“I want them to be better than me”

Parents from different socio-economic backgrounds reflect on their children’s schooling and education in Mexico City
ABSTRACT

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Academics within the field of education have produced extensive research. The purpose of previous studies has often been to explain the underlying causes, with a generalizing result, to how education operate within a nation. To contribute with an urban perspective, this studies aim is to research how parents from different socio-economic backgrounds in Mexico City are reasoning about their children’s schooling and education. What individual choices they have made and how the social context has impacted on these choices. The respondents were selected through a snowball selection using interviews with semi-structured questions for data collection. The material was coded into two themes, individual level and societal level. The respondents with wealthier and poorer socio-economic background were analysed separately and then compared and summarised. The theoretical framework is a combination of the human capability approach together with the findings in previous research. A finding in the research is that education is perceived differently depending on the socio-economic background. The respondents with wealthier socio-economic background are referring to the future work career and economic security as benefits for their children. The respondents with poorer socio-economic background are mentioning the opportunity to change their lives and “to not become like them”. Despite the different benefits mentioned, all respondents’ value education as the most important investment in life for their children. The conclusion drawn from the study is, that no matter what their socio-economic background is education a high priority.

Keywords: Education, Children’s schooling, Parents perspective, Socio-economic background, Mexico City, Mexico, Latin America

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1. Introduction

Education is a universal right for every child (United nations, 1989). The sustainable development report brings up education in goal number 4; “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (United nations, 2017, p 26). Today, more children around the world are enrolled in school than ever before. Despite this, there are 250 million children that are not able to read or write when they reach nine years of age. Being able to read and write is the foundation to inclusion in most societies, also contributing to good health, stable income and better opportunities. Education has many positive effects on people's lives and futures (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2018).

Mexico is among the fifteenth largest economies in the world and continues to climb economically. Despite this, half of the population is living in poverty (Globalis, 2017). Dropouts from school before completing secondary level is a common problem in the Mexican society. In 2013, a decision was made to make high school mandatory. This policy is still a work in progress. But has not been fully implemented in schools around Mexico (Landguiden, 2017). Calculations from 2011 predict that 49% of the entire population in Mexico will complete secondary school. In relation to the average of the OECD-countries where it is 83%, this is the lowest percentage within all the 34 OECD-countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013).

The field of education is well researched, from a variety of angles. Relevant research for this study has often been extensive research, where the aim has been to generalize the result to a whole country. These large studies overlook the individual’s perspectives and neglect the different social classes within the country. These socio-economic gaps are of great relevance in a country like Mexico. The generalized studies were performed in both urban and rural areas and among different social classes. The results are a generalization towards the whole population (Cárdenas, 2015, Bassi & Muñzo, 2015). These generalized results neglect individual’s perspective, as everyone is clustered together (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014). That is why the focus of this study be on the individual perspective through parents from different socio-economic backgrounds in Mexico City. This paper will also be a contribution to the research field, through its urban perspective.

The town of Mexico City has 21 million inhabitants (Nationalencyklopedin, 2018) and contains huge social gaps and income differences. The analysed research for this study has found that the socio-economic background, quality of schooling and the familial support has impacted children in the outcome of their schooling. To quote Martin Luther King Jr. “The job of the school is to teach so well that family background is no longer an issue” (referred in Farah & Upadhyay, 2017, p. 2). This quote shows that the socio-economic background a family has should not impact on children’s education outcomes. All children should have the same opportunities and possibilities to receive equal education, which today is not the case in Mexico. This study aims to view how parents with different socio-economic backgrounds and their reflection on their children's schooling and education. Parents have given their views on how their individual choices and social context have impacted their choices.
1.1 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how parents, with different socio-economic background, reason and decide upon their children’s schooling and education.

- What individual reasons are referred to, behind the choices parents from two different socio-economic backgrounds make, regarding their children’s schooling and education?
- What role does the social context play, with focus on the education system, on parents choices for their children's schooling and education?
- What role does socio-economic background play regarding similarities and differences in the choices parents made for their children’s schooling and education?

1.2 Outline of the study

Initially, a brief background about education and the current situation in Mexico is presented with a purpose to capture the attention and interest of the reader, to explain the context of the study. Thenceforward is the purpose and the research questions displayed, to create an understanding of the paper. In chapter two previous research from four categories presented; (1) Socio-economic background, poverty and education, (2) Quality of education system, (3) Family support and (4) From human capital theory to human capability approach. The chapter is end with a summary of the theoretical framework. The third chapter presents the methodology, where the method, selection of respondents and ethical considerations are explained initially. Also the collection of the data material and how the data processing and analysis has been performed. The result is presented in chapter four, where the analysed data material is divided into two teams; one individual level and one societal level. Each level holds subcategories that present the two groups of socio-economic backgrounds separately, with a comparison of the backgrounds in the end. Chapter five follows which holds a discussion regarding the results and findings of this study. Differences and similarities are addressed and reconnected to the research questions and theoretical framework. Finally, the authors will suggest a proposal for future research within the field of education viewed from a socio-economic perspective.

2. Previous research and theoretical framework

This chapter gives an overview of findings from previous research regarding factors that impact on children’s schooling. The material found in analysed research is organized in four themes: (1) Socio-economic background, poverty and education, (2) Quality of education system, (3) Family support and (4) From human capital theory to human capability approach. The human capability approach is outlined in the theoretical framework as an approach that pinpoints the importance of investing in education for future well-being. How parents take such factors into consideration in their choices for children's schooling. Hence, human capability approach and previous research constitutes the theoretical framework of this study.
2.1 Socio-economic background, poverty and education

Socio-economic background is a repeating pattern that has been found in previous research and has proven to have an impact on children's schooling. Socio-economic background refers to a person's education level, profession, financial situation and social status (Education and socioeconomic status, 2018).

The social gaps between people in the Mexican society are remarkable in different perspectives; regions, cultural belongings, education and professional levels (Globalis, 2017). The income differences in Mexico are enormous where half of the population are estimated to live in poverty. Despite this is there a strong middle class and a small group of very wealthy people. A lot of people have moved from the rural areas into cities, which has created miserable social conditions and slum areas. Unemployment, growing crime and homelessness are some problems that are plaguing Mexico City (Landguiden, 2017). Approximately, more than half of the population in Mexico make a living in the informal sector, which encompass everything from trafficking to selling ice-cream on the streets. There are few countries in the world that can be compared with Mexico’s social gaps where corruption is a major factor (Ibid.).

Giddens & Sutton (2015) present two perspectives on poverty, individual and structural poverty. The first perspective explains how the individual is responsible for his or her own poverty. The second perspective explains how poverty is related to the social structure, to create or reduce poverty. Tilak (2002) explains that education and poverty are closely connected to each other and that education is a way out of poverty.

In Mexico City the schools are available for everyone, the city offers both public and private schools. Through private education, the gaps increase between rich and poor families due to inequality between the schools. In analysed research is it shown that wealthier families often choose private schools for their children. Since the quality is better, and the knowledge is more adapted and relevant for the labour market. This is not a possibility for the poorer families, due to the high tuition fees, which limits the choices of education. This distinction between education levels contributes to the creation of gaps within the whole society (Andersson, 2005). Another important aspect of education is social cohesion. Schools do not only teach children about subjects in the curriculum, but also social values, trust, rules, tolerance and social integration. The outcome of this will create a better society, with a more democratic culture, and good institutions (Bonal, 2006).

Tilak (2002), explains that dropping out of school, low levels of education and not continuing higher education will affect the income salary. A person without education is more likely to end up in a negative spiral, which is hard to escape from without education (Ibid.). Whereas, a person who completes school, and maybe even tertiary education, has more options and possibilities for the future. Education is beneficial at both an individual level and a societal level, due to increased income salary (Ibid.). With improved income, the individuals have a more stable future in a long term perspective, better inclusion in the society and access to good healthcare. Poverty reduction and better democratic values are indirect benefits that education provide, which helps to develop the society (Ibid.).
Education is well known to improve an individual’s economic situation and collective well-being. Through the benefits received from education such as knowledge, empowerment, stable income and inclusion in the society (Bonal, 2006). In earlier research, the socio-economic background proved to have a great impact on children’s schooling outcome. The socio-economic background the family holds has a large impact if the children complete their studies. With better economic resources, more options are available when choosing school, since high tuition fees are not a factor that impact. For poor families the options are limited, due to economic reasons and the risk of dropping out of school is much higher (Tilak, 2002). Child labour relates to school dropouts, where children from low income families tend to enter the labour force instead of attending school, to help out with the family’s economic situation. It has appeared to be a family decision if the children continue their studies, rather than an individual choice (Gibbs & Heaton, 2013). Females are affected in a broader sense when it comes to school dropout, especially those living in rural areas. Since it is easier for them to get hired performing jobs that do not require any education, which are often found in the informal sector (Bonal, 2006; Landguiden, 2017). This has to do with lower quality of education and not understanding the purpose of getting educated (Bonal, 2006).

This study’s aim is to get a deeper understanding of how parent’s, from different socio-economic backgrounds, have made choices about their children’s schooling and education. As described above, repeating patterns in analysed research highlights that children’s education outcome strongly connects to their socio-economic background. In this study socio-economic background refers to parent’s income and education levels, profession and social status.

2.2 Quality of education system

Mexico’s education system has improved remarkably in the last years. Today, 94.2 % of the population can read and write. 96% of children are enrolled in school which places Mexico among the top of OECD-countries with the highest enrolment rates. (Education Policy Outlook Country Profiles, 2013; Landguiden, 2017). Primary school or primaria is between the ages 6-11. Most children fulfill primary school but only about 62 % continue to secondary school (Reuters, 2018). Lower secondary or secundaria is between the ages of 12-14. The transition from primary school to lower secondary school is where a huge amount of dropouts take place. Upper secondary/High school or preparatorio is between the ages 15-17. Between 2000 and 2011 the graduation rates from upper secondary school had a positive rise, with an average of 47%. Despite this increase in comparison to other OECD-countries where the graduation rate is at 87%, Mexico’s percentage is still low (Education Policy Outlook Country Profiles, 2013). In 2012, Mexico implemented a policy that will make upper secondary education mandatory, increasing the years of mandatory schooling from nine to twelve. This policy is a work in progress and is expected to take time before fully implemented in the school system; therefore school dropouts are still a big problem for the country (Landguiden, 2017).
Today, quality is considered a problem in the education system of Mexico, and a contribution factor to why children dropout of school (Landguiden, 2017). Lack of quality in school, especially in the public schools, makes it challenging for students from poorer socio-economic backgrounds to compete with student from wealthier socio-economic backgrounds in the same career (Andersson, 2005). In a study by Bassi, Buss and Muñoz (2015) in Latin America, it was found that the quality in schools is a contributory factor to the low scores in the national tests around countries and a reason why children leave school.

In 1990, Mexico introduced a policy to improve the access and enrolment into primary schools. The policy contributed to an improvement of participation in primary school among children but neglected the quality of education. The country has improved access to primary school, but test results are still low. Goal 2 in the Millennium Development Goals was about education, which focused on providing elementary education for all children around the world (United Nations, 2015). The policy around education changed in The Sustainable Development Goals, since the quality in schools and continuation to higher education had been pushed aside. The Sustainable Development Goals received a new approach around education, where quality and lifelong learning is in focus (United Nations Statistics Division, 2017).

It is hard to attract well educated teachers to work in public schools which contributes to the low quality in public schools (Andersson, 2005). Most children in Mexico attend public schools, which are free from tuition fees, but where student absence is very high. This is sometimes related to families who do not see the purpose of education, resulting in the retaking of classes or dropouts (Landguiden, 2017; Gibbs and Heaton, 2013). The fewer economic assets a family owns, the lower the possibility that they invest money in education, since other things in the households’ economy are prioritized (Bonal, 2006).

The quality of school is a repeated pattern observed within the research field. An aspect that has to be considered for the outcomes of children’s schooling, since it is connected to how the social context in Mexico City is.

2.3 Family support

In previous research in the field of education has it shown that family support has a positive impact on children’s educational outcome. Through the motivation and encouragement received from the parents are the children shown to perform better in school (Al-Hroub, 2015).

The relationship that families have to education and the support they are giving to their children is a repeating pattern in analysed research. Parents involved in their children’s educational process, especially in the early school years, contributes to higher grades. These children are also more likely to complete a higher level of education (Claudia & Saucedo, 2003). This pattern has been noticed in both developed and developing countries. Children in the earlier years of schooling are not in a position to individually make the
decision of staying in school, it is more a parental decision regarding the family situation they hold (Al- Hroub, 2015; Gibbs & Heaton, 2013). A study made in Mexico explains that the older generation did not have the obligation to attend school, and their parents never forced them to go. Due to the changes in society and improved development in the country, the older generation today understand the importance of school. They see the benefits gained from education, such as employment opportunities, a stable income and a better quality of life (Claudia & Saucedo, 2003).

The labour market is another aspect affecting children's schooling. A study from Latin America made on 12-year-old children who worked, showed that children who had an economic income would be more likely to continue working than studying. High tuition fees, family's support and socio-economic background were some of the factors behind the result (Bonal, 2006). For younger children is the family support of great importance for the outcome of their schooling. If the family considers education important, they will support their children to continue study, whereas if the family does not see the benefits gained from education, it is more likely that the child will start to work young and not complete school (Gibbs and Heaton, 2013).

The current study aims to research how parents, with different socio-economic backgrounds, are reasoning around their children schooling and education. Family support is a factor that has been highlighted in analysed research to impact the outcome of children’s schooling.

2.4 From human capital theory to human capability approach

The human capital theory was recognized in 1960 and through a paradigm in the late 80s, where the human capability approach was introduced (Tilak 2002). Amartya Sen (Ibid.). Points out that the strength of both theories, is focusing on the human being as a central part. The theories are closely connected and only recently have they been distinguished from one and other. To ensure a better understanding of the human capability approach that will be used for the study is it of importance to bring up the human capital theory since it is the base of both theories (Ibid.).

The human capital theory was created by the economist Adam Smith and Alfred Marshall. The theory focuses on education as an important factor to develop human capital and economic growth, assuming that education and earnings are strongly connected to each other (Tilak, 2002). Education and knowledge creates valuable human capital and transforms people with skills to be productive which is reflected in their salary. Human capital theory has an economic approach and explains that education is an instrument for economic growth, and higher access to valuable labour. As such, education has an impact on the individual and the societal level and is beneficial through all the stages (Ibid.).

Sprung from the human capital theory is the human capability approach. This theory focuses on the human being and human agency. For a person to be able to live a life with substantive freedom and enhance the personal choices in life. And to have access and
possibilities to invest and develop these individual inhabited abilities through education, is of great importance for everyone (Bonal, 2006). A combination of well-being and freedom is an indirect approach to social change and a direct approach for achieving better financial position, this is what the theory highlights as some benefits gained from studying. Through education people gain the knowledge to read, write, communicate and argue which contributes to a higher quality of life, and individual empowerment (Tilak, 2002).

The following quote by Galbraith highlights the importance of education, and that there is “no well-educated literate population that is poor, [and] there is no illiterate population that is other than poor” (cited in Tilak, 2002, p 199).

Both the human capital theory and the human capability approach argue that education is of great importance for development. The human capital theory views education as a tool that will contribute to development. This theory primarily focuses on the economic gains received from education, rather than individual achievement. The human capability approach view education to be development, not as a tool to development, where the individual is the focus. How the individual gains received from education also indirect contributes to development of the society (Tilak, 2002).

Through education the individual benefits are basic knowledge economic stability and inclusion in society. This leads to empowerment of the individual and has an indirect impact on the society (Tilak, 2002). When individuals are having a better life situation it does contribute to the well-being of the society and the whole nation. Education is beneficial for societies and nations through its contribution to economic growth, and reduction of poverty.

In this study, the human capability approach will be the theory used since it has a broader spectrum. The theory focuses on the direct and indirect factors that education contributes to, both for the individual and society. This theory is considered most suitable for this study and its purpose.

2.5 Summary of theoretical framework

Socio-economic background, quality of schooling and family support, have been found in previous research to have an impact on how children’s schooling outcome will be. The better socio-economic background the family has, the more possibilities and choices they possess regarding their children's schooling. Education is a way out of poverty and a society that has educated people has less poverty in the country (Tilak, 2002). Education is an opportunity for people with poorer socio-economic backgrounds to change their life situation. Through knowledge are the individual gains empowerment and better health. These are some benefits received from being educated which helps to inclusion in the society (ibid.). That is why this study is focused on two groups with different socio-economic backgrounds, to understand the reason behind parents individual choices made about their children's schooling and education. To find out if there are differences and/or
similarities between the socio-economic backgrounds and how the societal context impact these choices.

The human capital theory is focused on the economic benefits, such as economic growth, increased human capital and higher salaries (Tilak, 2002). The human capability approach, on the other hand, is focusing on the inherited value received from education; human rights, social inclusion, freedom, social changes, stable economy, increased opportunities and possibilities for the individual (Ibid.).

This approach focus on the ability the individual holds from having material freedom, and through that being able to live the life that is wanted and fulfill their dreams (Tilak, 2002). These two theories have recently been distinguished and separated from one and other but both theories focus on the human being as the central part. The human capability approach is derived from the human capital theory and to better understand the human capability approach is both theories necessary to mention. In this study the human capability approach will be the theory used.

The human capability approach is focusing on the direct and indirect factors education contributes to, both the individual and the society level. Education is considered as a tool to decrease poverty which is beneficial for the whole nation, through it is contribute to economic growth. The individual does gain empowerment and basic knowledge such as reading and writing which gives people an inclusion in the society (Tilak, 2002). When individuals are getting a better standard of living does it contribute to well-being of the society and the whole nation.

The human capability approach show how education is a way to escape poverty. Where the theory highlights that with education is it possible to break out of the negative spiral and establish a better life situation (Tilak, 2002). The human capability approach will be used and discussed in the analysis of this study to confirm what role education has for the individual level and societal level.

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology of this study. The data has been collected with semi-structured interviews. The respondents have been selected through a snowball sampling with a delimitation that the selected participants must have children. The collected data material has been coded and analysed from the theoretical framework. The objective has been to observe patterns in how parents with different socio-economic backgrounds have discuss their children’s schooling and education. The ethical considerations have been carefully monitored to ensure the respondents’ confidentiality.

3.1 A qualitative study

Previous research within the field of education has used a variety of methods in their data collection. In reviewed articles with an aim of explaining the causes to why children
dropout of school, has the methodology been qualitative interviews. Whereas research that aims to highlight future outcomes of children’s education, have used quantitative methods. Research of relevance for this study has often been shown to be wide, where the aim has been to give a general explanation of an issue pertaining to a whole country or continent. These extensive studies tend to neglect the different social classes and gaps when generalizing the results. The studies have been conducted in both urban and rural areas and within different social classes (Cárdenas, 2015, Bassi & Muñoz, 2015) Through generalized results, the individual perspective has been neglected, as respondents have been clustered together (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014). That is why our study aims to focus on the different socio-economic backgrounds in Mexico City and what impact it has on parents reasoning. The findings complement already existing research within the field.

Qualitative interviews have the purpose to gain a deeper understanding of life stories and complex occurrences (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014). This method is flexible since the researchers does not know in advance how the respondent will answer and can adapt the interview questions according to the answers given. The respondents have a great chance to express their thoughts since more room is given to the respondent’s opinions. An interview guide with semi-structured interviews has been used, to keep the interviews on the right track and to ensure the validity of the study (see appendix 2). (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014). Qualitative interviews work as a tool to understand more details about a specific sequence. The answers from interviews are often more informative than a survey (Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014) because semi-structured interviews offer both structure and flexibility, that is why the authors of this study have chosen this method. The method has been found most suitable for the study and its research questions, where the purpose is to understand how parents from two different socio-economic backgrounds reason about their children’s education. An alternative method would have been narrative interviews but was not chosen since the authors already had some decided areas they wanted to look deeper into. The narrative method would have been used if the aim of the study had been to focus on the perceptions of certain happenings, rather than understanding the causes behind the decisions the parents had made. The interviews have been carried out with guidance of an interview guide together with follow-up questions to the answers (Bryman, 2008).

3.2 Ethical considerations

In the process of conducting interviews, especially in a foreign country, ethical principles need to be clarified. Bryman (2008) brings up four ethical principles; voluntary, integrity, confidentiality and anonymity. The interviews have been conducted with people from a different country than the authors originate from and the ethical considerations are therefore of great relevance to discuss in this study. In the opening phase of the interviews, the purpose of the study was clarified for the respondents to accept participation (Bryman, 2008). As the interviews have been in Spanish, the researchers wrote a letter where the ethical considerations were clarified to all respondents before the interviews (see appendix 1).
The ethical letter that was used, included the following; the participation is voluntary, and the respondents have the right to leave the interview or refrain from answering a question they feel uncomfortable with. To ensure the anonymity no real names will be used in the completed thesis. The names will only be used for the researchers to separate the different interviews conducted. The confidentiality demand has been taken into serious consideration, where the data has been stored in a safe place. The respondents have been ensured that the conveyed data will not be used for anything else than this research paper. The interviews have been recorded if the participants has agreed upon it, or if not, notes have been taken during the interview. It has been clarified that the recordings will only be heard by the researchers, and will be deleted after the essay has been completed, to ensure the integrity of the individual.

Culture is an aspect that has been considered since the authors have a different culture than the respondents. The authors are aware of the hierarchy within the Mexican society and have tried to erase the boundaries by getting to know the respondents briefly and create a relaxing environment before the interviews.

3.3 Selection of Respondents

According to Hjerm, Lindgren and Nilsson (2014) the research question should determine what method the researcher will adapt. To answer the purpose and the research question where semi-structured interviews were chosen as a method; is to gain a deeper understanding of the respondent’s views and choices the parents had made around their children's schooling and education. To compare the answers and find out what factors were mentioned. The respondents have been chosen to be representatives for the groups with different socio-economic backgrounds where half of the participants where parents with poorer socio-economic backgrounds and the other half, parents with wealthier socio-economic backgrounds in Mexico City. As the purpose of the study is to get a deeper understanding of how parents view their children’s schooling and education, the selected respondents needed to have at least one child and either be hired in a household or have someone working for the household. The selection of parents with wealthier socio-economic background are the job providers, which refers to having someone hired for household services. The selection of respondents with poorer socio-economic background is maids, cooking ladies and chauffeurs who are employed in the household of the families with wealthier socio-economic background. All of the respondents have a representative selection from both genders.

The respondents were selected through a snowball selection. With help from our cooperation partner Tec de Monterrey, the authors got in contact with the first student. The student offered his help with finding respondents and asked his father and maid. Who both agreed to participate and being interviewed. Through this student we got in contact with other students. These students knew other respondents that was possible to interview for the study. 19 interviews were booked. Half of the respondents represented people from wealthier socio-economic background and the other half represented the poorer socio-
economic background. Five of the booked interviews could not be performed since the children were too young, they had no children or was cancelled due to sickness. In total 14 interviews were conducted, where both of the socio-economic backgrounds were equally represented. The author’s chose not to continue to look for more respondents because of theoretical saturation was reached (Bryman, 2008).

3.4 Presentation of respondents

All the respondents are living in Mexico City and hold two different socio-economic backgrounds, which they are presented and grouped after. All the names used for the respondents are pseudonyms.

3.4.1 Wealthier socio-economic background

The respondents with the wealthier socio-economic background earns more than 3167 US dollars/month, with an exception of one respondent, who earns between 1685-3116 US dollars/month. All the respondents have people working in their households as maids and/or chauffeurs.

Mary Rodriguez

Mary Rodriguez is married and has two children; 22 and 25. She holds two bachelor degrees and is a housewife. Her father did not complete his bachelor degree and owns today a brick factory. Her mother studied a technical education for two years after high school and then decided to stay at home. Mrs. Rodriguez view on education is slightly different from her parents in the sense that her parents were not that supportive and did not push them to attend school. She, on the other hand, will push her children to finish their studies (Interviewed: 02-05-2018).

Claudia Pantoja

Claudia Pantoja is married and has three children in the ages; 13, 18 and 20. She completed high school and today owns and manages her own company. Her father has a bachelor degree and owns a jam and sausage company. Her mother holds a high school diploma and is a housewife. Her father considered education as important, while the mother of Mrs. Pantoja did not care (Interviewed: 03-05-2018).

Mafer Guerra

Mafer Guerra is married and has three children in the ages; 13, 20 and 22. She holds a bachelor degree and is a housewife. Her father's education level was a bachelor plus a specialization within anesthesia and he worked as a doctor. Her mother completed high school and was a housewife. Her parents considered education as important as Mrs. Guerra does today (Interviewed: 25-04-2018).
**Fernando Castro**

Fernando Castro is married and has three children; 22, 24 and 26 years old. He is currently unemployed but works in the biology field. His education level is a master in fish biology. His father finished lower secondary school and his mother finished high school and then two years of technical university studies. Both of his parents worked as dancers. Even if the father had a low education level he did understand the importance of education and was very hard on his principles and values, which is the same values and principles Mr. Castro holds today about education (Interviewed: 09-05-2018).

**Agustin Ramos**

Agustin Ramos is single and has two children; 19 and 22. He has two master degrees and work as an industrial engineer. His salary income is between 1685-3116 US dollars/month. Mr. Ramos’ father had a bachelor degree and worked for a company that made boxes for cosmetics, and his mother completed high school and has always been a housewife. Mr. Ramos’ view on education, that education is of great importance, is the same view as his parents had (Interviewed: 03-05-2018).

**Jesus Lopez**

Jesus Lopez is married and has two children in the ages of; 24 and 26. He has a bachelor degree and works with International trading. Mr. Lopez father completed secondary school and his mother did most likely complete primary school. His mother was a housewife and his father worked as a traffic police. Mr. Lopez has the same view as his mother had on education, she was the one pushing and motivating Mr. Lopez and his five siblings to attend school (Interviewed: 04-05-2018).

**Salvador Gonzalez**

Salvador Gonzales is divorced and has three children in the ages; 17, 21 and 24. He started a bachelor degree but did not complete it. Both his parents had a bachelor degree, his father worked as a lawyer and his mother was a housewife. Mr. Gonzalez reason about education in the same manner as his parents did, that it is of great importance for the opportunities in the future (Interviewed: 25-04-2018).

**3.4.2 Poorer socio-economic background**

The respondents with the poorer socio-economic background earns between 51- 255 US dollars/month or 306-817 US dollars/month. The maids have different way of working throughout the week, some of them live in the households they are working, while others work every day and then leave for their own home in the afternoon. The chauffeurs work every day and leave work late in the evenings to go back to their homes.

**Lorena Castro**

Lorena Castro is a widow and has five children in the ages; 19, 20, 22, 24 and 25. She is working as a maid and studied at a high school level but did not complete it. Mrs. Castro’s
mother did not know how to read and write, while her father completed primary school. The mother did not work and the father’s profession was within construction. Mrs Castro's parents thought education was good, a preparation for the future. Her parents share the same view as Mrs. Castro has today (Interviewed: 26-04-2018).

**Victoria Mosqueda**

Victoria Mosqueda is married and has two children in the ages 23 and 25. She was one semester away from finishing high school and works today as a maid. Mrs. Mosqueda is not certain of her parent’s education level but think they finished primary school. Her father was a factory worker and her mother stayed at home. Mrs Mosqueda’s father did not think education was important while her mother was the one pushing the children to attend school, to ensure a better future. Mrs Mosqueda is reasoning about education in the same manner as her mother (Interviewed: 02-05-2018).

**Sophia Gonzalez**

Sophia Gonzales is married and has two children; 28 and 33. She has completed secondary school and is working as a maid. Her parents both studied three years in school, at the time recognized as primary school. Her mother stayed at home and her father worked in a factory. Mrs. Gonzales parents wanted their children to get an education, in the same way as Mrs. Gonzales wants for her children today (Interviewed: 02-05-2018).

**Mariana Peña**

Mariana Peña is separated and has two children; 6 and 17 years old. She is working as a maid and finished primary education. Her father studied at high school level but did not fulfill the studies, and her mother never went to school. The father's profession was at different jobs around the community, and the mother stayed at home. Mrs. Peña explained that her parents today understand the value of education and that their view has changed but when she grew up they did not see the purpose of having an education (Interviewed: 25-04-2018).

**Rodrigo Fernandez**

Rodrigo Fernandez is married and has two children; 18 and 24 years old. His profession is chauffeur and he began lower secondary but dropped out after a month. His mother finished primary school and his father's education level is unknown, since he died when Mr. Fernandez was 3 years old. His mother worked in the house and cleaned clothes for others. He does not know his mother’s views on education since he had to dropout of school to contribute economically to the household (Interviewed: 09-05-2018).

**Santiago Nuñez**

Santiago Nuñez is married and has one child of 10 years old. Mr. Nuñez started high school but dropped out, today he works as a chauffeur. His dad finished primary school and his mother started high school but did not fulfill it. His father was a carpenter and his mother a housewife. Mr. Nuñez has the same view around education as his parents had, to study and to lead a better life than the previous generation (Interviewed: 01-05-2018).
Diego Martinez

Diego Martinez is married and has four children in the ages; 25, 27, 30 and 32. He works as a driver and he finished lower secondary school. His parents did not have any education and worked repairing trucks, his mother was a housewife. Mr. Martinez has a totally different view on education than his parents had, for him education is everything (Interviewed: 08-05-2018).

3.5 Data collection

The selection of respondents was through students at Tec de Monterrey, where the students initially asked their parents and the workers hired for household services if they wanted to participate. The authors explained the main purpose of the study for the students, so they could inform their parents and workers about what the interview would be about, due to the consent requirement. Respondents have the right to choose whether or not to participate (Bryman, 2008). When the selected participants agreed to take part in the study, they were in charge of deciding the time and place for the interview. The selected environment were always conducted at a known place for the respondents, normally at their house or place of work.

A pilot interview was carried out before the data collection started, to make sure that the asked questions were of relevance for the study and its research questions. Through the pilot interview some mistakes and gaps were recognized in the answers of the respondent, and were changed before the data collection started. The pilot interview was also a good opportunity to see how the interview would function in a foreign country. It was through this, the authors realized they should have an icebreaker for the interviews, to make the respondents feel more comfortable. That is why the authors decided to bring “Swedish fika”. The “Swedish fika” was very useful to open up the dialogue between the authors and respondents and to get to know each other. This helped to create a relaxed environment were the respondents could feel safe to share their stories without feeling apprehensive.

The researchers hold limited knowledge of the Spanish language and has therefore used an interpreter. The interpreter did not have any relation to the respondents. Before the interviews the authors had informed the interpreter not to add or change the answers of the respondents and translate as correctly as possible. It should be noted that the interpreter was not licensed, but currently studied to become a teacher with a major in Spanish as a second language. A critique towards the use of a translator is that important information might have been lost or changed in the translation process. The interpreter had good knowledge in both the English and Spanish language and was of Mexican descent. Even if he held good knowledge of both languages there was a risk in misunderstanding and errors in the translation that must be taken into consideration for the results. Since the authors were carrying out the research in a foreign country the interpreter has been of great help in how the questions should be asked. He explained how some words had a negative meaning in the Spanish language and helped to reshape the questions. Before the start of the interview, the interpreter repeatedly explained the purpose of the study and the ethical
considerations to make sure the respondents agreed to participate. All respondents agreed to be recorded during the interviews.

It was carefully explained that there was no right or wrong answers for the questions and the purpose of the study was to get the participants view and opinions. One of the authors led the interviews together with the interpreter in order not to create confusion for the respondents. The questions were asked in a way to not bias the respondents in their answers, to make sure the author’s impact was minimal and to make sure the validity of the study is met. The other author was in charge of taking notes and assisting in the follow up questions, while both the authors were observing the body language of the respondents during the interview. All the interviews lasted between 40- 60 minutes. In the end of the interviews, the authors asked the participants if there was anything they wanted to add, as a finishing phase of the interview.

3.6 Data processing and analysis

The interviews were transcript after the interviews were performed, to not leave all the data collection to the end due to the time-consuming process (Bryman, 2008). The collected material was read and transcribed by both authors to ensure that no information was overlooked. The collected material was analysed through two themes, individual level and societal level that were brought to attention through our theoretical framework. The selected themes were analysed according to the research questions.

The authors coded the material individually. And where later compared and discussed between the authors in order to confirm that the themes found in the material were of relevance and not impacted by the author’s opinions.

4. Results

In chapter four the data is presented. The result is based on the research questions and organized into two themes; individual level and societal level. Each theme is divided into subcategories where the answers from people with wealthier socio-economic background are separated from people with poorer socio-economic background. A summary is presented at the end of each theme to highlight similarities and differences between the respondents with different socio-economic backgrounds.

4.1 Individual level

The individual level refers to the choices the parents have made about their children’s schooling and education. Why their children are studying, what their children will gain from education and how education will affect the future of their children. To give an understanding of how the parents’ interviewed individually reasoned and decided about their children’s education and schooling.
4.1.1 Wealthier socio-economic background

The respondents with a wealthier socio-economic background living in Mexico City consider education to be an important investment for their children’s personal development, to get a job and have a better future. The parents interviewed with wealthier socio-economic backgrounds understand the importance of getting an education, especially in a country like Mexico where corruption and gaps are visible problems. Salvador Gonzalez said how happy he is that his children are able to get a good education: “I appreciate they have the opportunity to study and that they understand the importance of studying and education. I hope they capitalize or benefit from education in their lives.” Mafer Guerra viewed education in a similar way and adds that education is the only way to go for her children and their future: “I think that they knew, or they know that it is very important, so they can do what they want with education.”

All of the respondents declared that they never had to force their children to attend school or continue their studies. The children in these families have seen it as the natural course of action. The parents interviewed with a wealthier socio-economic background mentioned their jobs and education levels as impacting factors on how their children value education. Jesus Lopez is one of the respondents that stated an example how his wife and he has influenced their children in their schooling and education.

So in a way they have seen what we have done in our professions and they follow the trend, not because hey, you have to study but because they have to develop themselves. By looking who we are, how hard we do, and they have seen that with some hard work they can have money. Money, they said is not the most important thing, but it helps. They know that in order to live better they have to study and work hard and they see that…. they see how much we work. (Jesus Lopez)

The children with wealthier socio-economic backgrounds already understand the importance of continuing school and to have a good education. It has been visible that the families with a wealthier socio-economic background want their children to complete at least a bachelor, sometimes even a master degree. To dropout of school and start working has never been an option in these families. Agustin Ramos, Jesus Lopez and Salvador Gonzalez are three of the respondents who pointed out that without grades and diploma would it be very hard for their children to get a good job. All of the respondents with wealthier socio-economic background viewed education as a preparation for their children's future work. A way for them remain with the same life quality and stable income as their family has today.

Claudia Pantoja is a respondent who had a completely different view on education than the other parents with wealthier socio-economic background. What distinguishes Mrs. Pantoja is that her answer is similar to the respondents with poorer socio-economic backgrounds reasoning about schooling and education. She differs in the sense that she talked about gained respect, better diet and becoming a better person as the most important things her children are receiving from education. She did also mention stable economy and
opportunities for future work as the rest of the respondents with wealthier socio-economic background did. But these benefits were not the main focus during her interview. Mrs. Pantoja grew up in a poor family where her father paid for her education at a private school. She understood the value of education early, especially after her father left the family and her mother got depressed. She took over the role of her parents and paid for her sister’s education to give her the same opportunities she had. She brings up the differences from her current life to her old life “Now I see the difference. The same neighborhood keeps living in the same way. They did not change, they did not develop” (Claudia Pantoja). She always prioritized school and started to work when she was 16 to create a better future and never blamed the society for her situation. Jesus Lopez is another respondent with a similar background and family situation as Mrs. Pantoja. He briefly shared some information about his childhood during the interview, which is the reason why only Mrs. Pantoja is exemplified. Mrs. Pantoja and Mr. Lopez have through investment in education managed to break out of a structural poverty. Through the individual choices their parent made about prioritizing education where both respondents were able to change their life situation.

Half of the respondent’s parents with wealthier socio-economic backgrounds have completed high school or secondary education level. The parents of the respondents understood the value of education and wanted the best for their children, which is why their parents put effort and money into the respondent’s education. The participants of the study who had parents with only a secondary or high school degree have today a bachelor or master’s degree. All the respondents reason today in a similar way, about education, as their parents did when they were growing up.

4.1.2 Poorer socio-economic background

The majority of respondents with poorer socio-economic background, mention that everyone living in Mexico City has the same opportunity to get an education. They think it is up to the each person to take action and make use of the opportunity.

All of the respondents with poorer socio-economic background believe that through education it is possible to improve the situation for their children’s future. They explain that if education is not prioritized the standard of life will never improve, since it will be hard to break out of their current life situation. The individual choices and support made by the parent’s is of great relevance for the outcome of their children’s schooling and education. Victoria Mosqueda said the following to her children: “When they have arrived from school they would say I do not want to go to school anymore. And then I said, do you want to be like me, look like me, become like me.” She is saying that she wants to give her children better opportunities then she had growing up, and as a parent it is her job to do so. All the respondents see education as a way out of the current situation they are living in and a possibility for their children to not end up like them. Even in tough times is it all about the individual decision parents are making for how their children's future will become. Sophia Gonzalez said that economy is a factor to dropouts: “A lot of people do not finish secondary school, the main reason is because they need money” (Sophia Gonzalez). That is why the interviewed parents with poorer socio-economic background
is make it possible, even in hard times, for their children to attend school. A lot of effort is made to motivate their children in their studies.

Rodrigo Fernandez mentions that education in itself is beneficial and through it his children can become better people. He explains that his daughter is getting an opportunity of becoming independent through education and as a parent he keeps motivating her to finish her studies:

The way I influenced them, I told them that not be a person like me. I did not want them to suffer what I did, and I did not want them to go through the same situation that I was lacking. So I told them the only thing I can give them is education. (Rodrigo Fernandez)

Lorena Castro said that education is contributing to personal development for her children that they may become independent. She said that one of her sons is already working and has a stable income and does not depend on her as a mother anymore. She also mean that education is contributing: “to become a better person in life and to be a people of good, I tell them to be people of good and be good men.”

The respondents with poorer socio-economic background have all completed primary school. The majority of the respondents did start lower secondary school but only four of them fulfilled it. There are different reasons mentioned in the outcome of why they did not continue or complete lower secondary school, economic reasons are a major factor. These parents are well aware of the opportunities and possibilities that come from education and one respondents states the following:

For the future, and regarding family I want them to have the opportunity for education, because my mother does not know how to read and write and my father studied until the first year of secondary and my brother finished in the fourth class of primary school, so I wants them to be a role model. (Mariana Peña)

In five of the interviews did we find out that at least one of the children in each family had a university degree. Where the rest of the children are currently studying at university or were about to start. Mariana Peña and Santiago Nuñez had children that were too young for university studies. But the future goal for these children is to make sure that they get at least a bachelor degree, maybe even a master. Considering the level of education the respondents hold, it is a huge improvement in the level of education their children today are receiving. It shows how important the individual decision and support from the parents are and how big an impact it has on children’s educational outcome.

All of the respondents said, with a smile on their faces, how happy and proud they were to have the possibility to give their children a good education. So that their children can have a better life then they as parents have had. Even though the respondents with poorer socio-economic background are earning around minimum wage, have they made an individual choice to make sure their children are receiving education.
4.1.3 Summary of individual level

All of the respondents with different socio-economic backgrounds in this study mention education to be of great importance for their children. The respondents have slightly different reasons about why education is important and what benefits their children gain from being educated.

The respondents with wealthier socio-economic background consider education to be an important investment to get a good job, where they refer to a better income and opportunities to live the life they want. It is brought to attention that the parent’s education level and profession impact their children in a positive manner and through it they understand the value of education. In the families with wealthier socio-economic background is it considered normal to fulfill a university degree. While the respondents with poorer socio-economic background mention that the individual decisions they as parents have made, is because they want give their children opportunities in life and make sure they do not become like them. Other benefits from education that are mentioned by the parents with poorer socio-economic backgrounds is being a role model, empowerment for the individual, receiving respect and a chance to get out of poverty.

The respondents in this study, with different socio-economic backgrounds, view the benefits received from education differently but value education equally.

4.2 Societal level

The societal level in this study will refer to how the social context in Mexico City is constructed and functioning. What impact it has on parent’s choices around their children’s schooling and education. Gaps are a visible problem within the society which is reflected in the education system with two different types of schools. The public schools that are owned and financed by the state and the private schools that are owned by private companies and investors.

4.2.1 Wealthier socio-economic background

All respondents with wealthier socio-economic backgrounds have placed their children in private schools. All of them mentioned that the public schools were never a choice, because of bad quality, lack of educated teachers, low level of English lessons or not providing English classes at all. This is considered by the parents a limitation of their children’s work possibilities in the future.

All respondents from the wealthier socio-economic background considered that people in Mexico City do not have the same possibilities into education. First, everyone does not have the possibility to choose which school they want to study at, due to the high tuition fee of the private schools. Secondly, they referred to economic reasons and the low salaries people receive which forces their children to work instead of participating in school:
Unluckily there is a high percentage of poverty in Mexico. Even though everyone has access to free education, poverty drives many of them to work and because of that not many go to school. (Salvador Gonzalez)

Another respondent said:

A lot of people, you know a big percent of the population do not have any money to continuing studying professionally not even high school because they have to start working when they are at high school or maybe before. (Mary Rodriguez)

Without educated people it is hard to keep up the development for the nation. Mafer Guerra mentioned that “Education in other countries is free and still good. The education does not reach all kinds of people in Mexico, so if you had good education for free the country would be so much better.” Many of the wealthier socio-economic families do think that the government does not put enough effort into the school system. One respondent said:

I think the government does not care about educating people. They want to have people basically not educated so they can continue doing whatever they have been doing for probably the last seven years. They do not want to improve it, they just want to keep it basic. (Mary Rodriguez)

Jesus Lopez and Agustin Ramos have both lived in countries outside of Mexico and consider it important to learn about other countries and cultures. Both of them viewed education as an opportunity to go abroad and study. He highlights the relevance and personal gains received when studying abroad. Both a foreign degree and improved language skills are something that will make a person stand out on the labour market. Mr. Lopez agreed with Mr. Ramos and gives an example from his career. Even if Mr. Ramos had a higher degree than his co-workers, he was paid less since he did not speak English. That is the reason to why he decided to study abroad. Mr. Ramos continued and explained that the society today is different. He believes that the labour market has higher demands in comparison to when he grew up. Today there is a bigger competition on the labour market and in order to get a good job, it is necessary to have skills or something ordinary that an employer would value. As mentioned Mexico City is one of the most populated cities in the world, with more than 21 million people, which makes the competition of jobs tough.

4.2.2 Poorer socio-economic background

The majority of the respondents with poorer socio-economic background think that everyone in Mexico City has the same opportunity to get education and enter school but it is up to the people in the society to take the opportunity. The inequality between the public
and private schools affect the people with poorer socio-economic background to prioritize work above education.

Mrs. Peña is mentioning the fact that there are opportunities for everyone to get an education in the Mexican society since the public schools are free and available for everyone. This can be confirmed by Victoria Mosqueda who also adds:

As parent we set goals to give them better opportunities. There is a lot of opportunities but sometimes they become stuck because of status. Regarding that the weather it is public or private there is always intelligent people. The difference is that sometimes in private schools they have better opportunities. But it is also the case that people that do have the opportunities they do not know how to take advantage of them. (Victoria Mosqueda)

The respondents with poorer socio-economic background mention that the educational system is unfair since they do not have the same possibilities to place their children in the school they desire, due to high tuition fees. All the respondents mentioned that the quality in the public schools are too low. With a lack of English classes, teachers who do not show up for classes and student who pass classes even if the rating criteria is not met. Mariana Peña explained that her children cannot do their schoolwork in school since the facilities do not have internet. Because lack in services provided does the children need to go outside the school to do their assignments. Mrs. Peña also mentioning the distance as a factor to why she cannot place her children in the school she desires. She said that if they lived closer to the private school she would place them there. Due to the social context with bad infrastructure, are there limited possibilities for people with poorer socio-economic background to choose which school to place their children in. All of the respondents mentioned that they travel with public transportation to get to work and spend hours in traffic. Santiago Nuñez, Mariana Peña and Lorena Castro consider that it is the parent’s responsibility to send their children to school, despite the lack of quality. They consider that even if the quality is low in the public schools, it is still important to get an education. Another factor to the low quality in the public schools is because of the teachers. Victoria Mosqueda and Sophia Gonzalez are two parents who believe that it is the teacher’s responsibility for the poor quality in the public schools. That they do not take the responsibility for the poor learning outcomes.

A cleaning lady and a mother of two children named Sophia Gonzalez consider that education is important to keep up with the development in the society, “Education is important because the world is changing a lot. You need to know what to do at every moment in order to move forward.” Mrs. Gonzalez also mentioned the importance of having a diploma from a completed education, in order to get a good job:

I think they realize that without studies and education you are no one, and that is because social reasons or different classes. For instance, a woman how does not study is at the
bottom because she can either be a worker, a factory worker or the once that makes clothes. So, there is a lot of opportunities and my son he like to study and to overcome, and to become better. That is the reasons. (Sophia Gonzalez)

Rodrigo Fernandez confirm that without education you are no one. Education is a preparation for future work and gives people the opportunities to a better life. Santiago Nuñez is one respondents that talks about poverty in the society as a factor to why people do not get educated. He states that education is important, but how some people do not have money to make a living and therefore is education not prioritized. He compare the Mexican society to the European societies and mention that European people are working together and helping each other to overcome and develop as a society. While in the Mexican society everyone is trying to do everything on their own instead of working together. Mr. Fernandez explains that his son is trying to help poor people to change their situation in Mexico City:

My son he realized that education in Mexico is poor especially because there are no opportunities for the people at the bottom. Because of that he wants to create a company where they give education to people with low income. So, they can get in to university. (Rodrigo Fernandez)

Sophia Gonzalez is bringing up her neighborhood as an example that shows how poverty is a factor to why children do not stay in school:

I am speaking about my level and my town, so in my street like 80% of the kids’ only finish secondary, it is because they see that their mom need money, so they start working. And although their fathers do give money for like all the expenses they still need more money to just keep forward. (Sophia Gonzalez)

What has been noticed during the analysing of the data collection, is that poverty has affected the respondents with poorer socio-economic background and is a factor to why they dropout of school. More than half of the respondents say that they could not finish their education because of economic reasons, and that they had to earn money for their family. When the respondents talked about their parents and their view on education, it showed that their parents reasoned in the same way as the respondents do today about schooling and education. Their parents considered education important, but the society was different at that time. The families of the respondent were large, with many children, poor conditions and little money for food. These are the main reasons given why the respondent dropped out or did not complete their schooling when they were young. Even if their parents wanted to give their children an education it was not possible due to the economy in the household and how the society was at the time.
4.2.3 Summary of societal level

The respondents with wealthier socio-economic backgrounds state that everyone in Mexico City does not have the same opportunities to receive education, due to economic reasons and the social context. The respondents with poorer socio-economic background state that everyone in Mexico City has the same opportunities to get education, but it is a question of who makes use of the opportunity.

The respondents with wealthier socio-economic background believe that the government does not spend enough money on education. The huge quality gaps between the private and public schools is a result of economic resources in the school system. All the parents with wealthier socio-economic backgrounds have placed their children in private schools. They consider that the quality to be too low in the public school and value higher quality for their children's education. They want their children to have at least a bachelor degree to make sure that they are prepared for the tough labour market, ahead of them. The parents also reason that development of society as a factor in their decision making regarding their children's education. Without education is it hard to be part of the development and the changes that society is going through.

The respondents with poorer socio-economic background mention the quality of the education and teachers to be an issue in the public schools. The parents said that they do not have the possibility to place their children in private schools, since the tuition fees are high. Another factor that impact the parent’s choices is that there is a lack in the public transportation where they live, which makes it hard for the children to commute every day. All respondents with poorer socio-economic background agree on the fact that without education do their children have very limited possibilities in the society of Mexico City. Education is the key for their children to a better life and to change their status in society. The respondents with poorer socio-economic background are mentioning economy as a factor that limits their choices around their children's education. Even if all respondents in this group prioritized their children’s schooling and education do they also mention that they do not have the freedom to place them wherever they like.

5. Analytical discussion

In chapter five is an analytical discussion given based on the findings in the study. The study’s purpose has been to get a deeper understanding of how parents reason their decisions about their children’s schooling and education, from an individual level and a societal level. The analytical discussion is presented from our research questions and has been discussed along with the theoretical framework. Finally, the conclusion is presented that leads to suggestions for further research.
5.1 Parents decision from an Individual level

A research question in the study aims to find out what individual reason the parent have, behind the decisions made around their children’s schooling and education.

The parents with wealthier socio-economic background state that education is a chance to ensure the future, and give their children the opportunities to choose what they want in life regarding profession, where and how to live their lives. The majority of these parents view education as a guarantee and an investment for their children. This is in line with the human capability approach is pointing out about benefits received from education. Benefits like freedom, possibilities and opportunities for people and in this study the children of the respondent (Tilak, 2002).

The respondents with poorer socio-economic background explains that they value their children's education highly. These parents do not want their children to end up like them. They want to empower their children so they are able to change their life situation and escape poverty. Education is considered by the parents to be an investment that makes it possible, and is confirmed in the study's theoretical framework by Tilak (2002). Where it is considered that education is a possibility for people with a poorer socio-economic background to change their life situations. That is why the parent have pushed their children to continue their schooling and become educated. The author of the study has noticed that the parents support is of great importance for people with poorer socio-economic background. An example found in the collected data show how ones family educational level has improved significantly over three generations. Where the respondent’s parents’ were illiterate to today have children studying at university level. This demonstrates the impact parents motivation have on their children and how this resulted in an improved educational level over generations, which is a direct factor to a better life (Tilak 2002). All the respondents mentioned different factors why they have made the choices that they have regarding their children’s education. But all respondents, no matter which socio-economic background, want what is best for their children and therefore they prioritize education.

5.2 Parents decisions from a societal level

A research question in this study has aimed to find out how the social context in Mexico City has impacted parents choices around their children's schooling and education.

The parents with wealthier socio-economic background mention, how the private schooling holds better quality in both teachers and lectures. The diploma received from the private schools gives an upper hand on the labour market. That is why the majority of the respondents from the wealthier group have placed their children in private schools. Mentioned in the theoretical framework does the lack of quality in public schools cause problem for students in their future careers. Since they cannot compete for the job on the labour market with children that received an education from private schools (Andersson 2005).
The parents with poorer socio-economic background consider that everybody in Mexico City do have the same possibility to education. But adds that it depends on the people who takes the opportunity. The parents mention that there is poor quality in the public schools and that the educational level of the teachers are low. But explains that it is still important to educate their children instead of letting them work. Another factor that has impacted the parent’s choices around their children's schooling and education, is the lack of public transportation in the areas they live. Which limits the parent’s choices in schools available for their children. The parents with poorer socio-economic background do not directly blame the government for the lack in the public educational system. But what is mentioned above about bad quality, low educated teachers and lacking transportation possibilities, does the authors consider all of these factors be the government's responsibility to invest in.

Mexico City is a society with structural poverty where everybody do not have the same possibilities to attend school and get a good education. Due to economic reasons and distance. Therefore, do the authors mean that their opportunities and possibilities are limited for the people with poorer socio-economic background. This can be confirmed with what Bonal (2006) acknowledge about the polarization in the education system in Mexico. He mention that all the people in Mexico do not have the same possibilities to choose what school to place their children in, due to high tuition fees and distance to school.

To reconnect to the introductory part of the paper, does the sustainable development report goal 4 mention that everyone should have the same opportunities to a lifelong learning. To include everybody and ensure equal education for all (United Nations, 2017). Referring to Bonal (2006) and the structure in the Mexican society, does the respondents in this study hold different conditions regarding income salary, profession opportunities and social status. Therefore, do they not have the same freedom and opportunities to choose the life they want.

5.3 The role of socio-economic background

A research question in this study has aimed to find out if parents with different socio-economic background, have resonated in same or different ways regarding their children's schooling and education. To find out what impact the socio-economic background have.

The result in this study shows that the respondents with wealthier socio-economic background have more opportunities in the choices made around their children's schooling. This due to that they have the economic resources to place their children in any school they wished for. The majority of the respondents with wealthier socio-economic background have made the choices around what school their children should attend, jointly with their children, based on their preference of studies. Freedom of choice is in line with what the human capability approach is highlighting as a benefit received from education. While people with poorer socio-economic background do not have the freedom to place their children in the school they wish for, due to the social context in Mexico City.
Children how grow up with wealthier socio-economic background get influenced by their parents educational level and professions. Which is reflected in the children's educational level. To finish a university degree is something that is considered as a norm in the families of respondents with a wealthier socio-economic background. While the parents with a poorer socio-economic background mention how they as parents have supported and pushed their children to attend school and continue their education. Because they want to give them better opportunities in life. This shows that there is different factors behind the motivation of their children's schooling.

No matter what socio-economic background the respondents in this study had, did all the respondents prioritized their children's education highly. But the educational system in Mexico City with private and public schools does contributes to a lack of social inclusion in the society. The theoretical framework mention social inclusion as a major factor received from education. Individuals who gain basic knowledge such as reading and writing have taken a first step towards inclusion in the society, which also affect the humans’ well-being (Tilak, 2002). A divided educational system with private and public schools does divide people after their socio-economic background and the social inclusion in the society will remain, where gaps are visible problems. The authors believe that if the government in Mexico would invest the educational system and try to overcome the gaps between public and private schools. Would all children regardless of socio-economic background be able to get equal education. This would help to develop the country in a positive manner.

5.4 Conclusion and proposals for further research

Our result shows that the no matter what socio-economic background a person has, education is valued highly and prioritized to invest in. This result is in line with what previous research has found regarding education. This study complements with parents perspective from different socio-economic backgrounds and how they have reasoned around their children’s schooling and education within Mexico City.

The individual reasons the parents are referring to with wealthier socio-economic background is that education is an investment for the future work and career possibilities. The parents with poorer socio-economic background are mentioning that education is important for the possibility to change their life situation and “to not end up like them”.

The respondent with wealthier socio-economic background consider that everyone in Mexico City does not have the same possibilities to get education, due to economic reasons. The respondents with poorer socio-economic background does not agree and states that everyone has the same opportunities to get education. But where it is up to the individual to make use of the opportunity. All respondents in this research are mentioning the inequality that exist within the school system. And are directly or indirectly blaming the government for the current situation.
What distinguish the people with wealthier socio-economic background from the people with poorer socio-economic background, is that they as parents have the possibilities to place their children in any school that is compatible for their children education and studies. Whereas the respondents with poorer socio-economic background has limited choices due to the social context in Mexico City. Finally, all respondents no matter socio-economic background are prioritizing their children’s education and schooling.

A limitation the authors have noticed during the research is that the study only focuses on one specific group of people with poorer socio-economic backgrounds. All the selected respondents with poorer socio-economic background are working and/or living in an environment with families with wealthier socio-economic background. Where the lifestyle of these people differs significantly. The authors considered the environment to be a factor which affect and impact people in a bigger sense then what was brought to attention in analysed research. The way parents raise their children within the families with wealthier socio-economic background, were the norm is to complete at least a university degree. Influence the parents with poorer socio-economic background in a positive manner in the way of raising their own children. The authors consider that by working and living in a completely different environment than your own, influence the parents in positive manner. The authors believe that the environment contributes and influence parents with poorer socio-economic background, to try to change their life situation and create a better lifestyle for themselves and their children. That is why the parents with poorer socio-economic background motivate and push their children to stay in school, even if the quality is lacking. In order for their children to break out of the negative spiral of poverty. This study did not focus on the environmental aspect as a factor to children educational outcome, but could be of relevance for research further. Where a complementary study could be made on people with poorer socio-economic background without the environmental contact with people from a wealthier socio-economic background. To research how those parents view their children’s schooling and education. This research was never a possibility due to security reasons and authors lack of knowledge in the local language.
References


Appendix

Appendix 1

Information to respondents

Hi!
We are two Swedish student studying international relation- global studies from Jönköping University. We are writing our thesis in Mexico City in collaboration with Tec de Monterrey. The thesis aim is to look at the different socioeconomically background (Education level and salaries) and how these factors affect children’s schooling and outcomes for the future. We want you to know that this interview is voluntary. You can at any time dropout and you do not have to answer the questions if you feel uncomfortable with them. The material from this interview will only be read by us (Lina & Josefine) our supervisor and examiner. The paper will be published in a research database through Jönköping University. You will be anonymous throughout the whole papers and your real names will not be used.
Thank you for your time!
Lina Gustafsson & Josefine Olandersson

¡Hola!
Somos dos estudiantes suecas de la Universidad de Jönköping. Cursamos la carrera de Relaciones Internacionales y Estudios Globales y actualmente estamos escribiendo nuestra tesis en colaboración con el Tec de Monterrey de la Ciudad de México. La tesis tiene por objetivo apreciar los diferentes contextos socioeconómicos (tanto el nivel educativo como el salarial), cómo estos factores afectan la educación de los niños y cuáles son los resultados al largo plazo.
Queremos que sepas que esta entrevista es voluntaria. Puedes terminarla en cualquier momento y si las preguntas te hacen sentir incómodo(a) no es necesario que las respondas. El material de esta entrevista sólo será leída por nosotras (Lina y Josefine), nuestra asesora y nuestro examinador. El trabajo será publicado en una base de datos de investigación, a través de la Universidad de Jönköping.
A lo largo de todo el trabajo tus respuestas permanecerán anónimas y sólo tu edad y género serán utilizados para hacer referencia a tus respuestas. No se agregará ningún nombre.

¡Gracias por tu tiempo!
Lina Gustafsson & Josefine Olandersson
Appendix 2

Interview guide

- Nombre- Name
- Femenino/ Masculino- Female/Male
- Estatus social- Civil status (married/ single/ divorced/ widow)
- Dónde vive?- In what area do you live?
- Dónde trabaja?- In what area do you work?
- Nivel educativo?- Education level
- Profesión- Profession
- Salario- Salary

  o 1 000- 5 000 Pesos
  o 6 000-16 000 Pesos
  o 17 000- 32 000 Pesos
  o 33 000- 61 000 Pesos
  o 62 000- Higher

- Va a votar en las elecciones? -Are you going to vote in the election?
  Porqué/Porqué no? Cree que es importante? -Why/why not? is it important?

- Cómo describiría la educación en México?- How would you describe education in Mexico?
- De qué manera ha influido la educación en su vida?- In what way has education influenced your life?
- Cómo cambió su forma de vida después de tener hijos?- How did your life situation change after you got children?
- Cuántos hijos tiene, cuales son sus edades?- How many children, their age?
- Cuál es su nivel educativo actualmente? Level of education today? all children
- Publica/Privada? - Public/ Private?

Choices around schooling

- Porqué colocó a su hijo/hijos en esa escuela en específico?- Why did you place your children in the specific school?
- Porqué razón su hijo/hijos estudian o no?- What is the reason why your child/children study/do not study?
- Cómo influye como padre/madre en su hijo/hijos en asistir/no asistir a la escuela?- How has you as a parent affected your child/children to attend/not attend school?
- Qué tan importante considera que sus hijo/hijos asistan a la escuela?- How important do you consider your children’s schooling?
- Cuál es la razón por la que sus hijos terminaron/no terminaron la escuela?(primaria,secundaria,preparatoria) -What is the reason why your children complete/or not completed?(primary, secondary, high school).
- Podría mencionar una cosa que haya influido en la educación de su hijo/hijos? - Can you mention one thing that has impacted your childrens schooling?
- De qué manera afectó su nivel educativo y profesión en sus hijo/hijos? - Have your education level and profession impacted your children in any way?
- Como? How?

Geografical levels
- Cómo se transporta a su trabajo? - How do you get to work?
- Cree que es importante la educación viviendo en la Ciudad de México? - Living in Mexico City do you think education is important for your child/children?
- Porqué, explique? - Why, develop?
- Si su hijo enferma, que haría? - If your child get sick, what do you do?
- Afectaría en su trabajo si enfermara su hijo? - Does it affect your job if they get sick?
- A sus hijos les gusta la escuela? - Does your child/children like school?
- Tienen amigos en la escuela? - Do they have friends in school?
- Son los mismos que tiene en el vecindario? - Are they from the same neighborhood?

- Qué beneficios obtiene su hijo/hijos con la educación a nivel individual? - What benefits does your child gain with education on an individual level?
- Qué actividades realiza en los fines de semana? - What do you do on the weekends? / Que actividad realiza cuando no trabaja? - What do you do when you do not work?
- Cree que todas las personas en México tienen las mismas oportunidades para obtener una educación? - Do you think everybody in Mexico City has the same possibilities to get education?
- Qué opinan las personas de su vecindario sobre la escuela? - How does people in your neighborhood think about school?

Socio-economic background
- Qué nivel educativo obtuvieron sus padres? - What education level did your parents have?
- Qué profesiones realizan? - What professions did they have?
- De qué manera lo apoyaron sus padres durante su tiempo en la escuela? - How did your parent support you during your time in school?
- Cuál es la opinión de sus padres sobre la educación? - How is/was your parents view around education?
- Es diferente a la suya, de qué manera? - If different from yours, in what way?

- Le gustaría agregar algo a cerca de la educación de su hijo/hijos?
Is there anything you would like to add about your child/children’s schooling?