

COMBATING STABILITY CONCERNS AND PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH LITERACY AND EDUCATION

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Strategic Studies

by

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

COMBATING STABILITY CONCERNS AND PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LITERACY AND EDUCATION, by LCDR Megan A. McWilliams, 78 pages.

The United Nations declared education as a fundamental right that should be free, compulsory, and afforded to everyone under *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Education and literacy are crucial for not only human development but also societal development. Literacy promotes democratic institutions, economic security, job opportunities, and general health awareness. Instability plagues countries with poor literacy rates. This is the case for West Africa. It contains the largest number of illiterate adults and greatest security implications on the continent. This thesis examines three case studies of states that experienced tragic wars and low rates of literacy: Republic of Korea, Afghanistan, and Liberia. It will then evaluate if the education programs are efficient, effective, and acceptable. This will then help to answer the main research question; should U.S. African Command place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability.

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ACRONYMS

AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
ANDS	Afghanistan National Development Strategy
DoD	Department of Defense
EFA	Education for All
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
MoE	Ministry of Education
NESP	National Education Strategy Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy
ROK	Republic of Korea
TSC	Theater Security Cooperation
UIS	United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAMGIK	United States of America Military Government in Korea

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and compute using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve his or her goals, develop his or her knowledge and potential and participate fully in community and wider society.

— United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Aspects of Literacy Assessment: Topics and Issues from the UNESCO Expert Meeting*

Overview

According to Article 26 of *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, education is a fundamental right; a right that is free, compulsory, and afforded to everyone (United Nations 1948). Literacy is the foundation taught at elementary and fundamental stages of a person's life. Literacy is the foothold for developing further educational and learning opportunities such as technical and professional education. Being literate allows individuals to think critically, engage in society by promoting a more democratic institution, and acts as an enabler to promote economic growth. The ability to read or write does not solely affect the individual. Literacy has a cascading impact on the family, on the community, and on the society as a whole. Countries experiencing a low-level of literacy incur issues with poverty, economic security, lack of job opportunities, suffer from a myriad of health issues (malnutrition, disease, etc.), and have diminished capacity for governance.

Even though literacy is a basic need everyone should have, not everyone in the world is literate. Illiteracy is a problem that transcends in some of the most populated and

poorest regions. Figure 1 highlights the highest and lowest regions of literacy around the world.

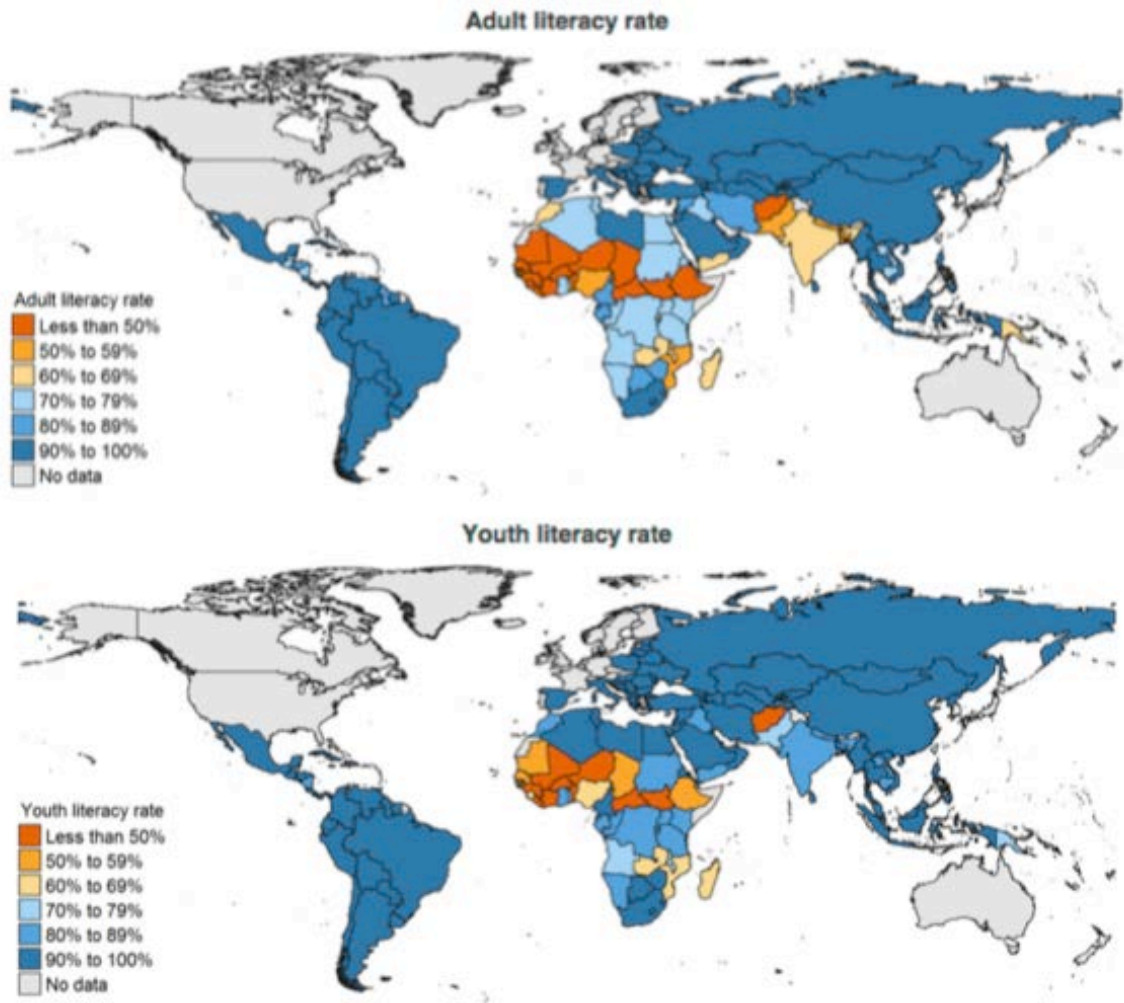


Figure 1. Lowest and Highest Literacy Rates in the World

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics, "Adult and Youth Literacy," Fact Sheet No. 32 (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics, Paris, France, September 2015), 2.

The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UIS) reported the 1990 global adult literacy rate to be as low as 76 percent (UIS 2013, 10). Poorer regions such as the Arab States, Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa reflected significantly lower rates than the global average.

Over the past decade, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), World Bank, and UNESCO fought to significantly improve the literacy rates in selected countries around the world. In 2003, the United Nations (UN) launched a decade-long initiative—the UN Literacy Decade—to further develop societies that are below the global literacy rate. The UN sought to achieve the six “Education for All” (EFA) goals:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs.
4. Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and providing equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. (UNESCO 2015)

Globally, adult literacy rates improved from 78 percent in 1990 to 84 percent in 2011; however, it was not a universal improvement in all regions. In 2011, regions that exceeded 84 percent were Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean. Arab States, South and West Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa fell below the average. Figure 2 illustrates the adult literacy rates by region and gender.

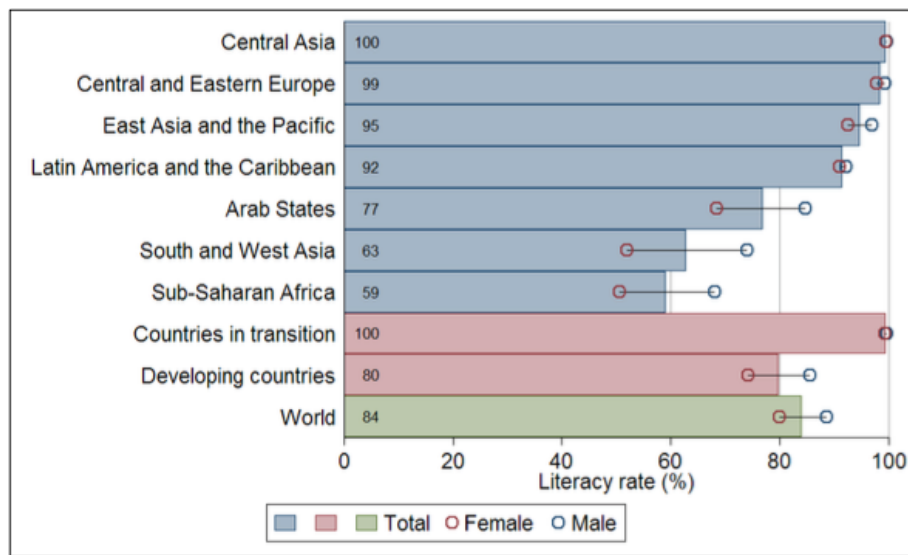


Figure 2. Adult Literacy Rate by Region and Sex, 2011

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics, “Adult and Youth Literacy: National, Regional and Global Trends, 1985-2015” (Information paper, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Institute for Statistics, Montreal, Canada, 2013), 8.

However, literacy is not the only concern in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is only one of several challenges facing the region. Muslim extremism, Boko Haram, and Al Qaeda insurgents operating out of Africa increase violence and further destabilize several regions. Political unrest and weapons proliferation threaten Africa. In West Africa, the

Ebola outbreak in 2014 caused massive worldwide panic. Illicit trafficking and piracy affect both West and East Africa. These threats affect not only the African continent, but it also affects the United States and its interests. The rise of extremism and terrorism, proliferation of weapons, weak governance, and pandemic outbreaks create additional risks for the American people and our allies (U.S. President 2015, i). The geographic combatant commander at U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) is responsible for addressing issues like these when they arise within the African continent.

AFRICOM is a Department of Defense (DoD) organization in charge of military operations on the African continent. Their 2014 mission states, “United States Africa Command, in concert with interagency and international partners, builds defense capabilities, responds to crisis, and deters and defeats transnational threats in order to advance U.S. national interests and promote regional security, stability, and prosperity” (U.S. Africa Command 2014a, 5). Figure 3 captures the vast challenges on the continent.

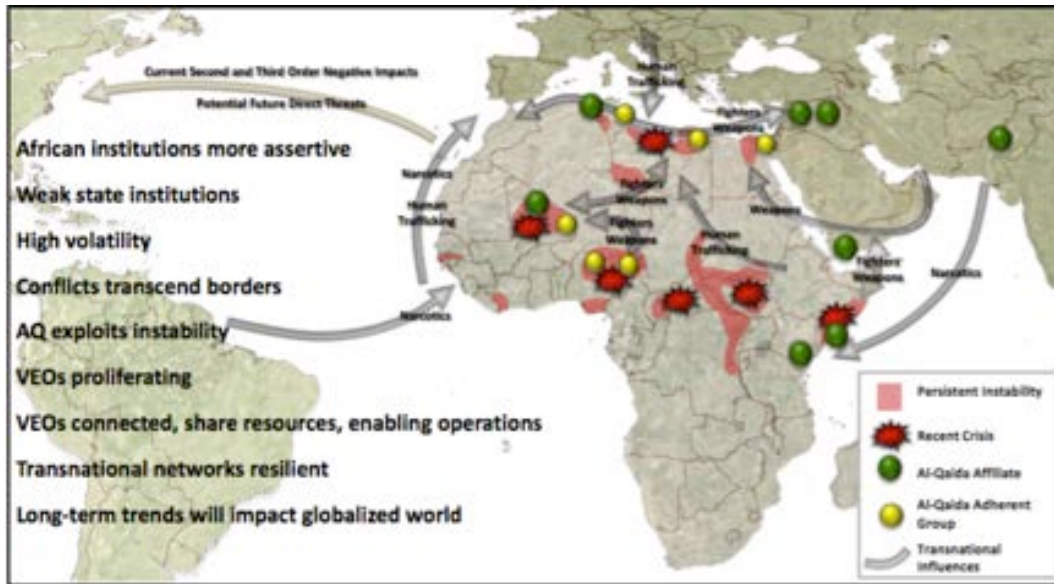


Figure 3. Conflict and Instability throughout Africa

Source: U.S. Africa Command. "Command Brief," 2014, accessed November 14, 2016, <http://www.africom.mil/NewsByCategory/document/23122/2014-command-brief-english>, 9.

The AFRICOM commander has a wide range of military options ranging from combating terrorism and conducting counterdrug operations to providing foreign humanitarian assistance and civil support. All military options require AFRICOM to have wide spectrum of capabilities to promote stability and security. Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning*, is the DoD doctrinal publication that provides a framework for military planners, i.e. AFRICOM, to establish how to use joint forces to conduct activities across the vast range of military operations in conjunction with interagency partners (Chairman JCS, 2011, i). The military uses an operational approach when planning and executing missions. Every operational approach must achieve the national security objectives; this forces the military planners to examine the ways in which issues are addressed, with the resources available, in order to achieve the desired end state and

meet the national security objectives. Enhancing literacy and education is a way in which AFRICOM can improve Africa’s stability.

The first step when analyzing a problem is to define the desired end state. Once AFRICOM determines what the environment should look like, then the combatant commander can assess the problem—what is prohibiting the operational environment from achieving the desired end state. When the combatant commander understands the problem, then he/she can develop an operational approach, the actions necessary, to achieve the desired end state. Joint Publication 5-0 provides the operational approach concept on how to examine issues and solve problems. Figure 4 depicts the notional five-phased operational approach when conducting military operations.

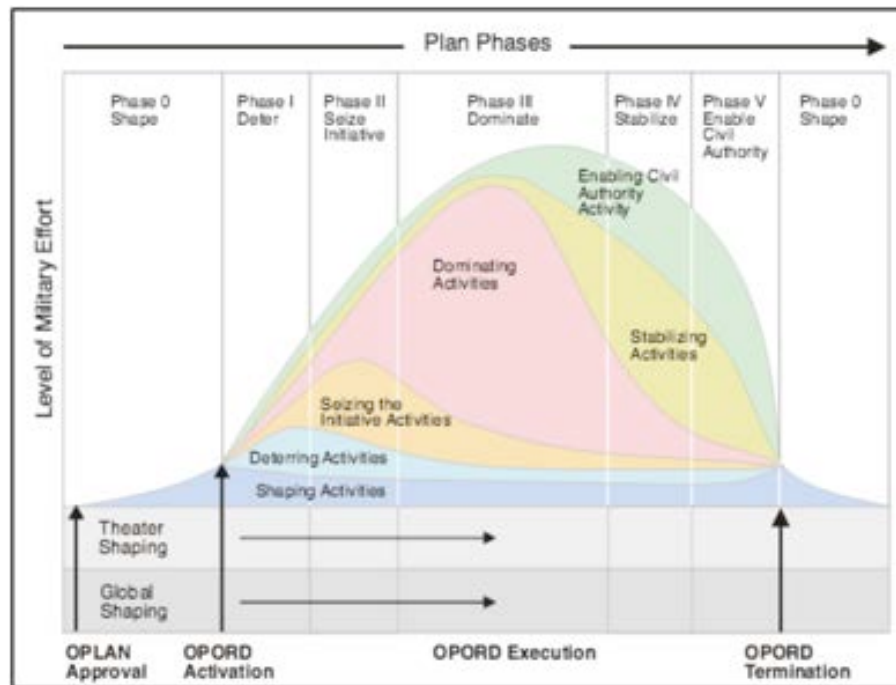


Figure 4. Notional Operation Plan Phases

Source: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, August 11, 2011), III-39.

Each phase of the operation requires a different level of effort, activities, strategy, and objectives. Combating literacy and education is an effort that should be conducted in every phase of an operation. Education can play a key role in conflict prevention, Phase Zero; and rebuilding societies, Phase Four; and in post-conflict situations through peace building, Phase Five.

There is a political space that opens which allows for change and reform post conflict; this space allows for policy makers to restructure priorities and rebalance inequalities to impact and consolidate peace building (Hanemann 2005, 8). Literacy and education is way to refocus and rebuild societies through introducing new concepts and ideas. Through education, individuals can learn to work together for community improvement and find peaceful solutions. Literacy and education can deter future conflict by teaching conflict resolution mechanisms; therefore, it must be stressed in every operational planning phase.

The joint services (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force), Special Operations Command Africa, and interagency representatives (Department of State, USAID, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Energy, and Department of Justice) work together in execution of the U.S. national policy and guidance in Africa. In order to address the threats, improve security, stability, and promote democracy, societies must address the issues surrounding literacy and education. This paper suggests education is the center of gravity for improving the stability of West Africa. Literacy and education are challenges that need long-term dedication and support in order to produce sustainable effects.

Primary Research Question

If literacy improves the society, promotes stability, and supports conflict resolution—should the DoD embrace literacy programs in support of foreign countries? This paper examines the success and failures of implementing educational programs in a post-conflict situation. It then examines West Africa, as it contains the largest number of illiterate adults in their population and greatest security implications on the continent. The primary research question for this paper is; should AFRICOM place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability?

Secondary Research Question

In order to answer the primary research question; should AFRICOM place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability, other questions must be answered. Evidence should suggest if AFRICOM should be an agent towards promoting education by answering the secondary questions. The secondary questions are:

1. Are educational programs efficient?
2. Are educational programs effective?
3. Are educational programs accepted?

These questions were chosen because programs must be financially efficient and effective at educating in order to be sustainable. Efficiency lies within the bounds of financial constraints (e.g. cost of school books, teacher salaries, school facilities). Bottom line, efficiency is the cost of education.

Effectiveness of an educational program refers to the ability of the program in ultimately accomplishing its purpose—improving literacy rates. An educational program is effective if it improves literacy rate by 50 percent. The 50 percent threshold is based off the UN's EFA goals.

The third question, the author determined, is important to examine because the amount of support the educational programs receive from their government and general population could determine the propensity for success. Long-term educational development could potentially suffer if the government and its people do not support the programs.

Assumptions

First, this study assumes that West African countries will continue to have difficulty combating illiteracy without assistance. Remote rural areas, limited resources, and weak governmental agencies will struggle to implement educational programs. Therefore, the U.S. government and non-governmental organizations (NGO) will continue to assist in educational programs. Evidence by UIS suggests there is still a long way to go in order for West Africa to achieve functional literacy.

The second assumption is that the West African governments will accept and support educational programs. If the governments decide they do not want to improve upon literacy, then it will be necessary to adjust the planning factors and readjust the assumptions (Kem 2012, 95).

In literature, education can represent many things. Several works discuss education services and/or programs. The author assumes literacy is a part of the mentioned educational programs and reforms. Literacy is synonymous with education.

The last assumption is that theater engagement opportunities conducted in the AFRICOMs area of responsibility will continue. The U.S. military will continue to be involved in the theater, working to improve security for the region.

Definitions and Terms

The following key definitions are used in this thesis. The terms are provided to help ensure there is a common understanding of concepts presented.

Literacy: There are many definitions and measurement scales to define literacy. The concept of literacy can be as narrow a concept as describing the ability for one to read, to the broadest concept of literacy as explained in a sociological and/or anthropological perspective context (e.g. domain, cultural, computer, situational literacy) (Zakharia and Bartlett 2014, 2). This thesis defines literacy as the ability of one to write, read, and verbally communicate.

Functionally Literate: To be functionally literate means an individual can read, but they read for the sake of learning. They have a deeper appreciation for learning and are able to work independently through the process of critically thinking (Kem 2016, 92). UNESCO suggests that one should have at least three to four years of educational training to be effective at understanding the minimum reading and writing skills required for life long development (Martinez and Fernandez 2010, 18).

UIS developed a measurement scale, the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program, to provide policy planners with the required information to help with setting goals for implementing literacy policies (UIS 2014). The Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program enables countries to assess their own skills. The Literacy

Assessment and Monitoring Program measures literacy in five levels (the desired end-state having all individuals at a Level 3):

Level 1: Individual has poor skills, may be unable to read basic labels.

Level 2: Individuals can handle simple, clearly explained tasks. They have coping skills, but have difficulty tackling new challenges or job skills.

Level 3: Individuals have minimum coping skills needed for daily societal interaction. Skill-level equivalent to those successfully completing a secondary school and are prepared for college.

Levels 4 and 5: Individuals able to understand and process information. (Kem 2016, 92)

Limitations and Delimitations

The limitations and delimitations of this thesis must be addressed because there will inherently be some flaws with the research. Limitations are beyond the control of the writer. Limitations are the potential weakness of the research. There may be a limitation of information regarding literacy programs or knowledge of where to find additional information.

Over the course of this research, it was determined that there are limitations of information with respect to how much financial support is given and determining all the agencies who provide financial support to literacy programs. The depth of research was limited due to the timeframe allowed to complete this thesis.

In contrast to limitations, the writer has control over delimitations. Delimitations are set boundaries the writer put in place. There are hundreds of literacy programs implemented all over the world. In order to narrow the scope of research, this thesis focuses research on the specific three literacy programs implemented in the Republic of Korea (ROK), Afghanistan, and West Africa. The three countries researched were based

on their experiences of high conflict and low level of literacy rates. The ROK currently exceeds the global average with literacy rates in the high nineties. Afghanistan and Liberia experienced exceptionally low literacy rates, but are making improvements on literacy rates and their education programs. By using these case studies, it should help to understand how to improve the literacy rates in West Africa and if AFRICOM should align its efforts.

Summary

As discussed, literacy affects society; it is a challenge for the society and world at large. It is a problem that can affect how the military force engages with partnering nations. Therefore, literacy is an enduring first order challenge the Army will encounter. Combating literacy fits under the second Army's Warfighting Challenge—shape the security environment. The military forces need to understand “how to shape and influence security environments, engage key actors, and consolidate gains to achieve sustainable security outcomes in support of Geographic and Functional Combatant Commands and Joint requirements” (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2016). This research can help with answering the additional Army's Warfighting Challenge learning demands of:

1. How can regionally aligned forces best engage key actors, shape outcomes, and set the conditions to consolidate gains?
2. What constraints and limitations bear on the Army's ability to shape the security environment and build the capacity and capability of our partners?
3. How must the Army synchronize NGOs, joint, interorganizational, and multinational efforts to build shared understanding and trust in order to shape outcomes and consolidate gains?

4. How does the Army identify and increase availability of subject matter expertise in building partner capacity and civil-military operations? (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2016)

This chapter provided an overview of the issues surrounding illiteracy. Because of the security implications, the primary question is; should AFRICOM place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability? The secondary research questions assist in framing the problem in order to answer the primary question.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature. Chapter 3 covers the methodology used to research and write this paper. Chapter 4 presents a detailed analysis of the research conducted on the ROK, Afghanistan, and Liberia. Finally, chapter 5 concludes by summarizing the findings and provides a recommendation for follow-on research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Illiteracy, today, is synonymous with hopelessness and poverty. We must turn this around. There is nothing inevitable about illiteracy. This is a challenge we can overcome.

— Irina Bokova and Laura Bush, “Literacy is the key to unlocking the cycle of poverty”

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature from various publications, documents, and other relevant data that will help to answer the primary research question; should AFRICOM place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability? The first section reviews the literature concerning the implications of illiteracy on society. The remaining sections of this chapter address policies and guidance from Washington, DC, and ultimately how AFRICOM executes these policies and guidance.

The second and third sections address the U.S. *National Security Strategy* (NSS) and *National Military Strategy* (NMS) which are followed by a more detailed discussion in the fourth section, the U.S. strategy towards Sub-Saharan Africa. Section five reviews the research being studied in the DoD directed Africa Center for Strategic Studies.

The final section ties in the role of AFRICOM and how they apply the NSS, NMS, and Sub-Saharan African policy directive, with respect to ongoing and future theater security cooperation (TSC) programs. The conclusion paragraph is a summary of findings presented in chapter 2.

Implications of Illiteracy

Countries suffering with low levels of literacy experience issues with poverty, low levels of health, economic insecurity, and poor governance. One also finds societies suffering from conflict situations experience difficulties with illiteracy. Illiteracy and poverty have close ties to one another. Some of the poorest economies are also some of the illiterate countries in the world. Impoverished households are typically illiterate households, placing little importance on education. Malcolm Adiseshiah states, “poverty breeds illiteracy by forcing children to drop out of school to work, and these illiterate people are forced to stay on the lowest levels of the workforce and thus remain in poverty” (Adiseshiah 1990, 1). Poverty can be self-condemning and an endless downward spiral. Literacy is the key to get out of poverty.

Illiteracy affects good public health. Understanding nutrition, good hygiene, and the promotion of good health practices requires one to understand messages or concepts for self-care; without it, households and societies are negatively impacted (Martinez and Fernandez 2010, 8). Basic written instructions on how to properly medicate can prove challenging, even after a physician provides oral instruction (Marcus 2006, 339). One recent example is from the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The Ebola outbreak illustrates how illiteracy affects general health awareness. An individual’s ability to read or understand health care messages could have helped spread the awareness of the Ebola virus. Informational billboards posted around infected areas were well written, but not understood by the majority of the populace. The Director of Action Aid Liberia, Mrs. Korto Williams, blames the low level of literacy on the Ebola denial (Azango 2014). She

feels if the public could read and understand the warning signs, the spread of the virus would have been lessened. Illiteracy affects the health of a society.

Illiteracy impacts the economy. Education is a key determinate of a person's income. Education increases awareness, it sparks creativity, and increases personal productivity (Thengal 2013, 131). At the grassroots, an individual's inability to read or write affects their ability to obtain employment and ensure economic stability (Martinez and Fernandez 2010, 11; Roman 2004, 85). This causes higher rates of unemployment that causes a financial burden to the economy. Unemployment directly affects the health of the overall economy.

Societies with low literacy rates lack development and growth. Literacy and education are important drivers to economic performance and potential (Hendricks and Musavengana 2010, 19). Literacy is essential to improve economic status. The impact of literacy on socio-economic development is positive and can be easily determined by comparing the standard of living, per capita income, gross domestic product (GDP), level of industrialization, and the development of infrastructure within a country" (Thengal 2013, 124).

Literate adults are elected into state and local government positions. Elected officials are charged with the responsibility to implement plans and invest in the future of a country. Their values, if aligned to democratic values, protect human rights and promote economic development. If the elected officials are corrupt, if they abuse their power, the society can stand up and fight for their rights. An individual is aware of their rights and entitlements in society if they are literate. However, illiteracy limits an individual's ability to contribute.

Limited opportunities are available for the illiterate population to stand up for their rights (Martinez and Fernandez 2010, 8). Literacy provides citizens the required access to participate in socio-political life at the local and national level, and allow them to express political views (Thengal 2013, 130). Research suggests that those with higher education demonstrate more likely to engage in civic actions and are more inclined toward using legal authority to build new social order (McGinn 1980, 201) vice acting out in violence.

There are a number of barriers that impede improving a country's literacy rate, to include (but not limited to): conflict, access to education, women's perceived role in society, age discrimination, and financial stability. In 2003, conflict and human rights abuse uprooted almost 17 million people in Africa from their homes (Hanemann 2005, 3). At the end of 2014, UNHCR reported civil conflict displaced an astonishing 59.5 million people (UNHCR 2014). This figure includes refugees, internally displaced, asylum-seekers, and stateless persons. Continued fighting in Syria alone has reportedly affected over four million refugees as of December 2015 (UNHCR 2015).

It is important to note that refugees experience issues and concerns with literacy and education programs. Refugees focus more on day-to-day survival than education. The government's primary focus is on resolving conflict, thus funding for education is typically cut from the budget (Hanemann 2005, 3). Displaced personnel and refugees are vulnerable to their surroundings, creating new insecurities. Humanitarian assistance needs to include literacy education to help build and ensure the future capacity of the individuals. If the refugees relocate to outside of their mother country, they struggle with learning a new language. This may cause an educational teaching dilemma for

international aid workers; whether to teach the refugees in their native language or the language of the country where they currently reside.

Alan Smith and Tony Vaux identify the important relationship between education and conflict: (1) education is a fundamental right; (2) education is essential for human development and a critical component towards eradicating poverty; and (3) education, if not implemented carefully, can potentially aggravate the existing conflict (Smith and Vaux 2003, 11-19). Literacy education, if not received early on in childhood, is typically a loss for that person. As the individuals age, opportunities lessen. If the opportunities are not available, individuals may experience personal shame for being illiterate. Regardless, the society will suffer from lack of social development (Smith 2010, 1).

Not all towns or villages have access to schools. The perception of women's role in society and early marriages hamper girls' education. Age discrimination affects youth and adults alike from attending. If they missed the opportunity for education when they were younger, they might not attend when they are older due to feeling insecure. Finally, poorer families tend not to send their children to school because of the lack of financial stability. Children often stay home to support the families.

These are the greater issues that surround illiteracy. The U.S. government and military have worked in operational environments with low levels of literacy in the past and more than likely will find themselves in similar environments in the future. Therefore, the U.S. policies should address literacy and education in order to improve the security and stability of countries with low literacy rates given its impact on society.

U.S. National Security Strategy

President Barack Obama's 2015 NSS, created in concert with the National Security Council, outlines the current major national security concerns to the United States. The document President Obama and his administration plan on dealing with the threats, and the desired endstate to ensure U.S. security protected. Figure 5 summarizes President Obama's strategy.



Figure 5. U.S. National Security Strategy

Source: Created by author using information from U.S. President, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, February 2015).

National Military Strategy

The NMS provides a summary of the global strategic environment and challenges the United States faces. The strategy describes ways in which military forces will be used in protecting and advancing the U.S. national interest (Chairman, JCS 2015, i). The document broadly touches on the issues that span across all geographic regions. Specifically to Africa, the strategy addresses Africa's rapid population growth creating economic and resource shortages. Violent extremist organizations undermine regional security with their spread of corruption and participation in illicit trade. The strategy for Africa is to strengthen institutions "aimed at fostering stability, building peacekeeping capacity, and countering trans-regional extremism" (Chairman, JCS 2015, 9).

U.S. Strategy Towards Sub-Saharan Africa

A presidential policy directive, signed into law in June 2012, addresses the specific U.S. policy goals regarding Sub-Saharan Africa. President Obama states there is a clear concern over security, political instability, development and poverty within the continent. Africa has a strategic importance to the United States and it is vital to invest towards their future.

The strategy lists the four pillars, also known as lines of effort, to achieve these goals: (1) strengthen democratic institution; (2) spur economic growth, trade and investment; (3) advance peace and security; and (4) promote opportunity and development (U.S. President 2012, 2). Above all, through these efforts, the desired end-state of 'strengthening democratic institutions and enhancing economic growth' will be achieved and future success in Africa ensured.

Under the fourth pillar, the policy directive towards Sub-Saharan Africa recognizes the need for educational development. It states that educational services are necessary in order to address constraints on growth and promote reduction in poverty. The strategy, however, does not link the relationship of education with the other three pillars.

Africa Center for Strategic Studies

The Africa Center of Strategic Studies, established in 1999, nourishes a broader understanding for the DOD on security concerns in Sub-Saharan Africa. The strategic research program conducts research that aims to address the security issues on the continent. The center also works to build and strengthen long-term, strategic, partnerships with African partnering state institutions through conferences, academic programs, and other training programs. The Africa Center of Strategic Studies identifies twenty-one dynamic security issues in Sub-Saharan Africa consisting of general security challenges, piracy, violent extremism, conflicts (resource and identity), corruption, and peacekeeping. The center examines the security issues to seek viable options to solve these complex problems (Africa Center for Strategic Studies 2016).

U.S. Africa Command's Role

The NSS, the NMS, presidential policy directives, and DoD guidance (i.e. guidance for the employment of the armed force and DoD strategy for Africa) shape AFRICOM's work on the continent. AFRICOM's lines of effort in addressing the unique security challenges are executed in one of three ways: specific operations (e.g. Operation Onward Liberty), military partnership exercise, and/or TSC programs. The overall

objective of the exercises and TSCs are to strengthen the defensive capabilities of African partners and prevent mass atrocities (U.S. Africa Command 2014b, 11). Figure 6 outlines security concerns and AFRICOM’s strategic levels of efforts in achieving the desired end state.

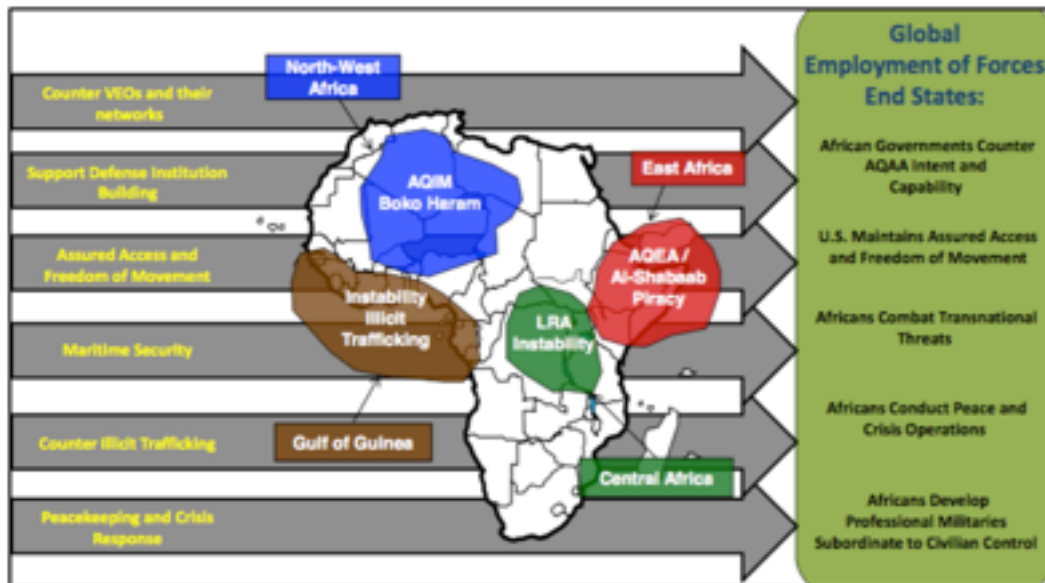


Figure 6. U.S. Africa Command Theater Campaign Concept

Source: U.S. Africa Command, “What We Do,” 2014, accessed November 27, 2015, <http://www.africom.mil/what-we-do>, 10.

Under the TSC umbrella, AFRICOM focuses its efforts on building institutional capacity and developing human capital. The DoD and DoS both play vital roles in this category. Numerous TSCs support activities towards basic military training, education and professional development, humanitarian assistance, counter-narcotics, and foreign military financing. TSCs that are more common focus on security training such as military tactics, contingency operations, and force protection/security operation. Those

that are not as common, but are equally as important, are TSC that deliver veterinary aid, theater logistic engagement programs, medical civil action program, pandemic response program, and engineer civil action programs (U.S. Africa Command 2015). The Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance TSC, funded by the Department of State, trains peacekeepers deployed in support of UN and African Union peacekeeping missions (Warner 2013).

Summary

The review of literature helps to understand the issues surrounding illiteracy. The impact of illiteracy resonates at the grass roots of poverty, poor health, economic security, and governance. Low levels of literacy have higher propensity to conflict (Hanemann 2005, 5). Documents from the NSS down to the AFRICOM engagement plan reinforce the need for improved health standards, improved economic security, conflict prevention, and peace. AFRICOM implements the NSS and presidential directives through TSC programs and engaging African partners. The potential for democratic institutions, economic growth, and regional stability is limited if societies are illiterate.

Investments towards literacy and education programs are needed to develop long-term regional stability. Every phase of an operation should ensure efforts are made to improve literacy and education. The next chapter in this study, chapter 3, will explain the methodological research approach used to analyze information presented in chapter 4. The following chapters will examine how the ROK, Afghanistan, and Liberia developed their educational sectors post-conflict.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to apply the literature review from the previous chapter, and to discuss the research methodology applied to answer the primary research question; should AFRICOM place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability? During the implementation of the methodology, the secondary questions addressed help to determine if AFRICOM is the best solution in executing literacy-focused missions.

This chapter lays out the road map on how the qualitative methodology was used to reach the conclusions, which are presented in the final chapter within this thesis. Chapter 3 has four sections. The first section describes the comparative study method, and how the researcher obtained the data collected on the case studies presented. The second section presents the evaluation criteria which aims to answer the primary and secondary questions. The final section addresses potential threats to validity and possible biases.

Historical and Comparative Study Methods

The author accessed and reviewed both primary and secondary resources available at the Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The research presented was taken from research papers, policy papers, published reports, online news reports, as well as other sources. A significant amount of data was available from sources such as the UNESCO, UIS, USAID, and UNICEF. The sources

used provide a breadth and depth of the issues surrounding literacy and educational programs. The comparative study method used relies on a historical investigation of educational programs implemented in the ROK, Afghanistan, and Liberia. The data collected will help to assess if AFRICOM should approach educational programs in West Africa to enhance security within the region.

Evaluation Criteria

This research paper seeks to understand educational programs, the execution, and how the programs affect the society. This thesis explores to see if AFRICOM should engage in TSC programs geared towards literacy development in order to improve the economic environment in West Africa. The evaluation criteria will help to determine if AFRICOM is suited to perform this mission. Table 1 illustrates the applied criteria in this research. The three criteria match the secondary research question because this assists in the conclusion of the primary question.

Table 1. Evaluation Criteria			
Questions	Low	Medium	High
1) Program efficient?	\$	\$\$	\$\$\$
2) Program effective?	<25% improvement of literacy rate	25-49% improvement of literacy rate	50% or greater improvement of literacy rate
3) Program universally accepted?	Low Support	Moderate Support	High Support

Source: Created by author.

There are numerous factors that convolute the measurement of efficiency in examining national education. Some of these include: relative cost of educational infrastructure (i.e. administration, teacher salaries, and supplies), relative cost to a student and family, the average household income, and financial support from international donors. These factors can vary greatly between countries. As discussed in the limitation section, collecting all the information required to assess how much financial support was given and determining all the agencies that provide financial support to literacy programs proved unattainable at this time.

The case studies presented in chapter 4 discuss the available data. To establish a common comparison of evaluation in this thesis, efficiency is based on government expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP. The World Bank and UIS provide the data for analysis. The lowest and highest extremes range from 0.8 percent and 19.3 percent respectively. A bell curve ranking evaluation helps to distribute the variable from the highest and lowest percentages. A low (\$) ranking ranges from 0.8 percent to 2.99 percent. Medium (\$\$) efficiency countries are those that spend 3.0 percent to 4.9 percent receive a medium efficiency ranking. Lastly, spending 5.0 percent or more on education receives a high efficiency ranking (\$\$\$).

The evaluation criterion uses the EFA standard to evaluate program effectiveness. If a program fails to cut literacy rates by 25 percent, then the program receives a low score. A medium ranking is given to countries that are able to improve literacy rate by 25 percent. Improving literacy rate by 50-percent constitutes a highly effective program.

Public support and governmental support helps to determine the acceptability ranking of educational programs. Low support is when the population and government do

not invest in education or literacy programs. Medium support is when there is a mismatch of support from either side. If both the public and government recognize the importance of education and literacy and participate in the programs, the program is ranked as highly supportable.

Research Methodology

The following is the research method in this thesis:

Step 1 in the research design is to review the historical background for each case study, specifically identifying their literacy rate.

Step 2 in the research design addresses the educational programs.

Step 3 is to understand the cultural acceptance to literacy.

Step 4 is to apply the evaluation criteria to assist in determining answers to the secondary research questions:

1. Are educational programs efficient?
2. Are educational programs effective?
3. Are educational programs accepted?

Step 5: The last step in this design is a consolidation of the findings. This should help answer the primary research question.

Threats to Validity and Biases

Threats to validity and biases could affect the following research. The accuracy of this research, and the reliability of the data in forming a conclusion, is based on the three cases studied: the ROK, Afghanistan, and Liberia. Generalizing the research findings in order to apply it to other groups is an external threat to validity. Using the evaluation

criteria to rank the effectiveness against the EFA standard for a literacy program could create a validity threat. The ranking is merely a benchmark for all countries to attain. If the benchmark of 50 percent is not achieved, it suggests that there is room for improvement.

Biases may also threaten this research. The author is a service member in the Department of the Navy. The author participated in five TSCs in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, engaged in several exercises within the U.S. Pacific Command theater to include time spent in the ROK, and visited six countries on the African continent. Additionally, the author has a general idea of where the research may lead and what the outcomes are with respect to the primary and secondary research questions. This may subconsciously influence the author's sources of information. The author understands the possible threats to validity and biases, understanding personal experiences and influences need to be mitigated to prevent any negative effects on the study, conclusions, or recommendations.

Summary

By applying the research obtained through the literature review, historical and comparative study, research methodology, and the application of the evaluation criteria, the primary and secondary research questions will be answered. Chapter 4 will present the data and analysis of the three case studies.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

Chapter 4 presents the facts and findings of the data collected over the course of this study in order to answer the primary research question, should AFRICOM place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability? The first section within this chapter sets the stage by presenting the key points and implications surrounding illiteracy. The remaining sections present the case studies of the ROK, Afghanistan, and Liberia. During the course of this study, the presentation and analysis of the research uses the five-step approach, as described in chapter 3. Each case study is reviewed separately, results are consolidated, and an overall conclusion is provided.

Researched dates vary throughout the cases studied because the major conflicts occurred during different timeframes within the respective countries. Education, during times of conflict, tends to be less important as opposed to fighting the conflict; resources are funneled more towards efforts to fight the conflict vice educating. The research touches on the conflict and its effect on education. The research focus is on data collected that describes how countries address literacy and educational shortfalls following conflicts and examines the progress thereafter.

Republic of Korea

Step 1: Historical Background

The ROK has seen its share of occupation, fighting, and conflict. From 1910 to 1945, the Imperial Japanese ruled over Korea. At the conclusion of World War II, in 1945, Korea found itself a divided country: a Soviet Union held north and a U.S. occupied south. The US Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) took control and ruled in South Korea from 1945 to 1948.

President Syngman Rhee officially established the ROK, also known as the First Republic, in August 1948. President Rhee held the elected position from 1948 to 1960. Rhee had a difficult rule, fighting through tribulations from the Korean War when North Korean forces, backed by the People's Republic of China, invaded the ROK. At the conclusion of the Korean War, Korea's war torn country had one of the poorest economies and one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. The ROK turned its economy around at an alarming rate with heavy investment and a strong emphasis on education (Asian Info 2016).

The adult literacy rate was estimated at 22 percent in 1945; by 1970 it was 87.6 percent, and by the late 1980s it estimated around 93 percent (Center on International Education Benchmarking 2014). The government expenditures on education increased from 8.7 percent in 1948 and topped out at 19 percent in 1971 (McGinn 1980, 46). As of 2002, the literacy rate was an astonishing 97.9 percent.

Step 2: Educational Program

The ROK experienced three periods of educational system reform: the U.S. military government (1945-1948); the First Republic (1948-1960); and the Third

Republic (1961-present) (McGinn 1980, 11). The Japanese Empire established a good educational system in Korea during their occupation prior to the USAMGIK educational reform. During this period, only the Japanese were allowed to teach and only the Japanese were allowed to attend secondary and higher education institutions (Center on International Education Benchmarking 2015). At the end of World War II, the Japanese left, taking their educators and educated in tow. A large educational gap surfaced in the Koreans educational system.

Approximately 78 percent of the population was illiterate and lacked educational opportunities. The U.S. military authorities viewed education as a way to spread American ideology and promote the democratic system; their first step was by reopening the educational institutions and creating new educational structures (Lee 2006, 4). The USAMGIK period sought equal educational opportunity for all, an open and rational system. Control remained at the local level in order to reflect the population's ethnic composition. Students were self-motivation.

The ROK constitution adopted the educational policies set forth by the USAMGIK. The constitution specified, "All citizens shall have the right to receive an equal education . . . compulsory education shall be free . . . independence and political neutrality of education shall be guaranteed" (McGinn 1980, 12).

American soldier educators contributed (1) to eradicate the remnants of Japanese colonial education, (2) to plant the seed of American democratic education in school systems, administration, and curriculum and instruction, (3) to train Koreans with Western practical knowledge and scientific skills, (4) to practice "Koreanize" education for the Korean people, appointing many Korean intellectuals who participated in a new educational plan under the USAMGIK guidance and assistance, (5) to give opportunities to learn American ideas and culture directly or indirectly from the American people or in Christian churches, colleges, and universities, (6) to increase many tertiary students and institutes, and

(7) to give the Korean people equal opportunities to enter colleges and universities. (Jeong-Kyu Lee 2006)

The First Republic supported and continued the quest for educational advancement but struggled achieving the goals. Financial constraints and the outbreak of war caused the government to impose centralized authority over educational processes (McGinn 1980, 13). As a result, the Ministry of Education (MoE) had increased control over educational development and planning. The last reform, the Third Regime, further centralized the control in the educational system; the board of education, chaired by the provincial governor and superintendent, requires appointments signed by the president (McGinn 1980, 14).

Step 3: Cultural Acceptance

The Japanese occupation limited Koreans' access to educational opportunities. The USAMGIK liberated the Koreans by expanding the educational rights to all. As for the ROK government, they too stressed the importance of education by signing an educational law into effect, adopting several of the goals set forth by the USAMGIK.

One of the factors that contributed to the exceptional educational development is the social demand for schooling. Korea embeds the importance of education into its culture, valuing it as a means of promoting self-enhancement, achieving higher social status, and power. Jisoon Lee writes, that because the Korean people experience such hardships during the early 1900s that they have a strong conviction to do anything to improve their way of life; education would be the vessel to brighten their future (Lee 2001, 15).

The importance of education resonates in every household. Education plays an important aspect to developing one's self. McGinn's research revealed, from 1960 to 1972, that education has become more significant over the years to being the second highest concern amongst Korean students (McGinn 1980, 209). Parents stress education upon their children. The success of an individual's child reflects upon the parents and their status in society; the more success the child has, the more it pleases the parents (Center on International Education and Benchmarking 2015).

Step 4: Evaluation Criteria

Efficiency

The ROK government alone cannot afford the cost associated to ensure success of the educational system. It relies on significant support from other entities. The ROK received a considerable amount of foreign aid following the war. At least \$100 million was given in foreign aid for educational purposes to Korea between 1952 and 1966 (McGinn 1980, 96); the money went towards revamping old classrooms, building new facilities, and training teachers. In addition to financial support, the U.S. military provided countless man-hours towards construction and donation of school supplies.

Even though the government funds educational programs, parents are willing to pay additional costs to ensure their children receive the best education possible. Parents play a huge part in supporting educational costs. Because there is such a high importance of education, parents assume the financial burden.

Lastly, the cost of teacher salaries is lower than most countries. Teachers are willing to accept lower pay because the job is well respected. Additionally, teachers

receive additional pay through tutoring jobs paid by parents. This being said, the determinate factor of educational efficiency is based on the percentage of GDP.

The data for governmental expenditures on education available from UIS and The World Bank only goes back to 1970. Therefore, the author took the information from McGinn's research. The government expenditures on education rose from its starting point of 8.7 percent of the GDP to 19 percent in 1971 (McGinn 1980, 46), resulting in a highly efficient educational program.

Effectiveness

At the end of World War II, Korea suffered from extremely low levels of literacy. An estimated 78 percent of the adult population could not read or write. Through financial support, the construction of larger and newer school facilities accommodated the massive influx of students. Based on many upgrades since World War II, the illiteracy rate dropped to 27.9 percent by 1960 (McGinn 1980, 48).

Acceptance

All levels of the spectrum highlight the importance of education. The government spends a significant portion of its budget on education. The Korean culture and its people perceive education as a means to a better life and are willing to pay the price to ensure their children receive the best education possible. Educational programs in the ROK are highly acceptable.

Step 5: Aggregation

Step 5 in the research design aggregates the information presented in step 4. The information is measured against the evaluation criteria to assist in determining the

educational program’s efficiency, effectiveness, and acceptability. Table 2 presents the aggregation of the three criteria.

Table 2. Republic of Korea Evaluation Criteria			
Questions	Low	Medium	High
1) Program efficient?			\$\$\$
2) Program effective?			X
3) Program universally accepted?			X

Source: Created by author.

The ROK ranks high in all three evaluation criteria. The government investing a large portion, 19 percent, of its GDP expenditures on education rates a high efficiency evaluation. The effectiveness of the ROK’s educational programs is evident. The ROK needed to decrease the illiteracy rate in the country to 39-percent to reach the UN’s 50 percent goal. The ROK not only achieved this goal, but also surpassed the expectations. The educational program in Korea effectively decreased its illiteracy rate by 64.3 percent within 15 years, exceeding the UN’s goals by 14.2 percent. Lastly, the overwhelming support of education by the government and the population constitutes a high acceptance evaluation within the country.

Afghanistan

Step 1: Historical Background

Afghanistan recognized the value of education and literacy in the early twentieth century. Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan, the prime minister from 1953 to 1963 and later president of the Republic of Afghanistan from 1973 to 1978, promoted economic

modernization, instituted educational reforms, and encouraged women's emancipation (Afghanistan Online 2001). Under the 1964 constitution (Article 34), the right to education is free of charge—is the right to every Afghan, and primary education is compulsory for all children (Government of Afghanistan 1963).

The education sector began its decline in the late 1970s because Afghanistan was in a state of conflict. The Soviets invaded in 1979, a civil war broke out in 1989 where the Taliban seized control of most the country, and the U.S.-led an invasion following the September 11, 2001 attack in New York City (BBC 2015a). The national education program ceased to exist during this era.

Decades of conflict and exclusion from educational opportunities shattered the educational system. Since 1979, an estimated 2,000 schools were destroyed or fell due to disrepair (UNICEF 2002, 2). The literate population amounted to a meager 28.1 percent as of 2000 (Index Mundi 2002). With the help of the government, USAID, international donors, and numerous other outside agencies, Afghanistan's educational sector began to turn in 2001 with the ousting of the Taliban regime. As of 2015, the literacy rate increased to 38.2 percent, representing 52-percent of the male and 24.2 percent of the female population (CIA 2016a).

Step 2: Educational Program

A rapid expansion of the educational system occurred after the fall of the Taliban. In 2002, the newly established Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) entrusted the MoE to rectify the dysfunctional and disabled educational system (MoE Afghanistan 2016). The MoE had to revamp the entire educational system. He inherited unusable schools, lacked a national standard curriculum, unregulated madrassas,

and had less than 1 million students enrolled with 20,000 teachers and with little to no female representation (MoE Afghanistan 2016).

The MoE, with the support of the UN agencies and NGOs, kicked off March 2002 with a back-to-school campaign. The campaign reopened schools, built new schools, trained teachers, and supplied teaching materials for classrooms. UNICEF, one of the major contributors, anticipated 1.8 million children—both boys and girls—would enroll in their schools. By July 2002, nearly three million children were enrolled and attending school (IRIN 2002a; IRIN 2002b).

The GIRoA emphasized the importance of literacy and education in several policy frameworks and reforms, to include: *The Constitution of Afghanistan*, two *National Education Strategic Plans* (NESP I 2006-2010 and NESP II 2010-2014), and the *Afghanistan National Development Strategy* (ANDS 2008-2013).

The *Constitution of Afghanistan* addresses the importance of literacy and education in five separate articles: Article 17 (Ch. 1, Art. 17), Article 43 (Ch. 2, Art. 22), Article 44 (Ch. 2, Art. 23), Article 45 (Ch. 2, Art. 24), and Article 46 (Ch. 2, Art 25). The constitution laid the foundation upon which the NESP is based.

The MoE's NSEP I identified eight lines of effort, or programs, to reinvigorate the system: general education, teacher education, education infrastructure development, curriculum development, Islamic education, technical-vocational education and training, literacy and non-formal education, and education administration reform and development (MoE Afghanistan 2007, 49, 50). NSEP II refocused the concern by emphasizing literacy and non-formal education as one of its top priorities with the following objectives:

1. Increase literacy of the population aged 15 and over to 48 percent (34 percent females and 54 percent males) by 2014
2. Provide literacy courses for 3.6 million by 2014, with at least 60 percent female learners
3. Provide vocational training for 360,000 learners (or 10 percent of the graduate of basic literacy) by 2014
4. Enhance standard learning achievements of graduates from 50 percent to 80 percent in 2014 (UNESCO 2011, 6).

The ANDS is a comprehensive document created by the people and the government, addressing the principles and goals of achieving a peaceful and stable future. The strategy identifies three main pillars (security; governance, rule of law and human rights; and economic and social development) and eight sub-pillars. Education and culture falls into the economic and social development pillar. Figure 7 illustrates the GIRoA's devotion to education, ranking it as the third highest developmental priority for the country.

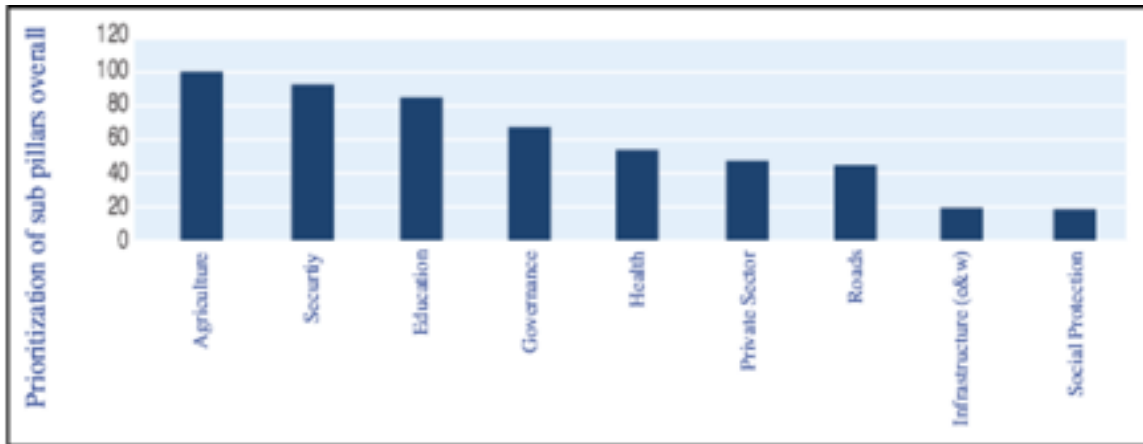


Figure 7. Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s Prioritization by Ranking of *Afghanistan National Development Strategy* Sub-Pillars

Source: Director, Ministry of Economy, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, *Afghanistan National Development Strategy 1387-1391 (2008 - 2013): Capacity Building* (Kabul, Afghanistan: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, March 2008), 29.

As of 2016, the MoE, along with USAID and other donors, opened more than 13,000 schools, recruited and trained more than 186,000 teachers, and increased overall enrollment rate up to eight million students (USAID 2016). The demand for education is ever increasing, and the government continues to build the national education system.

Step 3: Cultural Acceptance

The Soviets and Taliban limited educational opportunities for Afghans. The Taliban destroyed thousands of schools during their era of power. The Taliban only allowed males to attend what little facilities existed. The curriculum shifted away from literacy, technology, and science to religious based studies. Mullahs, educated Muslims, taught religious law and doctrine in madrassas or mosques to young boys. These schools were often times used as recruit depots for the Taliban, radicalizing individuals and training them to become suicide bombers (Nabi-Amanullah 2012, 5). As for the women

and girls, the Taliban terminated the educational opportunities by strictly prohibiting their schooling in 1998. The Taliban disregarded women, stripping them of all their rights. The Taliban wanted to ensure women would “sink deeper into poverty and deprivation, thereby guaranteeing that tomorrow’s women would have none of the skills needed to function in a modern society” (Bureau on Democracy, Human Rights and Labor 2004).

The 2001 U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan ended the Taliban’s control over the country. The reopening of schools was a critical step towards rebuilding the country. The GIRoA stressed the importance of education. The government encouraged all genders to enroll in school or get remedial education in order to face the challenges required of an expanding peacetime economy (Kem 2016, 96).

Boys and girls, men and women, seek education and literacy training. The USAID run Afghanistan Literacy and Community Empowerment Program is just one of several dozens of literacy programs in the country. The program empowers the community by integrating “community development opportunities through activities in local governance, adult literacy and numeracy, and economic empowerment” (Janke 2007, 4). The program noted great success and participation from both genders.

Even though gender equality in education exists, culture pressures within the education system needs acknowledging. Gender segregation endures within the system. Boys and girls are not taught together. Males and females are taught in separate rooms. Boys are taught by men, and girls by women. Educational opportunities can be limited because of the socio-cultural expectation of this gender separation (Kem 2016, 95).

Step 4: Evaluation Criteria

Efficiency

International donors have spent millions of dollars to Afghanistan for development. The European Commission, The World Bank, the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway, and The Netherlands paid for almost two-thirds of the education aid for Afghanistan (Oates 2013). According to the ANDS, the Ministry of Finance allotted \$4,872,000 towards the operational and developmental sector of education and culture from 2008 to 2012 (Government of Afghanistan 2008, 178).

UIS has limited data for the percent of the GDP the government expended on education. The data available is from 2010 to 2014. UIS reports Afghanistan spending 4.6 percent of its budget on education as of 2014 (UIS 2016a); figure 8 illustrates the fluctuation of governmental expenditures on education over the last few years.

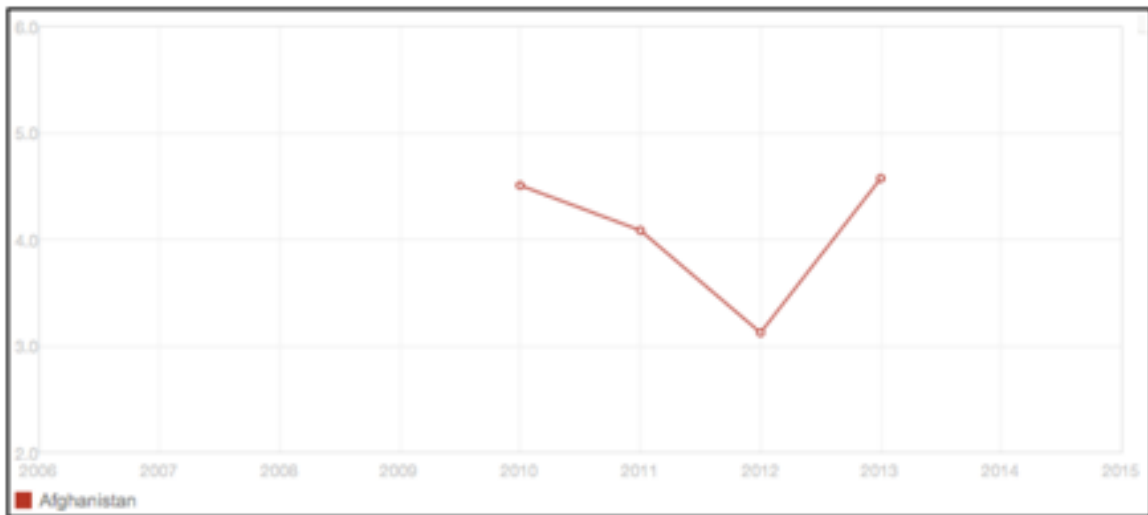


Figure 8. Afghanistan: Percent of Governmental Spending on Education

Source: The World Bank, “Government expenditure on education as % Of GDP (%),” The World Bank Group, accessed March 19, 2016, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GD.ZS/countries/AF?display=graph>.

Effectiveness

Afghanistan has a population of over thirty-two million people (CIA 2016a). Over 76 percent, twenty-four million, of the population reside in rural provinces of the country (UIS 2014). This has made an additional challenge for governmental and NGOs in reaching the masses. From 2002 to 2015, the GIRoA, partnering with several agencies, through numerous programs, improved educational opportunities by building schools in both urban and rural areas, increasing enrollment from one million students to over 8.7 million students, including girls (The World Bank 2015). The programs worked to create a standardized curriculum across the country. The programs increased the teacher work force from 20,000 to more than 187,000 trained teachers (The World Bank 2015). The 2000 demographic survey revealed 71.9 percent of the population were illiterate (Index Mundi 2002). By 2015, the illiteracy rate decreased to 61.8 percent (UIS 2016b).

Acceptance

The GIRoA openly accepts education. The ANDS recognizes education as one of the top three priorities within the country. The *Constitution* supports the free education for all citizens. The MoE supports literacy and education. The MoE recognizes “the strategic importance of literacy and lifelong learning in reaching national and global targets of EFA; the NESP of Afghanistan identifies literacy and non-formal education as core components” to improving sustainable development and overall, improving the livelihood of Afghans (Education Minister Afghanistan 2012, 2).

There is not a lot of information regarding the obstacles men must overcome concerning education. However, there is a plethora of literature dealing with education and women’s rights because the Taliban prohibited women from being educated. The

culture remains patriarchal even though the Taliban no longer has control. Gender equality remains a challenge within the society. One of the highest and most consistent problems for women is education and illiteracy (The Asia Foundation 2010). Women deal with discrimination in the male dominated society. Local culture beliefs discriminate against women being educated, the lack of female teachers, and lack of education infrastructure. All of these are obstacles that impede women’s education (Ayubi 2010).

The public’s desire for literature and education is evident. The reopening of schools caused men and women, boy and girls to flock to schoolhouses. Enrollment greatly exceeded expectations. UNICEF expected 1.8 million students in 2002 and received over three million (IRIN 2002b).

Step 5: Aggregation

Table 3 aggregates of the information presented from the previous section, step 4. Aggregating the data and measuring it against the evaluation criteria can answer the secondary questions of determining the educational program’s efficiency, effectiveness, and acceptability.

Table 3. Afghanistan Evaluation Criteria			
Questions	Low	Medium	High
1) Program efficient?		\$\$	
2) Program effective?	X		
3) Program universally accepted?			X

Source: Created by author.

Afghanistan rankings are not consistent across the evaluation criteria. GRoA does invest a fair portion of its GDP expenditures on education. It spends 4.6 percent of its total budget (UIS 2016a); therefore, it meets the medium evaluation criteria.

The effectiveness of Afghanistan's educational program shows that there has been improvement. However, in order to reach the UN's goal, decreasing illiteracy by 50 percent, Afghanistan illiteracy rate would need to be at 35.9 percent. The educational program's effectiveness failed to reach the 50 percent goal. It accomplished a 13.8 percent decrease in fifteen years. Therefore, the effectiveness of the programs is low.

The acceptability of educational programs amongst all parties is unanimous. The government supports education as reflected in several documents. The drastic increase of school enrollment demonstrates the population has deemed education as acceptable. The Afghanistan educational program receives a high evaluation because the government and population see it as an important issue.

Liberia

Step 1: Historical Background

The American Colonization Society formed a colony in a small West African country called Liberia in 1847. The society was composed of former African American slaves and indigenous people. Liberia was a U.S.-controlled settlement. Joseph Jenkins Roberts, a freed slave from America, became the country's first president. At times, the colonists, also referred to as Americo-Liberians, experienced violent opposition from the indigenous population because they felt excluded from citizenship (Thompson 2014). However, the power remained under Americo-Liberian control from 1847 to 1980. Over

130 years of power ended with a coup d'état led by an indigenous Liberian Master Sergeant, Samuel Doe.

Samuel Doe led the bloody coup and seized power in 1980, then led a military régime under the People's Redemption Council for nine years. Liberia endured issues with poor human rights, corruption, abuse, and ethnic tensions in the subsequent years under Doe's control. Rebels formed, headed by Charles Taylor, in Cote d'Ivoire and marched to Monrovia to overturn Doe's authority in December 1989; this action sparked a civil war.

From 1989 to 1996, Liberia experienced one of the bloodiest wars on the African continent claiming 200,000 lives (Thompson 2014) and displacing millions of refugees. The UN and the Economic Community of West African States brokered a cease-fire. The Liberians elected Charles Taylor as president in 1997 in hopes that he could rebuild and return Liberia to its former peaceful state. Unfortunately, the peace treaty was short-lived. Taylor's terrorizing rule continued with infractions of human rights abuse, terrorisms, and the use of child soldiers. Taylor also supplied crucial aid to rebels in Sierra Leone, which helped to prolong Sierra Leone's own civil war (Chorley 2013).

Massive opposition over Taylor, his government, and his support for rebel troops led to the creation of the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy. They began attacking government targets in northern and western Liberia in attempts to overturn the government (Global Security 2016a). The violent conflicts led to the second civil war from 1999. It was not until 2003 that a second peace agreement signed. The signing of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement officially ended the conflict. Liberia

transitioned to a peaceful democracy under the National Transitional Government of Liberia (Global Security 2016b).

Two civil wars, lasting over fourteen long years, devastated the economy and infrastructures throughout the country. The education system ceased to exist due to the destruction and displaced educators (Children in Crisis 2013). UIS reported 43.1 percent of the adult population was literate in 2004; between 2008 and 2011, the literacy rate was 42.9 percent (UNICEF 2013), and as of 2015, 47.6 percent of the population is literate (UIS 2016b).

Step 2: Educational Program

Liberia had to rebuild following the devastating fourteen years of civil war. The UN appealed to the international community to support the rebuilding of Liberia, with an estimated cost of \$600 million to start initial reconstruction (Lederer 2004). The World Bank worked with the Liberian government to come up with effective tools towards developing the country. The next few paragraphs discuss some of the key strategies and initiatives created to address educational development.

The *Liberia Country Program Evaluation 2004-2011* was one of the first strategic documents to aid Liberia in its recovery efforts. The program pinpointed three areas of improvement: rebuilding core state functions and institutions, rehabilitating infrastructure to jump-start economic growth, and facilitating pro-poor growth (Independent Evaluation Group 2012, xvi). Through addressing these issues the government of Liberia and its people can invest in long-term development and achieve future growth.

Liberia took the six goals outlined in the EFA and aligned it to their own National Action Plan 2004-2015 (EFA-NAP) (MoE Liberia 2004, 4). The NAP identifies key

programs, implementation strategies, and the management and administration restructuring required in achieving the desired end state, achieving the EFA goals by 2015. The financial cost for the program is \$50 million for fiscal years 2007-2010 (MoE Liberia 2004, 4).

The 2007 Liberia Primary Education Recovery Program identified eight areas to jump start the educational system: infrastructure, material, teacher development, accelerated learning program for adults, advisory and assessment services, educational sector governance, capacity building, and institution and implementation arrangement (MoE Liberia 2007, 35). The government estimates the program to cost \$70.6 million for fiscal years 2007-2010 to implement (MoE Liberia 2007, 5).

The 2008 Poverty Reduction Strategy identified education as one of the key elements towards poverty reduction. It recognizes education as a required component towards rehabilitating the state infrastructure and building capacity for long-term success. The government of Liberia agreed to work to improve the educational system that allows for better local control over schools, employs quality teachers, and promotes long-term learning achievements (International Monetary Fund 2008, 22). The PRS will cost an estimated \$156.6 million from 2008-2011 (International Monetary Fund 2008, 136). The Education Sector Plan (2010-2020) falls directly in line with the Poverty Reduction Strategy initiative by further defining how the MoE will focus policies and strategies to development the educational sector (MoE Liberia 2010, xii).

President Johnson Sirleaf signed into law the new Education Reform Act in 2011. The president attributed poor performance in the West African Examination Council exams due to the lack of qualified teachers, poor wages, and logistics (allAfrica 2011).

The act allowed the Minister of Education to empower authorities in local communities to promote an educational system that was strong and cohesive (Executive Mansion 2011).

In 2013, Liberia made headlines again for poor performance on college entrance exams. All 25,000 students failed the entrance exam for the University of Liberia; President Sirleaf blames the educational system (Pailey 2013). She launched a new plan to reinvigorate the educational sector. Her three-year MoE Operational Plan (2014-2016) addresses the necessary goals and plans to improve the education sector with the ultimately objective of reaching the EFA goals (allAfrica 2014). The projected cost is around \$180 million from 2014 to 2016 (allAfrica 2014).

Step 3: Cultural Acceptance

Liberia has two forms of educational systems: the western system and the traditional system. The western system is similar to that of the United States with a primary, secondary, and higher education level. Liberia's traditional education system, also known as bush school, teaches the fundamentals of traditional culture. This system places more emphasis on basket weaving, agriculture, and pottery than improving literacy of their populace (Dunn-Marcos, Killehlon, Ngovo and Russ 2005, 39).

The government of Liberia, through its multitude of action plans, operational plans, and strategies, places great importance and need on (western) education. The government worked to improve the curriculum, improve access and safety of schools, recruited and trained qualified teachers, and strengthen the governance of the educational system.

However, the two greatest impediments to education are poverty and access. First, poverty shifts the focus away from education to survival. Children are encouraged to stay home and help support the household. Those children, that are encouraged to educate themselves, lack basic resources such as textbooks (Dunn-Marcos et al. 2005, 37). Children are valued more for their support and work ability rather than in an educational setting (Countries and the Cultures 2016). Second, access to education in rural areas has improved but remains an issue. Figure 9 captures the disparity among gender, location, and income and the lack of presence in the school system.

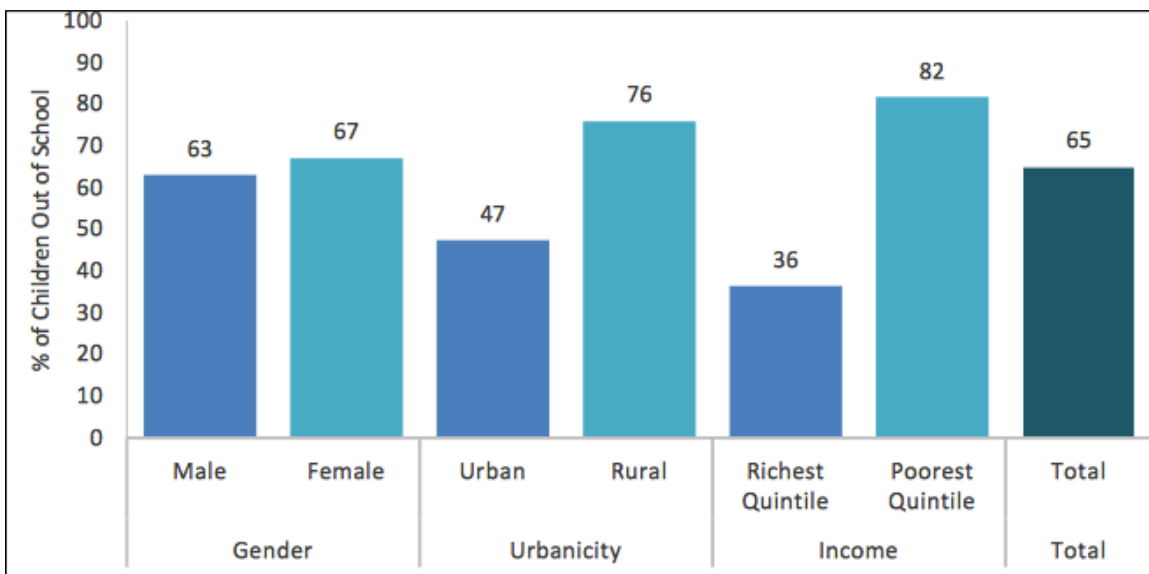


Figure 9. Percentage of Children of Primary School Age (6-11) Out of School

Source: Education Policy and Data Center, “Liberia: National Education Profile 2014 Update” (Education Policy and Data Center, Washington, DC, 2014), 1.

Step 4: Evaluation Criteria

Efficiency

The government of Liberia allocated over \$457 million towards educational programs since 2004 (EFA-NAP, Liberia Primary Education Recovery Program, Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the MoE Operational Plan). This in by no means is a comprehensive list of all the educational programs in the country. UIS reports that Liberia spent 3.3 percent of its GDP on education in 2008, but later decreased it to 2.8 percent in 2012 (UIS 2016a).

Effectiveness

Since the end of the fourteen-year of civil war, Liberia has worked to improve their educational sector. 56.9 percent of the population was illiterate in 2014 (UIS 2016b). The government worked with a multitude of organizations like The World Bank, USAID, UN, Global Partnership, and the European Union, with the desire to reach the EFA goals. The government erected new schools and hired qualified teachers. New governance structures were emplaced to allow for a decentralization and greater decision-making process to empower the local population and foster initiative (Dolo 2009). By 2015, the illiteracy percentage improved to 52.4 percent (UIS 2016b).

Acceptance

The Liberian government continues to stress the importance of literacy and education. Liberia is unique because it has an informal, bush type education and a more formal, western style education. The government developed several initiatives and key national documents to improve the (western style) educational sector. President Sirleaf

has made it one of her missions to improve education within the country. She recognizes it as a way to overcome poverty, create sustainable development (International Monetary Fund 2008, 7), and ensure enduring success. She goes on to stress that while infrastructure is important to development, it will not last if one does not have education; education is the most important thing “one can bequeath to their children” (allAfrica 2016).

The acceptance of education for the population shows mixed results. Some parents find education important, but there is a large differential based off location and income as seen in figure 9. Access to education and household income status plays a large factor whether education is significant or not.

Step 5: Aggregation

Step 5 in the research design aggregates the information presented in step 4. The information is measured against the evaluation criteria to assist in determining the educational program’s efficiency, effectiveness, and acceptability. Table 4 presents the aggregation of the three criteria.

Table 4. Liberia Evaluation Criteria			
Questions	Low	Medium	High
1) Program efficient?	\$		
2) Program effective?	X		
3) Program universally accepted?		X	

Source: Created by author.

Liberia's educational programs rank a low on the efficiency criteria because the governmental expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP is low. As of 2012, the government of Liberia only spent 2.8 percent of its GDP towards education (UIS 2016a). The effectiveness of Liberia's educational programs shows minimal improvement. Liberia's illiteracy rate needed to be 28.5 percent in order to reach the UN's goal of decreasing illiteracy by 50 percent. The educational program's effectiveness failed to reach the 50 percent goal. The program's effectiveness receives a low ranking, only accomplishing a 7.4 percent decrease of illiteracy over the past eleven years. Lastly, the government and population do not place equal significance on educational programs. The government supports education as reflected in key national documents. The population, however, does not back education as strongly. The unequal distribution of support places a medium evaluation on the acceptability of education in Liberia.

Analysis

The previous sections evaluated the three criteria within the specific countries studied. This last section consolidates the findings and compares the criteria against the other case studies to assist in determining if AFRICOM should place a greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability. Criterion 1, as reflected in table 5, reviews the program efficiency. The ROK government expended a great deal of their GDP towards developing the educational sector, where as Afghanistan and Liberia spent a lot less on education.

Table 5. Program Efficiency Evaluation Criteria			
	Low	Medium	High
Republic of Korea			\$\$\$ (19%)
Afghanistan		\$\$ (4.6%)	
Liberia	\$ (2.8%)		

Source: Created by author.

Table 6 analyzes the ROK's, Afghanistan's, and Liberia's effectiveness in implementing educational programs. An effective educational program improves literacy rates. A highly effective program, as measured in this thesis, achieves the EFA goals of decreasing illiteracy by 50 percent based on the countries' initial rate. The ROK surpassed the EFA goals in fifteen years. However, Afghanistan and Liberia were not as successful. Afghanistan decreased illiteracy by 13.8 percent in fifteen years. Liberia accomplished a 7.4 percent decrease in eleven years. Both programs receive a low evaluation because they failed to improve literacy by 25 percent.

Table 6. Program Effectiveness Evaluation Criteria			
	Low	Medium	High
Republic of Korea			Improved literacy by 64.3% in 15 years
Afghanistan	Improved literacy by 13.8% in 15 years		
Liberia	Improved literacy by 7.4% in 11 years		

Source: Created by author.

The last criterion examined is the program acceptability, reflected in table 7. The governments in all three case studies support educational development. The acceptability is seen by the governments' actions and policies devoted to educational reform. The public acceptability for literacy and education is not unanimous across the evaluation criterion.

The ROK citizens highly support education. The people see education as a way to improve oneself. Education is a sense of pride and status for parents and their children. Parents are willing pay a great deal of money in order to improve the educational opportunities for their children. In Afghanistan, the drastic increase in school attendance after the reopening of schools captures the public support for education. In the case of Liberia, more than half the children remain out of school. This is partly due to inaccessibility and partly due to income. The poorer households place less importance on education and more emphasis on day-to-day activities.

Table 7. Program Acceptability Evaluation Criteria			
	Low	Medium	High
Republic of Korea			Government and population supports
Afghanistan			Government and population supports
Liberia		Government supports, population does not fully support	

Source: Created by author.

Summary

By applying the evaluation criteria and aggregating the findings of the facts, this helps to answer the primary research question; should AFRICOM place a greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability. The answer is yes. AFRICOM should engage in programs that help to develop the educational sector in West Africa; however, there are caveats to this statement. The greater issue is the culture. AFRICOM should not expect the education system to improve as a result of improving infrastructure. AFRICOM first needs to understand the operational environment with respect to the culture. Second, once the culture accepts education as a way to succeed, then and only then will literacy and education prosper and long-term stability and security be possible. AFRICOM must indirectly affect education by working to improve the cultural acceptance.

Chapter 5, the final chapter, provides a conclusion for the three case studies examined. It also provides recommendations for future research and final thoughts.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The analysis of this thesis suggests the answer to the primary research question; should AFRICOM place greater emphasis on educational programs as part of the theater engagement plan in West Africa to enhance regional stability is yes, with caveats. The literature presented and the analysis states just how crucial literacy and education is towards the success of a state. States with high levels of illiteracy also have security struggles within their societies. The solution to lowering poverty levels, improving health standards, encouraging economic growth and security, and improving governance is through literacy and educational development. This final chapter is a summary of conclusions, recommendations for future research, and provides closing thoughts.

Conclusions

The information provided in chapter 4 suggests that the more a government accepts education as a priority, the more a government will expend on educational improvement. All three governments accept education, but the financial support varies greatly. The ROK spent 19 percent of their GDP on education whereas Afghanistan and Liberia spent significantly less, 4.6 percent and 2.8 percent respectively. The ROKs illiteracy rate significantly improved. Afghanistan and Liberia's illiteracy rate barely changed. One could perceive the more a country spends on education the lower the illiteracy rate. While this may have some validity, it does not capture the public aspect to the environment.

The people, more specifically the culture, greatly affect educational improvements. This is a third factor of acceptability that was not accounted for during the initial research. Challenges within the culture can present serious obstacles for long-term success for education. Gender inequality, cultural norms that exclude or discriminate against education, and poverty limit the success of the overall acceptance of education.

There is something unique about the Korean culture. It has a hunger for education unlike the other two country case studies. Korea overcame the largest illiteracy disparity of the three countries studied in roughly the same time. Under Imperial Japanese rule, Koreans were excluded from educational opportunities. The education system was built from scratch at the end of World War II once the ROK was reestablished as a sovereign nation.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban destroyed many of the schools. What few schools that remained had a religious connotation; women and girls were strictly prohibited from educational prospects. Afghans struggled with overcoming cultural norms that reside with gender inequality. Education is offered to all, yet issues with gender equality impacts progress. The culture must change to promote long-term success.

During Liberia's civil war, the educational system ceased to exist. Schools were closed, destroyed, or fell due to disrepair. The Liberian government created national strategies and policies to improve the education system, but little progress has been made in the past eleven years. The high percentage of children out of school suggests the culture does not openly accept education as a means for improvement or stability.

Recommendations

Recommendation for decision makers: when planners are faced with complex environments, where the population suffers from poor health, poor governance, poverty, and economic insecurities, where stability and growth are needed, the leadership should examine the educational systems as a means to stimulate the needed changes in a positive direction. Literacy and education have the ability to promote growth, prosperity, and stability. AFRICOM is capable of providing a vast array of resources in the form of construction, humanitarian assistance, stability, or security operations. Regional TSC can assist governments and communities in improving educational needs.

Recommendations to future researchers: due to earlier discussed limitations, future researchers should consider examining cultures with similar challenges, e.g. multiple languages. This could help to understand how countries, with multiple languages, enhance literacy and educational growth. Alternatively, future researchers could limit research to areas with low literacy rates and large rural populations. This might help to understand how best to spread education in remote regions. Future research could help to expose what works and what needs improving.

Closing Thoughts

AFRICOM has a vast array of challenges on the continent, from crisis to transnational threats. Security, stability, and prosperity throughout the area of responsibility is the desired end state not only for the combatant commander but also for the U.S. President. The instruments of national power—diplomacy, information, military and economics—helps the United States to advance and defend its values and interests,

and achieve national strategic objectives consistent with national strategy (Chairman, JCS 2001, I-1).

The presidential policy directive towards Sub-Saharan Africa addresses the strategy and commitment towards the success of Africa. It is important to leverage all four instruments of national power, including the military, to achieve the strategic objectives.

Combating literacy helps to shape the security environment, one of the Army's Warfighting Challenges. The military forces need to understand "how to shape and influence security environments, engage key actors, and consolidate gains to achieve sustainable security outcomes in support of Geographic and Functional Combatant Commands and Joint requirements" (Army Capabilities Integration Center 2016).

AFRICOM has control over the military instrument of power. It also has other, non-DoD departments working within the command, which can access and coordinate with other parent organizations to take advantage of the three instruments of national power.

AFRICOM has the ability to influence literacy and educational development, particularly during Phase Zero shaping operations, through their wide range of military operations and TSC engagement opportunities. Literacy and education affects the society. It enables security, stability, and prosperity.

Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society. It is a bulwark against poverty, and a building block of development . . . For everyone, everywhere, literacy is, along with education in general, a basic human right . . . Literacy is, finally, the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman and child can realize his or her full potential. (UN 1997)

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