there's the unemployed."

Participant 4D/1R commented, "…they're working for survival. It's subsistence farming; they're feeding their families. Y'know…everybody there is self-employed." Participants 2A/4A and 2B/4B agreed with this viewpoint and Participant 2A/4A also said

Some families have businesses and keep their kids working with them. You see children working as mechanics, helping their families in the tire shops, helping their family to run a business. Even when they're small—little kids…A lot of kids go looking for gold. Hoping to get quick cash. It's directed by the family. The family sends them out to look

for rocks that they can pound down…Boys, when they get to be about 12, 13, can get down into the holes to look for gold because they're small. They are sought after. To…go down into these holes that can collapse on them…pulling out rocks that what they hope is gold.

Not long after I left Burkina Faso, one of the participants forwarded to me an article of a collapsed mine that took the lives of several young children. The children who leave school either due to their own decision or because of their parent's direction and go to the gold mines are gambling for a big pay-off at the end of the day; yet, they are risking their very lives to participate in this venture. The message the study participants wanted to convey to students contemplating going to the mines was to stay in school.

In the orphanage that participated in the study, children have more options than other children in Burkina Faso. They have a support system that many children in Burkina Faso lack. Participant 2A/4A commented on the consequences of a student leaving the sixth grade without passing the exam:

…What we do, at least with our kids that are in our program is we encourage them to enter technical school, sewing schools, things like that. You have to pass the sixth grade exam for most schools, most tech schools, to admit you. But there are, like the sewing schools…sewing schools might be a little different, um, we were able to get some girls into that [without passing the exam].

In this orphanage, there are more options for entering technical school because there are people there who search for them and try to make them available to the children and families they serve. They take a comprehensive view of the child through early adulthood and assist them as needed to get as much education as they can and also help them acquire a skill or a trade. They help

them learn new techniques for farming. They promote good health and provide medical care within the facility or fund medical care outside their facility if needed. In doing so, they provide a better opportunity for the child to succeed as an adult in adult society. They have also hired back young adults after they have left the orphanage. They are an available contact even after a person leaves the orphanage. While there is no set age when a person has to leave the orphanage, they generally leave by the time they are adults, or earlier. As this was the single orphanage to participate in the study, I do not know if every orphanage in Burkina Faso offers the same advantages to the children who live there, although there is no reason to assume that other orphanages are the same.

In addition to the interviews, observations and field notes were also used to answer research question two. However, observations and field notes proved to be of limited value, as they did not provide information about how much of an education a person had or what his or her yearly income was. Data were available about how much a particular job might pay (e.g., about five cents per car to park cars), the cost of various items (e.g., a box of tissues, phone minutes sold street side; produce sold by street vendors; cloth sold at the market; etc.) and the average total number of years a person stays in school in Burkina Faso (4.5 non-consecutive years). Overall, data from interviews and observations, contextualized by information from public sources documenting average per capita income (See Chapter Two), suggests a person's financial future in Burkina Faso would be extremely difficult without at least a secondary education. Even with a secondary or tertiary education, employment futures are bleak, and this is even more so when a person has only a primary education.

Research question three. The research question, "What are the consequences of chronic poverty in Burkina Faso in terms of human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy?" is

the final research question for this study. Previous research indicates that there is a link between poverty and education (see Chapter Two) therefore it was relevant to explore this topic in an area of such widespread poverty as Burkina Faso. IQ 9 and 18 were designed to elicit data pertinent to RQ3, although other interview questions, as well as journaling and observations, yielded data relevant to this research question. IQ 9 asks, "If a student is not able to go to high school and graduate, can you tell me what kind of employment that person might be able to secure?" and IQ 18 states, "What can you tell me about life in Burkina Faso as it is related to education that we have not yet discussed?"

The future children face depends on whether they receive an education, according to data from this study. Some may live in poverty all their lives and others may be able to transcend poverty. Study participants indicated that children who receive an education are more likely to have opportunities for employment than children who do not and felt that children who do not receive an education are more likely to live in poverty their entire lives. Participant 4D/1R said, referring to the former:

> [Children] are hungry…they're ill…they feel poorly all the time so feeling sick is natural
>
> to them…being sick is normal…a lot of children…see what their parents do and a
>
> lot of times they don't see what opportunities exist because of having an education…
>
> Poverty here is a cycle from generation to generation.

Participant 2A/4A shared:

> The reason there is poverty is because people have not had the opportunity to be
>
> educated or trained in any skills to earn a living outside cultivating and because they rely
>
> on the weather for good crops and can only grow three months out of the year. They
>
> suffer and have limited resources so they cannot send their children to school so it is a

vicious cycle…we are trying to tackle (1) extending the growing season with alternative ways of growing, (2) offering training so mother's can learn skills to earn income, and (3) send kids to school/training programs. Without these things people won't ever break out of poverty. And this accounts for about 85% of the population.

For these two participants, poverty prohibits children from obtaining an education and thus is seen to prevent children from having access to opportunities that might be beneficial to them. The implication is that children see what their parents do (referring to the value placed on education, the type of work they engage in) and imitate their parents because alternative opportunities are not presented. Limited opportunities then travel inter-generationally, from parent to child, and consequently, the consequences of these limited opportunities remain unchanged across generations. The cycle of poverty and all of its negative side effects may continue indefinitely unless something is interjected that can potentially interrupt the cycle.

Participant 2B/4B noted that poverty overshadows many aspects of life in Burkina Faso and is decisively connected to survival. Participant 4C, noting that many children in Burkina Faso who live in poverty are often ill and don't have enough to eat, said:

I feel that education is the primary key for digging out of poverty. We need for this present generation to make it through school, train for a job, raise their children to value education, and then perhaps the poverty cycle will diminish.

Participant 1O said, referring to children who attend the school for the blind, "When children come here, they come without clothing. [We] try to find clothing for them…but when go back to [their] families, they will keep the clothes we gave them and send them back with no clothes." The participant went on to say that because the families are poor, they keep the clothing for the other children who are at home. The consequences of chronic poverty are far reaching,

impacting all facets of a person's life, including the ability to meet basic human needs, so much so that even the little that a person in a family may have, if needed, will be given to someone else. The division of already paltry resources between family members illustrates the insidious effects chronic poverty has on basic quality of life.

The translator who worked with me in Burkina Faso introduced me to many people who gave me valuable insights into the culture and life in Burkina Faso in general. These were compiled as field notes and observations. She also agreed with comments made during the interviews. One day the translator took me to visit an acquaintance of hers who had a baby girl and wanted me to see her baby. When I entered the courtyard, the mom was sitting outside with her daughter. Her baby's entire body was edematous, and my first thought was the child probably did not have long to live. After introductions, I was informed that the child had hydrocephalus and the mother asked through the translator if my family would adopt her daughter. She believed that her daughter would receive better medical care than what she could afford and that in giving her child to me she was giving her daughter a better chance at surviving. As families often cannot afford adequate health care, along with other basic needs, it is a common practice to give their children to other families (and even strangers) in the hope of a better future for that child.

Although the impact of education was not directly included as a variable in this research question, many participants made connections between poverty and education (RQ2), which is relevant to the overall research aim of this dissertation. Participants 2A/4A, 4C, and 4D/1R all commented that without education, the cycle of poverty would just keep repeating itself. Participants argued that without education, complications of poor health and health care, a lack of finances, fragmentation of families (i.e., the necessity of marrying off daughters at early ages

because the family has inadequate resources to provide for everyone), insufficient food and malnutrition, and other problems associated with poverty would simply never resolve.

Summary

In this chapter, participant responses were organized and viewed through the subthemes and main theme that emerged from the data and also according to the research questions that the case study sought to answer. Participants were forthcoming in their responses to the interview questions and provided a broad perspective to the many complex and systemic difficulties the people of Burkina Faso encounter in trying to obtain an education. Poverty was recognized by the majority of participants as one of the most pressing problems related to children receiving an education in Burkina Faso, particularly at the elementary level because without at least a sixth-grade education, which includes passing the national sixth-grade exam, the door to higher education, and possibly higher paying jobs, is closed. A total of 23 participants (79%) viewed the combined subthemes of poverty and income and employment as a major impediment to receiving an education in Burkina Faso. Many participants viewed the government as the entity most responsible for the perpetuation and correction of the weaknesses within the education system. Finally, the main theme of a culture of survival, even though it was not directly referred to as such by the majority of participants, nevertheless proved to be the predominant element that connected the subthemes together, excluding the subtheme of government.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

This qualitative case study is an investigation into the education system of Burkina Faso for the purpose of examining possible reasons for under-education in Burkina Faso as well as the impact of poverty on the education of the Burkinabé people. This chapter presents a summary of the findings and discussion of the implications of these findings in the context of existing literature. In addition, this chapter also presents empirical, theoretical, and practical implications; limitations and delimitations of the study; and suggestions for future research.

Summary of Findings

The analysis of the data collected from interviews, observations, and secondary sources of information revealed one main theme and six subthemes. The main theme, a culture of survival, was an overarching theme that was contextually related to the six subthemes of poverty, income and employment, school enrollment and attendance, health and nutrition, passing the sixth-grade national exam, and government.

The data revealed a consistent disconnect between the participants' perceived benefits of education and the path many parents ultimately choose for their children based on their own beliefs about education. More specifically, most participants held a view of how an education could benefit children over the long-term, which contrasted with their observations of parents' shorter-term, more immediate goals for their children and families. In addition, the study participants who were not Burkinabé nationals espoused a wider range of obstacles to education in Burkina Faso, whereas the Burkinabé participants often had a narrower focus.

Overall, most of the study participants indicated that poverty, income and employment, and the government of Burkina Faso itself presented the most daunting obstacles to education.

Participants who were not from Burkina Faso were the only participants who discussed a culture of survival and were adamant that navigating this culture influenced every life decision for the majority of the people of Burkina Faso, including decisions involving education. The following sections summarize main findings associated with each research question.

Research Question One

RQ1 is: what barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso? The main theme and six subthemes arising from the data were all pertinent to answering this research question. A culture of survival, poverty, income and employment, school attendance and enrollment, health and nutrition, and passing the sixth-grade exam were all viewed as major barriers to education.

A culture of survival was seen as the most daunting of all barriers because it profoundly shapes the family's entire way of life. All choices are made based on what is required for the family to survive. This affects decisions related to finances, food and water, children going to school versus staying at home to help, forced early marriage for girls, healthcare, education, and so on. There is no room to prioritize long-term life goals when a person spends every last resource on daily survival needs. The subthemes of poverty, income and employment, school attendance and enrollment, health and nutrition, and passing the sixth-grade exam, although each important factors influencing whether or not a child can gain access to education in Burkina Faso, are all shaped and contextualized by the overall culture of survival.

Within the five subthemes of poverty, income and employment, school attendance and enrollment, health and nutrition, and passing the sixth-grade exam, participants identified the following barriers to education:

- low personal and family incomes;
- limited job opportunities outside the family;

- an economy tied to agriculture with very few natural resources to aid its growth and success as the major employing industry in the country;

- inadequate teacher training to prepare students for adult life in their community and the world;

- the family cost of educating their children, in terms of costs to attend school and loss of a free labor source;

- inadequate number of school buildings and classroom space;

- high student-to-teacher ratio;

- inconsistent school attendance and high rate of early drop out;

- low mean-number-of-years children attend school;

- early forced marriage for girls;

- difficulty passing the sixth-grade exam due to possible corruption in the test administration, inadequate student preparation (because of school absence, poorly trained teachers, teaching methodology, language barrier), and cost to re-take the exam;

- outdated curriculum; and

- illnesses, injuries, and health issues that limit families' financial resources.

Surmounting these problems is unlikely without financial assistance from other countries and a long-term plan for the development of the job market (which includes teaching and training the work force). However, even if the government were to receive foreign aid, there would need to be a realistic plan in place to determine how this aid is to be allocated in order to maximize the benefit to the country.

Research Question Two

RQ2 is: how does a lack of access to education impact the ability of the Burkinabé to

earn an income that is sufficient to meet basic human needs such as adequate food, clothing,

shelter, and medical care for oneself and family members? Interviews, journal entries,

observations, and published data were used to answer this question. People described life

circumstances for the Burkinabé, many of which were related to income and/or education such

as:

- the income earned from jobs that do not require an education (i.e., farming,
   parking cars, selling phone minutes, and so on);

- the number of hours people typically work in a day to provide for their needs—
   (eight to16, depending on the job);

- the choices a family has for affordable medical treatment;

- the practice of parents giving their children to other people to raise because of a
   lack of money;

- the economic and social consequences of ostracism from one's village (especially
   women, children, the disabled, and social dissidents);

- forced early marriage for girls; and

- people living in unfinished buildings.

These data were used to detail the obstacles facing the Burkinabé people and

contextualize the lifestyles shaped by poverty and the struggle people endure to meet basic

human needs. Observations related to these struggles informed the development of interview

questions. Although not every observation, comment, or event was explicitly related to

education, many of them were directly or indirectly related to education, poverty and/or survival

and thus ultimately relevant to education and the impact of poverty.

The data suggest that the answer to RQ2 is that a lack of an education of at least 10th

grade or higher greatly impacts the ability of a person to earn an income sufficient to provide for his or her basic human needs, as well as those of a family. While the economy in Burkina Faso is very slowly improving, it is significantly less stable than the economy of the United States or other developed countries. Food insecurity is an ever-present dilemma for many of the people of Burkina Faso. Safe, clean water is not available to many rural and urban communities. Decent clothing, shoes, shelter, and transportation are unattainable for numerous people in Burkina Faso. People who are employed in jobs outside the family business or farm are more likely to be educated and have access to resources allowing them to meet basic needs as well as maintain a higher standard of living. However, while a portion of the population is educated and can provide financially for their needs, the country as a whole is extremely poor and uneducated and it takes a very small imbalance in their fragile economy to plunge the entire country into a crisis. For example, the recent overthrow of their long-term president sent the country into a weeklong turmoil associated with an immediate shortage of food, water, and money. From this perspective, it might seem that having an education may not be beneficial in helping people provide for themselves, given the unpredictability of when citizens will be required to narrow their focus to immediate survival needs. However, when the majority of the population of a country has a work force that is educated and trained, the country tends to attract business and jobs and people eventually acquire the financial means to rise out of poverty.

Research Question Three

RQ3 is: what are the consequences of chronic poverty in Burkina Faso in terms of human life outcomes, such as health and life expectancy? Data pertinent to this research question were primarily gathered through interviews and journal entries. The consequences of chronic poverty include poor health, a lack of safety and sanitation procedures, a shorter lifespan, disintegration

of the family, insufficient food and potable water (both of which can result in increased health problems), and continued generational poverty. Poverty is cyclical in that if there are insufficient finances to send a child—or millions of children—to school for 10 continuous and consecutive grades, there is a substantial tendency for those children to enact the same life choices and life styles as previous generations. This was observed in the data acquired in this study. This perpetuates the culture of survival and prevents substantial or robust changes in the economy.

Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine possible reasons for under-education in Burkina Faso and to examine the impact of poverty on the Burkinabé people as it is related to education. The results of this study investigating the education system of Burkina Faso portray a complex picture of the relationship between poverty and education. While the data point to education as a potential major factor in the eradication of poverty, people who are able to attend school to at least the 10th grade or beyond are not guaranteed employment upon completion of their education. What the educated person has in Burkina Faso is a better *chance* at finding employment after graduation, but it could still take years to secure a job and, in the end, the person may still need connections in the industry or sector of the government to which they are applying in order to get hired. Consequently, education is not regarded as a necessity for many children in Burkina Faso. Due to the extensive poverty throughout the country and the uncertain future of those who are educated, parents frequently regard education as extraneous and unessential for meeting life's needs and demands. Parents also maintain an attitude that if they did not receive an education earlier in their own lives, it is not necessary for their children to receive one either. The findings of this study, in contrast, indicate that education is overall beneficial but is subject to numerous barriers in Burkina Faso.

Theoretical Framework

The study results suggest that human capital theory plays a role in the acquisition of employment in Burkina Faso. Among other things, human capital theory assumes that a job candidate with a higher education is more capable and knowledgeable than a candidate with less education, and thus more productive (van der Merwe, 2010). The van der Merwe case study showed that respondents' earnings were significantly influenced by their educational attainment, regardless of their level of productivity. However, the tradition of hiring people based on family contacts is also influential in hiring practices in Burkina Faso, and this finding diverges from human capital theory.

The difficulty families face in paying for all or part of their children's education suggests that the value placed on education in Burkina Faso does not conform to the value of education inherent in Mann's theory of democratic education (Mann, 1848). Mann argued in his theory of democratic education that education should not be reserved for the elite but should be made available to all, regardless of their ability to pay, gender, race, religion, or station in life. He viewed education as necessary for the advancement of the individual. This case study supports Mann's theory in that fees charged for the education of children in Burkina Faso inhibit their enrollment and attendance. Monetary requirements make education unattainable for many and available primarily to those who can afford it. The concept of democratic education augments the idea predominant in many countries that education is a necessity for the welfare of the citizens as well as for the success and perpetuation of the country.

Children in the United States have been receiving education for almost 400 years, beginning with the first public school in Boston, Massachusetts in 1635. Consequently, there is a legacy of education in America that has been handed down for generations within the family and

within society itself; it is assumed and even legally required that every child will go to school. Public education, which is supported through taxes rather than tuition, is basically free. These cultural axioms are lacking in Burkina Faso, where a child's enrollment and attendance in school is uncertain due to a variety of reasons that are principally embedded in poverty, including the inability to pay for schooling.

The study results do not support progressive theory. Education in Burkina Faso is teacher-centered and is carried out via a traditional, content-based curriculum. Students use what they have learned from their instruction to complete the national sixth-grade exam and other required school exams as well. The current curriculum has been in use for a long period of time, and the unique needs of the children are not taken into consideration, as many of the participants noted in their interviews.

As teachers often have class sizes of 100 students or more, it would be difficult to implement a curriculum that is responsive to the interests of the children. Except for several private schools, there are few or no amenities or resources such as libraries, technology, visual aids, textbooks, or even time, to encourage students to pursue personal interests or projects, such as a classroom activity (i.e., show-and-tell), or a Power Point presentation. In addition, as there is no electricity in many of the students' homes and chores are completed after school, and because many of the parents are illiterate, there is virtually no opportunity to work on an activity after school or to receive help from parents to complete it. Finally, less than 10% of the students enrolled in elementary school actually complete it (EPDC, 2010) and even fewer students' complete secondary education. Thus, the most basic of educational needs, such as learning to read and write, are not met, making the curriculum less a priority than helping children be able to stay in and complete school to begin with.

Public choice theory regards regimented, government bureaucracy as creating a commodious homogeneity across public schools, void of competition. Without competition, there is no incentive for change (Lubienski, 2006). In poor countries, such as Burkina Faso, where many families cannot afford private school, public schooling is generally the only option. Reflective of progressive theory, which promotes education that revolves around the needs of the student(s), public choice theory advocates giving parents multiple educational opportunities to choose from rather than a single option promoted by the government. The results of this study, however, suggested that people did not believe that education consistent with public choice theory was a viable option for the people of Burkina Faso. While public choice theory promotes more individualized education in circumstances where it is feasible, in reality, that kind of choice is not possible to achieve in a country with no or little financial means to be able to establish, implement, and sustain multiple options for educating all the children.

Social innovation theory attempts to explain how innovation is grounded in civilization from its inception and how it is fundamental to economic growth and development. Innovation may result from chance, from the need to solve a problem, or from the acquisition of knowledge that is used to develop a new idea (see Chapter Two). The results of this study support social innovation theory as an economic necessity for Burkina Faso. Innovation, as a force that propels economic development and thus benefits all members of a society, is continually replacing products, services, concepts, and even knowledge with new commodities that are both tangible and intangible.

Countries differ in degree of innovation present in society as well as in how they accept or do not accept it and assimilate it into society. In Burkina Faso, some innovation is embraced by society such as cell phones and personal motorized vehicles, all of which are widely used. On

a somewhat smaller scale, computers and the Internet are also accepted. It is possible that the infrastructure and the availability of certain resources, such as electricity, income, and Internet services, limit the use of technology and innovative products and services.

At the same time, there is a distinct lack of certain kinds of technology in Burkina Faso, such as factories, heavy equipment, modern machinery, and transportation options. Cottage industries are still widespread in Burkina Faso. Most of what is made in the country is made by hand or with manually operated machines, such as treadle sewing machines, looms (if used at all; thread is also hand woven), and spinning wheels. Clothing is handmade by a tailor to a person's measurements and there is very little new clothing sold off-the-rack (although there is a large amount of used clothing and shoes sold in storefronts or street-side vendors, much of which comes from donations from charitable organizations). Additionally, excavations are often dug manually, bricks are handcrafted, fields are plowed with animals, much of cooking occurs over an open fire, and there is almost no indoor plumbing. Animals are still used to pull carts and bicycles and walking and motos are the standard mode of transportation, as very few people own a car.

A study conducted on farming techniques in Malawi and Burkina Faso illustrates personal beliefs about accepted farming techniques and new technologies to increase crop yield (see Chapter Two). Farmers who held onto established farming practices were unable to increase their yield whereas farmers who were willing to try innovative technologies and new farming techniques increased their yields. The ideas and technology used in the study were introduced to the farmers by researchers from other countries, indicating that the technologies and farming techniques did not exist in these areas of Malawi and Burkina Faso at the time of the research and originated elsewhere. This study suggests that innovative practices can be useful to

farmers. As a user and developer of technology, Burkina Faso ranked 124 out of 125 countries

in the 2018 Global Innovation Index (Cornell University, INSEAD, and WIPO, 2018), yet

innovation is considered crucial to economic development (see Chapter Two). In addition,

knowledge and learning are intricately linked with innovation and are viewed as essential to

capitalism (see Chapter Two). Study participants pointed out that without an education, children

most often grow up to do what they see their parents doing, whether it is farming, working in a

family business, or working in a trade or other occupation. This indicates that participants

believe that children and/or parents do not rely on or plan for education to be a significant

advantage toward earning an income sufficient to meet their basic needs or beyond, or that the

barriers outweigh the potential benefits. This, in turn, continues to limit the degree of innovation

that can be generated in Burkina Faso.

Empirical Literature

The results of this study revealed that there are many barriers to education in Burkina

Faso. These barriers have developed over time and have been influenced by factors such as

culture, government policy, natural resources, colonization, independence and many other

determinants that are intricately woven into the lives of the people of Burkina Faso and, to a

large degree, determine their life outcomes, including receiving an education. Personal income,

an indicator of both wealth and poverty, has, perhaps, the greatest influence on the opportunity a

child may have to be able to receive an education in Burkina Faso. The empirical literature that

was instrumental in the formation of this study examined many facets that influence access to

education and is detailed in this section.

Income and employment. Obtaining paid employment with an income sufficient to

meet a person's needs is a primary goal for most adults. The level of income a person earns is

intricately connected to both poverty and wealth. It often determines a standard of living people experience as a result of their income. A standard of living includes tangible objects as well as intangible things such as access to healthcare and education. In this study, income and employment was investigated as a barrier to education.

Research suggests that, globally, people who have higher levels of education have increased opportunities for employment and earn higher incomes (Grimm, 2011; Izeogu, 2008, Jensen, 2009; Kazianga, 2012; Okpala & Okpala, 2006; Tagoe, 2011). The world's economy is becoming increasingly international, thereby making it equally imperative for all countries to be able to compete in order to sustain themselves economically. For that to occur, an educated and trained populace is an absolute necessity (Miningou & Vierstraete, 2013).

In the current study, the predominant view of the majority of participants was that education plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of life for children in Burkina Faso. A higher quality of life for a child would include a family providing for his or her needs and remaining intact until the child becomes an adult, sufficient nutritive food, clean water, good health, adequate shelter, clothing, shoes, and eventually, a job with sufficient income. These study results of participants' beliefs are in line with the research that indicates an education can increase opportunities for employment and have the potential to elevate people out of poverty.

Pertinent to this case study is UNICEF's stance on poverty, particularly where children are concerned:

Children living in poverty face deprivation of many of their rights: survival, health and nutrition, education, participation, and protection from harm, exploitation, and discrimination. Over one billion children are severely deprived of at least one of the essential goods and services they require to survive, grow, and develop (UNICEF,

2005b, pg. 15, as cited in Minujin, Delamonica, Gonzales, and Davidziuk, 2005).

This position indicates that poverty impedes proper growth and development and the ability to survive. Further, education is included as an important right for all children.

Alternative schools and building design. The design and construction of school buildings is an essential component of education as they provide a central location where students gather to learn. Traditional school buildings in Burkina Faso are typically rectangular, each classroom having its own door that opens to the outside. Some of the schools are little more than a thatched roof held up by several sticks. Schools are often over crowded with as many as 100 students in a single classroom; ventilation is typically poor (Houston, 2011). While programs were initiated in areas of Burkina Faso to provide more classrooms, improve school enrollment, and alleviate overcrowding, many of the programs have been discontinued or were poorly implemented and the goals of the program were not realized. Study participants acknowledged that school-feeding programs encouraged school enrollment and attendance however, at the time of my visit, none of the public schools that were included in the study had a government sponsored feeding program. In addition, many of the classrooms were overcrowded, with as many as 90 students in attendance, and comments among study participants regarding a lack of schools, particularly high schools, were common. As none of the schools I visited were included in the programs initiated by the government of Burkina Faso to improve school quality, the results of this study are neutral in the support of the literature.

Access to education. Access to education is a fundamental necessity for children if they are to reach adulthood with skills that are required for employment in the 21st century and beyond. Dumas (2007) argued that market and labor constraints dictate in families what parents will do in regard to enrolling or withdrawing their children from school when income fluctuates

below subsistence level, linking child labor and poverty. Study participants indicated that it was a common practice in Burkina Faso for parents to hold their children back from attending school or refuse to enroll their children in school. Children are regarded as free labor in the family, and if all the children go to school, there is no one to help with chores related to running the family farm or a family business. In addition, if family finances are scarce, a common occurrence in Burkina Faso, parents cannot afford to send their children to school while simultaneously providing for their families. Survival is prioritized above everything else, including education. Thus, the findings of the current study were consistent with Dumas' prediction that labor constraints affect school enrollment.

Abraham Maslow identified basic needs that all humans require and ordered them according to a hierarchy, beginning with the needs most essential to human life, such as food, shelter, and safety. At the very top of the hierarchy is self-actualization, which, for most people, can only be met after all or most of the needs on the lower levels have been met (Maslow, 1943). Moreover, according to Maslow, the need for food is the most dominant of the physiological needs and nothing else in life matters until that need is satisfied; it is prioritized above everything else. People who are constantly pursuing a stable and secure food source are unable to focus on anything else. Due to extensive poverty in Burkina Faso, people are more concerned with meeting their essential life needs than with educating their children, which is not perceived as a crucial need.

Language of instruction. The language of instruction in a country is generally the primary language and one in which most students are fluent. In countries where there is more than one primary language, bi-lingual instruction may be beneficial. The study results did not yield conclusions relevant to previous research findings regarding the benefits of bi-lingual

instruction or the education of children in their first language versus a second language learned in the primary grades. In Burkina Faso there are many indigenous languages, many of them oral and without written form. Several scholars have argued that various instructional programs utilizing either an indigenous language for instruction or bi-lingual instruction through third grade resulted in better scores on the sixth-grade exam (Dembélé & Lefoca, 2007; Michaelowa, 2001; Nikièma, 2011; Omoniyi, 2007; Traoré et al., 2009; Trudell, 2011). However, all of the Burkinabé schools I visited used French as the main language of instruction, and all the directors and teachers claimed that all their students passed the sixth-grade exam. Given that there was no comparison group that offered a different language of instruction, it was not possible to use data from these schools to add to the existing empirical literature on this topic. However, all of the researchers previously mentioned neglected to incorporate the complication that the majority of indigenous languages in West Africa are oral and have no written form; therefore, there are no books or instructional manuals from which to teach. There are no curricula in an indigenous language. Additionally, indigenous, oral languages lack a word-for-word translation or word equivalents for technical words frequently used in the instruction of science and technology. It would also be considerably challenging for a teacher to teach phonetic sounds that are related to individual letters, reading, and writing without the benefit of a written language. It is recommended that future research on teaching and language in West Africa be contextualized in these challenges in order to generate meaningful research findings with realistic practical applications.

Special education. Children with special needs in Burkina Faso have received little or no consideration when compared to students who do not have special needs; indeed, there is virtually no literature regarding the subject of special education in Burkina Faso. As noted in

Bines and Lei (2011), Burkina Faso has no national plan to provide schooling or educational

services for children with disabilities and children with disabilities have received little attention

in Burkina Faso, in spite of programs such as Education for All and Education for All Fast Track

Initiative (Bines & Lei). This void provides a substantial opportunity for research. Participants

in this study indicated that students with disabilities or special needs were an embarrassment to

their families and were seldom sent to school. In addition, participants indicated that when

students with a disability approached a school with the intent to enroll and attend, they were

usually denied. Only one of the schools I visited was devoted to providing education and

employment support for students with a disability, which was a private school for the blind.

Health and nutrition. There is extensive literature regarding health and nutrition and its

impact on the ability of children to receive an education. The topics addressed in the literature

include HIV/AIDS, pre-marital sex, early and forced marriage, unwanted pregnancy, food

security, malnutrition, school-feeding programs, access to potable water, diseases transmitted by

unclean water, childhood diseases, malaria, and other health threats (see Chapter two). These

health issues all present a significant barrier to education in Burkina Faso, but two, a stable and

secure food supply and access to safe drinking water are of a greater concern due to the

magnitude of the effect they have on people's overall health.

Savadago et al. (2013) focused on access to clean drinking water in the Sourou River

Valley in Burkina Faso and Santos and LeGrand (2012) studied access to water in West Africa.

In the Savadago et al. (2013) study, urban areas in Burkina Faso were found to comply with the

WHO standards for safe drinking water, but in rural areas, where the majority of the population

live, up to 60% of the drinking water was found to be contaminated at levels exceeding the

recommendation of WHO (2013). Illnesses from drinking impure water contribute to "70% -

80% of health problems in developing countries" (Savago et al., 2013) and to nearly 2 million

deaths annually in children under the age of five (2013). Disease transmission due to unsanitary

water is responsible for a loss of productivity and days attended at school (Santos & LeGrand,

2012). Access to tap water reduces the incidence of disease resulting from contamination.

Further, the Santos and LeGrand (2012) study showed that people who had at least a primary

education were more likely to have access to tap water at some stage of their life in comparison

to people with no education.

It is common for families to have to travel long distances to obtain water that is safe for

human consumption, regardless of whether they live in an urban or rural location. Many villages

do not have a well or a "tap" and family members often leave in the early hours of the morning

in order to arrive at the well site before other families. A lack of fresh, clean drinking water is a

barrier to education in that the responsibility of obtaining clean water is frequently given to

children, which concurrently causes them to miss a day of school yet drinking unclean water may

result in missed days of school due to water-borne illnesses. A new school can only be built in

an area where there is clean water available and if it is not currently available, a well must be

drilled. However, if the well stops functioning, it may be a long time before it is repaired, if

ever, and having access to clean water becomes a major dilemma once again. The results of this

study supported the literature in recognizing that having access to clean, safe water is necessary

in order for children to have better health overall and thus, improved access to education.

Access to a secure food supply is a fundamental need for all humans. Food security is

linked to health, nutrition, and the decision of families to enroll their children in school, all of

which impact a child's ability to receive an education (Dabone et al., 2011; Delisle et al., 2013;

Kazianga et al., 2012, 2014). Dabone et al. (2011) conducted a study on the prevalence of

malnutrition in school-age children in public and private schools in Burkina Faso. The underlying assumption of the study was that nutrition impacts children's learning. While previous studies focused on rural areas in Burkina Faso where the food supply was insufficient and the nutritional status in school-age children was assumed to be poor, results of the Dabone et al. study (2011) confirmed that malnutrition was highly prevalent in school-age children in urban areas. The results of this case study supported the literature in assessing the availability of a secure and sufficient food supply and that the nutritional value of the available food supply in Burkina Faso is lacking. However, the results of this case study also recognized that in a country where people's food security is regularly in peril, just having enough food to eat everyday is of far greater importance than the quality of its nutrition.

Kazianga et al. (2012, 2014) evaluated feeding programs in Burkina Faso to determine if they improved the overall health status of school-aged children. The results of the study showed that for children who qualified for the program, take home rations (THR) helped them gain weight, while children who only ate meals at school did not have significant weight gain. One possibility for the increase in weight is that the combination of feeding children at school and programs offering THR helps children gain weight because there is more food available for all members of the family. Enrollment in school is higher for both boys and girls when a feeding program is implemented (Kazianga et al., 2014). Additional research is needed to examine the impact of feeding programs on educational outcomes, such as better grades in school and increased scores on the sixth-grade national exam, which all children in Burkina Faso have to pass in order to qualify for promotion to seventh grade. Study participants for this case study believed school feeding programs were beneficial as most families in Burkina Faso eat just one meal a day.

In addition, study participants indicated that treatment for illnesses and injuries can vary considerably and affect the healing process, which in turn, impacts the ability of a child to attend school. It was also noted in participant responses that prolonged absences from school prevented the child from receiving necessary instruction and that teachers were unable to help the child make-up missed course work. The literature reviewed for this case study did not examine what treatments are available for diseases in Burkina Faso, nor did the literature examine the prevalence of injuries to children from any cause in Burkina Faso and what course of treatment would be prescribed to manage an injury through the healing process. As improperly treated disease and injury among children in Burkina Faso can result in missed days of school, this presents another significant barrier to education and an opportunity for additional research.

Policy and development. Policy and development regarding governance of Burkina Faso is the responsibility of the central government. Government officials make all the decisions concerning the education of children in Burkina Faso however, not all the legislation passed by lawmakers is implemented uniformly across the country or enforced. Consequently, some children are prevented from attending school due to problems related to policy and development over which they or their parents have any control. Decisions by the government to charge school fees, upgrade the curriculum, hire and train more teachers, build additional schools, eliminate bias in policies that favors boys rather than girls, implement school feeding programs, and school attendance policies are some of the issues confronting the government of Burkina Faso that impact a child's ability to receive an education. Some of the literature regarding policy and development was not relevant to this case study. However, the results of this case study do support research from Kam and Sanou (2003) that outlined policies and practices within the government, culture, and education system that hindered the advancement of the Burkina Faso's

educational goals. They addressed failures of the government to implement reforms that would promote more teacher training, increase enrollment in primary school, maintain enrollment in secondary school, and reduce financial barriers, which were also issues of concern to participants in this case study. A lack of follow-up and accountability to determine progress as well as educational outcomes were cited as weakness by the authors and provide an opportunity for further research.

Family structure. Family structure is a crucial element in a child's development. The results of this case study support the literature regarding family structure and its impact on a child's education. During the course of this study, it was found that family structure frequently determines a child's living arrangements, which consequently affects the opportunity a child has to attend school. A child remaining in the parental home is always the preferred living arrangement, but for various reasons, children may be withdrawn from the family either temporarily or permanently. Sometimes a child may be brought to an orphanage to live if the family is unable to provide for the child. Determinants in living arrangements can include family finances; food supply; divorce; migration; illness; abandonment; child fostering; and the death of one or more parents.

Pagnier et al. (2008) examined orphan hood in Burkina Faso. Orphan hood may result from the death of one or more parents but can also be the result of child fostering (Akresh, 2008; Pagnier et al., 2008). Child fostering, a practice that is widespread throughout Burkina Faso, is the practice of sending children to live with families who may or may not be related to them as well as taking in children from other families who may or may not be related to the fostering family (Pagnier et al., 2008). While child fostering occurs for various reasons, if the fostering is due to an emergency, such as the death of a parent, the child is at risk for decreased school

attendance and increased work responsibilities within the fostering home (Serra, 2009). In addition, children removed from their parental home can be exposed to other risks such as intentional starvation (which is against the law but continues to occur); a decrease in food allotment; exploitation; abuse; and neglect. Furthermore, girls may be fostered out more frequently than boys because girls are not considered a financial asset to the family. The literature does not address what happens to a child once she or he leaves the family, such as the length of time a fostered child may live with the receiving family; how many children are never reclaimed by their biological families; and the long-term educational, economic, social, and cultural impact of child fostering on the fostered child. This void in the literature presents an opportunity for future research.

The future of education in Burkina Faso. The education system of Burkina Faso should, ideally, have specific goals designed to prepare students to eventually fulfill their role in adult society. The results of this case study, however, were inconclusive regarding the literature related to the future of education in Burkina Faso. Kouraogo and Dianda (2008) provided an analysis of the progress Burkina Faso has made to meet the educational needs of children and families and determined that by the year 2025, Burkina Faso will have met some of their goals. This study is unable to predict the time frame needed for Burkina Faso to meet the educational goals it has established due to the limited scope of the study and the many factors that influence the country's progress to those goals.

This study adds to the existing literature in that it entailed examining the lives of the people of Burkina Faso through the perspectives of teachers, missionaries, health care workers, government employees, and orphanage directors: people who have first-hand and in-depth knowledge of the difficulties faced by the Burkinabé people, and how having or not having an

education impacts their lives. In addition, this study is a qualitative study, which uses rich, lived experience as its data; this methodology is uniquely suited to examine the nuances and complexities of the many ways in which people's lives are affected by barriers to education. In contrast, much of the research conducted to date has primarily focused on educational policy and the progress of educating children in Burkina Faso, and has used quantitative methodologies that yield numerical outcomes. Few, if any, studies have examined the perceptions of the Burkinabé people themselves, contextualized and informed by their rich experiences, regarding how receiving or not receiving an education impacts them in terms of human life outcomes. Qualitative research is essential for capturing the complex social and cultural processes, as well as beliefs and values, underlying barriers to education and the multifaceted impact this has on the lives of the Burkinabé. This is a primary contribution that this study has to the existing literature.

Regarding the main theme of the study, a culture of survival, there was no available literature that explored this topic in relation to education in Burkina Faso. This study suggests that a culture of survival dominates every decision a family makes concerning their children's education as well as numerous other facets of life in Burkina Faso. This study added to the empirical literature by identifying an underlying construct that is directly related to many of the barriers already identified in existing research.

There is ample research that links education level to poverty. In Burkina Faso, where the majority of people do not have a sixth-grade education, the level of poverty in the country is consistent with the reviewed empirical literature on education and poverty. This study adds to the literature in that it reveals the complex influence of social and economic pressures and cultural values and beliefs that underpin peoples' decisions, including whether to educate their

children. One example of this is how parental decisions are shaped by the availability of food.

Most people, including children, eat one meal a day because that is what is usually available and

what they can afford (see Chapter Four). If food is available at school, parents are more likely to

send their children to school (Kazianga et al., 2012, 2014), but a government program designed

to provide free meals for children in all public schools in Burkina Faso does not exist.

<p align="center">**Implications**</p>

The intent of this study was to examine the education system of Burkina Faso to

determine if it was fulfilling its responsibility of educating the children who live there and to

explore the barriers that prevent children from obtaining an education. Barriers to education

presented in this study were identified by the study participants who not only live and work in

Burkina Faso but also have to educate their children there, giving them in-depth, valuable

experiences and knowledge of the education system, how it works, and what its strengths and

weaknesses are. This section details the empirical, theoretical, and practical implications that

arose from the study.

Empirical Implications

The empirical implications of this study are based on knowledge derived from examining

the education system of Burkina Faso and how it has impacted the lives of the Burkinabé people.

It is important to note that *having* access to education is critical to a person's opportunity to

receive an education. Having access to education cannot be taken for granted as, in many

countries, children are prevented from attending school for a plethora of reasons. Consequently,

the educational process is obstructed and children may experience the repercussions of that for

the duration of their lives.

This study suggests that poverty detracts from a person's quality of life and that

participants believed that education has the potential to not only reduce poverty but also improve a person's quality of life. This benefit of education is experienced by people in many different countries around the world where education is the norm (Grimm, 2011; Izeogu, 2008, Jensen, 2009; Kazianga, 2012; Okpala & Okpala, 2006; Tagoe, 2011). The literature indicates a number of impediments to education in Burkina Faso, including but not limited to: poverty and the inability of parents to pay for their children's education (Jilek et al., 1997; O'Ketch & Rolleston, 2007; Rule & Modipa, 2012), parental and cultural attitudes toward education (World Vision, 2007, as cited by Bines & Lei, 2011), health and nutrition (Charlés, 2006; Dabone et al., 2011; Delisle et al., 2013; Nitiema et al., 2011), access to health care; and the language of instruction (Nikièma, 2011; Omoniyi, 2007; Trudell, 2011). This qualitative study replicated many of these findings portrayed in the literature, including the many barriers to education that are present in Burkina Faso. The implication of this study is that barriers to education, many of which are related to poverty, can prevent children from obtaining an adequate education, which significantly impacts a person's human life outcomes.

Many children do not complete their elementary or secondary education in Burkina Faso, therefore, it is therefore imperative to implement approaches that will help them stay in school through at least the sixth-grade or longer. Study participants discussed recommendations that would improve the education system as well as help children stay in school. As study participants are the people who have direct contact with students and their families and have first hand knowledge of the various barriers to education that exist in Burkina Faso, they have valuable ideas about necessary approaches to improve the education system and help children complete their education.

The first recommendation is that, in order to decrease the impact of poverty on children

and contribute to improved health and nutrition, the government should institute food programs and provide potable water in all public schools in Burkina Faso so that there is an incentive for children to attend school everyday. Families will benefit from a food program in the schools, as children will receive an extra meal every day, something many parents are not able to provide.

The second recommendation is that the government of Burkina Faso commit to a budget that will include the purchase of a new curriculum and the necessary school supplies and equipment with which to teach it. Teachers need current, up-to-date materials to use in their classrooms in order to teach their students about the world in which they live. In addition to basic educational materials such as a chalkboard, chalk, pencils, pens, and paper, they also need math and science equipment, visual aids such as maps and charts, textbooks, in-school libraries, and so on. This is a critical component for the establishment of a leading-edge education system that is capable of graduating students who have a firm grasp of the information, concepts, and technology that will yield a working knowledge of our 21st century world. The people of Burkina Faso need to have opportunities in which they can learn about the world for the betterment of themselves and their country; education is a major portal through which that can occur.

Theoretical Implications

Human capital theory and Mann's theory of democratic education were central to the theoretical implications for this study. Human capital theory was important in the development of the interview questions, the main theme, and subthemes. People labor, spend, and consume and in so doing, contribute to the success and/or failure of every business venture ever conceived. Human capital theory places a high value on the education and training of workers with the belief that the better educated and trained a person is, the more productive that person

will be. Mann's theory of democratic education, which argues that education should be equally

available to all, was also essential in the theoretical framework guiding this study. These

theories provide a valuable basis by which to propose theoretical implications of this study, one

of which is that an educated and trained workforce is necessary to compete in a local as well as a

global economy and without it, unemployment rates will likely continue to remain excessively

high. A second implication of this case study is that at the present time, education in Burkina

Faso is not equally available to all due to the expenses associated with attending school in all the

grades, from elementary school through high school. Recommendations for these implications

follow.

A great deal of small-scale commerce is conducted in Burkina Faso every day. In the

opinion of Participant 5C, a financial expert who works for the US State Department, Burkina

Faso has the potential to rise up from poverty and reduce the negative consequences that are a

result of poverty. In order for that to happen, certain steps need to be taken—the most important

of which is the significant improvement of the large-scale economy.

In regard to the first theoretical implication, Participant 5C believed the government

would need to invest more money in educating and training the workforce in order to encourage

businesses to become established in Burkina Faso (many of the participants in Group A also

stated that the government needed to allocate more money for education). The first

recommendation, then, is that Burkina Faso specialize in the provision and production of goods

and services that are not currently produced in other countries in the region and educate and train

a workforce capable of generating those goods and services. For this to succeed, the government

would need to be willing to make a long-term commitment to funding education as these changes

will take time to implement and see to fruition. Technical training, in addition to academic

studies, would provide a skill or trade that could help students earn a living upon graduation as well as prepare them to compete for jobs that require a higher education and skill set.

Regarding the second implication, the recommendation is that the funding of education should be at a level that provides a free education for children so that education is widely available to all children, and parents are relieved of the financial burden of sending their children to school, which would make the education system of Burkina Faso more consistent with Mann's theory of democratic education. If the present education system continues unchanged, economically disadvantaged children will continue to be marginalized and denied the opportunity to receive an education that would allow them to participate in the 21st century job market. In all likelihood, this would make it improbable that Burkina Faso would see any economic changes. Instead, economic opportunities would occur in other parts of the world that are better prepared to advance trained and educated workers to companies looking for employees who are able to contribute to the achievement of the companies' economic goals and objectives.

Practical Implications

The practical implications shaped by the results of this study are made with the intention of pinpointing areas in the education system where improvements can be made rather than criticizing existing practices, the first of which, in this section, is that the number of students who can successfully and consecutively progress from first grade through the 10th grade needs to increase. This is a necessary step if Burkina Faso is to produce an educated and trained populace; however, it should be at no cost to the parents, as most families do not have sufficient income to pay for their children's education. Therefore, to achieve this outcome, the recommendation is that policymakers who have a role in shaping the education system eliminate school fees, which are a barrier to education in Burkina Faso.

The second implication is that education in Burkina Faso needs to have a focus: what is its purpose? The government of Burkina Faso, as the primary policy maker and funder of education, should consider the role of education in Burkina Faso. Therefore, it is recommended that all stakeholders in the education system of Burkina Faso—parents, government officials, teachers, school directors, and other interested parties—evaluate the role education realistically plays in the future of the children of Burkina Faso and make goals and form policies based upon them. It is also recommended that goals to consider should include an actual number of students all stakeholders want to see graduating from high school within the next five years and expand that aim to longer-term goals (total students graduating within a 10-year, 15-year, and 20-year timeframe). The final recommendation is to introduce STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) subjects as early as possible, preferably in the elementary years, as students need to graduate from high school with a clear understanding of advanced science concepts and abstract math skills such as those used in algebra, geometry, and physics. Students need to be able to apply that knowledge to even more complex science and math concepts as well as use it for the foundation of higher-level critical thinking skills, a necessity in the 21st century job market. Finally, it is recommended that the government expand the BRIGHT School Initiative (see Chapter Two) to eventually include all the elementary public schools in Burkina Faso, as the BRIGHT schools have a 10-year history of positive results in terms of test scores and school-completion rates (Kazianga et al., 2016).

The challenge of providing free education for all children in Burkina Faso is that fiscal appropriation is drawn from limited revenue. Money allocated for education in 2015 was 18.8% of the total budget, 2.89.7 billion CFA, or about $502,860,000 (US) (Universalia, 2018). The implication is that there may be insufficient funds available to provide free education for all

children in Burkina Faso and that families will still have to afford school fees if they send their children to school. The final two recommendations are for organizations and individuals who are not indigenous to Burkina Faso. These recommendations are: (a) to consider sponsoring a child through the completion of his or her education, as this has been shown to be effective in helping children remain in school, and (b) for schools in the United States—public and private— to partner with schools in Burkina Faso to help provide them with desperately needed supplies such as maps, pencils, crayons, paper, and other school supplies. In addition, children in participating schools in both countries would benefit from a broadened exposure to children from a different culture.

A primary purpose of education is to prepare children to eventually succeed in adult society as functioning members capable of earning a sustainable living for themselves and their families. Following this assumption, education is not a luxury, but rather a necessity, in that education is the foundation upon which a better and more prosperous future is built. In addition, as the world's economy continues to be dependent on the international production and consumption of goods and services, the competition for production will likely increase and will directly influence the availability of and access to those goods and services, however basic.

Burkina Faso elected a new president in 2015, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré. The overthrow of long-time president Blaise Compaoré in 2014 led to a period of political and economic instability which, to date, has included two terrorist attacks, one of which claimed the life of my friend. The country also experienced a significant health threat with the Ebola outbreak in neighboring countries in 2014. As the country slowly returns to a more stable government and economy, it is important to note that appearances can be deceiving. Claims of progress can mask problems that are not being addressed or are not responding to interventions,

such as financial aid. Therefore, it is important not to underestimate how fragile the country is as a whole and how easily the progress it has made can be overturned by a single event, such as a drought, a financial crisis, or an epidemic. Education remains at risk for being relegated to the bottom of the country's priority list should any new threat occur that would endanger the continued advancement of the country toward its overall goals.

Delimitations and Limitations

There were a number of delimitations included in this study design to define the scope of research. First, the study sample, while sufficient for a case study (n=27), was still a small sample and would not have permitted a more comprehensive and generalizable representation of perspectives that a larger sample could have produced. In addition, the participating schools and agencies were located in a relatively small area in Burkina Faso that was within a three-hour travel distance from the city in which I stayed and may not have adequately represented schools and agencies from other parts of the country. Both of these decisions were shaped by the resources (e.g., time, expense) available to me to conduct the study.

As the study was designed to examine people's experiences with the education system of a country in Africa with a culture, economy, climate, history, standard of living, health care system, and quality of life that is far different from what I have experienced in the United States, my attitudes and assumptions about these facets of life in Burkina Faso were also important factors to be aware of while conducting this research in order to reduce bias. In addition, the span of time over which the interviews were conducted, the time of year in which the interviews were conducted, and the limited amount of time I had to visit the country to conduct the research were specific to this study, making this study difficult to replicate. While I spent as much time as possible associating with the residents of the cities and villages in which I stayed and visited;

becoming familiar with the surroundings; shopping in local stores; speaking with hundreds of people; participating in everyday culture; eating food to which I was unaccustomed; listening, looking, and being teachable—this was all still from the perspective of a visitor. Although I lived among the Burkinabé for three and a half months, I was not raised in their culture and society, and there are countless subtle yet profound ways in which my experience is different from that of the Burkinabé people. Consequently, the study results may have been shaped by my own history and experience in ways that I am not unaware.

The limitations of the study included barriers related to access to participants and cultural and language barriers. Specifically, there was limited access to certain schools and agencies that otherwise would have been a good fit and the employees of that school or agency had to obtain permission and/or agree to participate in the study. Additionally, potential participants could only participate for an interview if they were available during the time frame designated for conducting the interviews. Finally, there were both cultural differences and language barriers between many of the participants and myself, bridged as best as possible by the translator who spoke the five languages most commonly spoken in Burkina Faso.

On my initial visit to Burkina Faso, I spoke with several people I knew in the country who connected me with other people who would be able to help me with the logistics of collecting data for the study and learning about the country and its culture. This was crucial in allowing me to gain access to schools, agencies, and study participants. However, these connections also represented limitations because they directed me to specific locations, organizations, and people, limiting inclusion. In addition, although the government was largely generous in allowing me access to schools and agencies, the government had rules about access to certain agencies, such as disallowing the touring of hospitals. These restrictions, then,

determined to a certain degree with whom and where I would be able to conduct interviews and gather data for this study.

Additionally, photography was somewhat discouraged, so, the only possible form of data collection for observations was journaling, requiring me to bring a journal with me everywhere and record information as soon as possible (I also used a camera when possible and with permission). Lastly, statistical data from public documents, other research studies, and school directors regarding school enrollment, attendance, and graduation rates were not always in agreement with each other, thus making their validity questionable given the lack of data reliability.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendations for future research are derived primarily from the limitations and delimitations presented in the study and also from the empirical implications of the study. Additional research can expand the scope of this study to include a more in-depth examination of the education system of Burkina Faso, the challenges that confront it, and solutions to improve it.

Future researchers could implement a qualitative case study approach and re-examine some of the same issues related to education in Burkina Faso that were included in this study, but more in-depth, by including several interviewers (rather than one). More interviewers could access a larger sample size, and more schools and agencies from multiple regions of the country, thus broadening the scope of the study and gaining additional insights from more participants. Further, future research would be enriched by a longer period of data collection during which time the researchers would have an opportunity to live more intimately within the culture. This would, ideally, reduce bias related to a different cultural upbringing and produce a more comprehensive view of the challenges faced by individuals and families in the decision to send a

child to school and the long-term consequences of that decision.

As the validity of statistical data from public sources was questionable due to poor reliability, this presents an opportunity for future research on policy. It would be worthwhile to develop a reliable and realistic method for gathering, measuring, and reporting statistical data regarding the enrollment, attendance, and graduation rates of children in public and private schools in Burkina Faso.

Finally, future researchers could also examine food programs within the schools, as some study participants indicated that food programs are helpful in motivating children to stay in school. Future research could investigate the impact of school-wide food programs on school enrollment, attendance, and graduation rate of students in Burkina Faso. In addition, as some private and missionary schools already provide food as an incentive to keep children in school, comparing the school enrollment, attendance, and graduation rates between different schools would build upon existing research by identifying the degree of impact that food availability and other factors may have on educational attendance and performance.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to examine the education system of Burkina Faso to better understand how it impacts the people who live there. It was found in this study that multiple barriers to education exist in Burkina Faso that limit access to education, perpetuate poverty, and prevent the country from achieving financial stability and other national, social, and economic goals. The issues encountered by the people of Burkina Faso in educating their children are complex and not easily solved. Worthwhile goals include graduating more students, equipping them to compete in a global job market, providing teachers with the necessary tools and training with which to competently teach students, updating the curriculum, and expanding

programs that have already proved to be successful. Some of the recommendations in this study would require considerable time and dedication, others less so. The citizens and government of Burkina Faso will ultimately decide which changes they are willing to commit to implementing in their education system and seeing through over the coming years.

There are opportunities for the foundation of understanding this study provides to be built upon. The reason I chose a case study rather than a quantitative study was because the study was investigating issues that intimately affect people and their lives. I felt that the complex and unique ways that these issues affected the Burkinabè deserved a more personal approach in order to tell the story of their struggles to educate their children rather than limit the outcome to numerical data. I find it very difficult to quantify the suffering resulting in and caused by giving away children in order for them to be fed or provided for; a statistic does not convey the desperateness and the anguish that is experienced when parents and caregivers resort to that action in order to survive. When children cannot attend school because their grade level is not being taught this year or because parents cannot afford to pay the fees, so much more is lost than academic skills—so is time, money, motivation to stay in school or go back to school, and the desire to complete one's education. To stay in school until a person is in his or her 20s in order to graduate requires an enormous amount of perseverance, and not many are able to persist to that point. There is a multitude of reasons why children in Burkina Faso do not complete their elementary or secondary education, and this study was ultimately driven by my interest in hearing and documenting the individual stories depicting why this occurs. My sincere hope is that, starting with the Body of Christ, people will continue to do what they can to contribute to the well-being of others less blessed, and that people in positions of influence and authority will consider what they can do to affect change in the policies of their communities and countries to

benefit those who need it the most.

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APPENDICES
Appendix A

Interview Questions
Questions to be asked may include:

20. What is your position in this organization?
21. How long have you worked in this organization?
22. Why did you decide to work for this organization?
23. In your opinion, what do you consider to be obstacles or barriers to education in Burkina Faso?
24. In your opinion, why do you think children are not enrolled in school?
25. What skills are necessary for students to bring to your classroom in order for them to be successful?
26. What happens to children when they leave the orphanage, and are they required to leave at a certain age?
27. What happens to students who do not pass the national exam after completing sixth grade?
28. What type of employment is available for people when they leave the school system?
29. If a student is not able to attend high school and graduate, can you tell me what type of employment that person might be able to secure?
30. In your opinion, do you think religion has an affect on a child's ability to receive an education in Burkina Faso? Please explain your answer.
31. Can you explain what happens to street children, including the Garibou?
32. Please describe how children are educated in your organization.
33. What do you consider to be the strengths of the education system in Burkina Faso?
34. What are its weaknesses?
35. What additional resources do you think educational stakeholders (families, teachers, students, and so on) may feel are necessary for combating under education in Burkina Faso?
36. In your opinion, do you think health and nutrition impact a child's ability to learn or to receive an education?
37. In your opinion, what health issues do you encounter on a daily basis that may impact a family's decision to enroll or not enroll their children in school or keep them in school once enrolled?
38. What can you tell me about life in Burkina Faso, as it is related to education, that we have not yet discussed?

Annexe A1

Questions pour un entretien:
Les questions a demander peuvent comprendre:
• Quelle est votre rôle dans cette structure ?
• Depuis combien de temps travaillez-vous dans cette structure?

• Qu'est ce qui vous motive à travailler pour cette structure ?

• Êtes-vous un chrétien ?

• Comment est ce que votre vision du monde – ou votre point de vue personnel – a influencé votre décision de travailler pour cette structure?

• Quelles peuvent être les conséquences culturelles pour une personne qui n'a pas fait l'école au Burkina Faso ?

• Quelles sont les conséquences financières d'être non scolarisé ou sous-scolarisés au Burkina Faso ?

• Quelle est l'attitude des adultes face aux enfants aux adolescents qui n'ont pas pu terminer leurs études primaires?

• Selon vous, quelles sont les raisons qui poussent les gens à abandonné leurs enfants ?

• Est-ce que la religion influence la performance d'un enfant a l'école au Burkina Faso ?

• Qu'est-ce qui arrive aux enfants de la rue (y compris la garibou) ?

• Décrivez comment les enfants sont enseignez dans votre école.

• Qu'est-ce qui arrive aux enfants qui n'ont pas terminé leurs études primaires et qui sont devenu trop vieux pour rester à l'orphelinat ?

• En quoi les conditions sanitaires et nutritives peuvent influencer la capacité d'un enfant à apprendre?

• Pensez-vous que les conditions sanitaires et nutritifs peuvent améliorer la performance de l'enfant à l'école ?

• Quels sont les problèmes de santé quotidiens que vous rencontrez et qui peuvent amener les familles à ne pas inscrire leurs enfants a l'école à les inscrire ou du moins à les garder à l'école?

• Savez-vous à quel âge les enfants burkinabés acquièrent généralement des compétences verbales dont ils ont besoin pour parler et communiquer ?

• Quelles sont les aptitudes ou les compétences que doit avoir un enfant avant d'être accepté dans votre école (en particulier la maternelle) ?

• Ont-ils tous les compétences nécessaires pour réussir à l'école ?

• Quelles sont les compétences /qualités dont un étudiant a besoin pour être admis à l'université ?

• Viennent-t-ils tous à l'université avec les compétences nécessaires pour réussir ?

• Quels sont les acquis du système éducatif au Burkina Faso ?

• Quelles sont ses faiblesses ?

• Pouvez vous nous parlez de d'autres aspects sur le système éducatif au Burkina Faso?

• Quelles sont les ressources supplémentaires ou des intervenants en éducation (familles, enseignants, étudiants, et ainsi de suite) nécessaires à la lutte contre la sous-scolarisation au Burkina Faso ?

• Pouvez-vous me parlez de d'autres aspects de la vie au Burkina Faso dont nous n'avons pas encore parlé ?

Appendix B

CONSENT FORM
"Elementary Education in Burkina Faso: What's Working, What Isn't, and Why It Matters.
A Case Study."
Georgia Gerard-Reed, Principal Investigator
Liberty University
Department of Education

You are invited to be in a research study of the elementary education system of Burkina Faso. You were selected as a possible participant because you have experience working with either: students, administrators, teachers, agencies, and/ or various organizations and operations that directly or indirectly impact the education of students in Burkina Faso. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Georgia Gerard-Reed, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Education at Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia, United States, is conducting this study.

Background Information:

The purpose of the study is twofold: 1) to examine the various causes that may prevent children from receiving an education in Burkina Faso and 2) to examine the impact of poverty on the people of Burkina Faso as it is related to education.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1) Participate in an interview with myself and/ or an interpreter or, if you are unable to participate in an interview but are still willing to participate in the study, complete a questionnaire in the presence of the investigator and / or interpreter and 2) allow the interview to be recorded on a voice recorder for transcription at a later date.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

The study has minimal risks, but no more than you would encounter in everyday life. There are no known risks and/ or discomforts associated with your participation in this study.

The expected benefits may be an opportunity to participate in a study that will bring a greater understanding of the way in which the education system of Burkina Faso functions and the impact it has on the Burkinabé people and other people involved in educational research.

Compensation:

Participants in the study will not be compensated.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records. All information gathered for this study from interviews, questionnaires, voice recording, document, artifacts, and observation will be kept in a secure location in my private home, including any information recorded on my personal computer. Voice recordings and computer entries will be available only to the primary investigator. All passwords will be kept in a secure location and will not be available to anyone other than the principal investigator. All electronic data will be erased three years after the study is complete and all written data pertaining to the study will also be disposed of in a confidential manner (shredded or burned).

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Georgia Gerard-Reed. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at ggerardreed@liberty.edu or at 159 Bellhammon Forest Dr., Rocky Point, North Carolina, 28457, United States

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1837, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS IRB APPROVAL INFORMATION WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN ADDED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record, video-record, and/or photograph me as part of my participation in this study.

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Interview Protocol: Elementary Education in Burkina Faso: What's Working, What Isn't, and Why it Matters. A Case Study

Date:
Time of Interview:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:
Location:

Explanation of the purpose of the interview:
I am a student at Liberty University in the United States and I am conducting research for my dissertation for my Doctorate in Education. I am interested in studying the elementary system of Burkina Faso to gain a deeper understanding of the impact it has on the lives of the Burkinabé people. The interview will take about thirty minutes and I will be, with your permission, recording it as well as taking written notes so I remember everything we discuss today.

Questions:
1. What is your position in this organization?
2. How long have you worked for this organization?
3. Why did you decide to work for this organization?
4. In your opinion, what do you consider to be obstacles or barriers to education in Burkina Faso?
5. In your opinion, why do you think children are not enrolled in school?
6. What skills are necessary for students to bring to your classroom in order for them to be successful?
7. Can you tell me what happens to children when they leave the orphanage, and are they required to leave at a certain age?
8. Can you tell me what happens to students who do not pass the national exam after completing the sixth grade?
9. If a student is not able to attend high school and graduate, what type of employment might that person be able to secure?
10. In your opinion, do you think religion has an affect on a child's ability to receive an education in Burkina Faso? Please explain your answer.
11. Can you explain what happens to street children, including the Garibou?
12. Please describe how children are educated in your organization.
13. What do you consider to be the strengths of the education system in Burkina Faso?
14. What are its weaknesses?
15. What additional resources do you think educational stakeholders (families, teachers, students, and so on) may feel are necessary for combating under education in Burkina Faso?
16. In your opinion, do you think health and nutrition impact a child's ability to learn or to receive an education?
17. In your opinion, what health issues do you encounter on a daily basis that may impact a

family's decision to enroll or not enroll their children in school or keep them in school once they are enrolled?

18. What can you tell me about life in Burkina Faso, as it is related to education, that we have not yet discussed?

Additional notes:

Appendix D

Observational Protocol: Elementary Education in Burkina Faso: What's Working, What Isn't, and Why it Matters. A Case Study	
Length of Activity: 15-30 Minutes	
Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes
Sample question to be answered through observation: What does the physical environment of the school/ classroom look like?	
Questions and Analyses	To Do

Appendix E

The following codes were instrumental in forming the theme and subthemes for this study. The theme is in bold print:

1. **Culture of survival:** Culture of survival; survival; survive; desperate; hungry; lack of food; poor; not enough money

2. **Poverty:** Poverty; extreme poverty; poor; not much money; not enough to eat; farmers; forced marriage; foster children out to other families; travel several miles for water; clothing; lack of clothing; lack of shoes; no jobs; children go to gold mines; if child leaves family to go to school money leaves the family; can't afford to take care of children; can't ignore the poverty

3. **Income and Employment:** Income; money; not enough money; poverty; poor; jobs; not enough jobs; hard to find a job; takes a long time to find a job; unemployment; unemployment rate; employment; employment rate; business; family business; private sector; government jobs; government training; pay check; population; youth

4. **School Enrollment and Attendance:** Enrollment; attendance; uneducated; sensitize; educate; importance; not a priority; family decision; tuition; school fees; not enough money; school year; harvest time; absent from school; can't make up missed work; girls education; boys education; early marriage; forced marriage; handicap children; chores; elementary education; secondary education; literacy; schools; classrooms; teacher-student ratio; language; language of instruction; curriculum; supplies; pay; pay raise; teacher education; teacher preparation; dedication; pay check; children commute long distances to school; no transportation; all children not allowed to attend; shortage of classrooms; not all villages have schools; have to leave the family to go to school

5. **Health and Nutrition:** Food; not enough food; malnutrition; sickness; health; disease; HIV; stigma; malaria; dysentery; measles; chicken pox; meningitis; Ebola; physical deformities; blind; accidents; injuries; no access to healthcare; inadequate healthcare; inadequate training; no diagnostic ability; food programs; clean water; unclean drinking water; sanitation; mental illness; indoor plumbing; no indoor plumbing; personal hygiene; poor hygiene; wash hands; diseases from bare feet traditional medicine

6. **Passing the Sixth-grade Exam:** Many students fail; have to pass to move up to seventh grade; need the certificate; can re-take exam; can stay in elementary school until 16; students allowed to study; students have chores at home; parents are illiterate and can't help; costs money to take the exam; fees are expensive; no electricity, can't study at night; parents unhappy if child fails; parents not proud of child

7. **Government:** Government; policy; regulation; programs; government training programs; decision makers; responsibility